

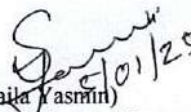
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Commerce
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1
Office of the Project Director
Level-12 (West side), Probashi Kollayan Bhaban,
71-72 Eskaton Garden Road, Dhaka-1000

Memo No: 26.00.0000.066.07.059.24-002

Date: January 05, 2025

Request for Expression of Interest for selection of a consulting firm (National) for Conducting trade related 02 studies

1. The Ministry of Commerce is implementing the Technical Assistance Part of IDA financed Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1.
2. The Procuring Entity intends to apply a part of the IDA Credit for procuring consulting firm for the following services:
Package No. SD-52: **Conducting trade related 02 studies including policy recommendations suggested by FTA Wing, MoC.**
The required qualifications and experiences of the consulting firm are as follows:
 - 2.1 The consulting firm must demonstrate legal eligibility to enter contract and conduct business under local and international laws.
 - 2.2 The firm should have a minimum of 10 years of experience in providing consulting services, including at least 5 years focused specifically on national and/or international trade-related research or studies for both public and private sectors.
 - 2.3 The consulting firm must have successfully completed at least three (3) study contracts related to national or international trade, trade facilitation, or export promotion within the past 10 years for public sector, or development partners.
 - 2.4 The firm having a proven track record in economic modeling and quantitative analysis, particularly in relation to trade impacts will be given a preference.
 - 2.5 The firm should have experience in managing and implementing projects funded by development partners, highlighting collaboration and compliance with donor standards.
 - 2.6 A detailed statement on the firm's resources including training facilities, IT equipment, logistics support, transport, and office space.
 - 2.7 The firm must submit an undertaking that it has not been blacklisted or debarred by any government organization or by the International Development Association (IDA).
 - 2.8 A list of key professional staff, including the proposed core team for the assignment.
 - 2.9 Average Annual Turnover is Taka 50 (Fifty) lakh over the past three consecutive years.
3. The Scope of Services / Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Consulting Firm for the package is available in the office of the undersigned and also at www.mincom.gov.bd and <http://brcp-1.gov.bd/>.
4. The interested consulting firm must submit the following documents with its Expression of Interest:
 - 4.1 Updated Trade License valid up to June 30, 2025,
 - 4.2 TIN Certificate & Update Income Tax Clearance Certificate/ Evidence,
 - 4.3 VAT Registration Certificate,
 - 4.4 Firm Registration certificate, if any,
 - 4.5 Bank Solvency Certificate,
 - 4.6 Audited Accounts for last 03 Years,
 - 4.7 Company Brochure outlining the firm's background, services, and notable achievements and
 - 4.8 All supporting documents to prove that they have required qualifications and experiences.
5. The Project Implementation Unit of BRCP-1, MoC on behalf of the Ministry of Commerce invites eligible consulting firm to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consulting firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services. The attention of interested Consulting firms is drawn to paragraphs 3.14 to 3.18 of The World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Procurement in Investment Project Financing, Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, July 2016 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank Group's policy on conflict of interest. A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations. Further information can be obtained at the address given below during office hours between 09:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Expressions of Interest (EOI) must be delivered in written form - one original & one copy in sealed envelope to the address given below in person or by mail by **2:00 p.m. on January 26, 2025.**
6. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason, whatsoever.


(Shaikha Tasmin)
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce
and Project Director (Additional Charge),
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1[Part-2]
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E-mail: pdbrcp1moc@gmail.com

Package No. SD-52**Terms of Reference****Consultancy/Research firm for conducting trade related 02 studies including policy recommendations suggested by FTA Wing, MoC****1. BACKGROUND**

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received an SDR 150 million Credit from the International Development Association (IDA) - a member of the World Bank Group - for financing the cost of the Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project 1 (BRCP-1), being jointly implemented by the Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BLPA), National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Ministry of Commerce. The second component of this umbrella project is being implemented by the Ministry of Commerce as a separate technical assistance project. The overall objective of this technical assistance project is to strengthen trade related institutional capacity in order to ensure active and sustainable cooperation between multiple trade-related stakeholders and economic empowerment of women traders.

This technical assistance project consists of following three (3) components:

- Component A: Develop (pilot) programs to support female traders and entrepreneurs. This component will pilot activities to help address barriers to women becoming more integrated into regional and global supply chains and trading opportunities.
- Component B: Capacity Development Support for the National Trade Facilitation Committee. The inter-ministerial National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTFC) has been set up to coordinate all trade and transport-related policies and activities in Bangladesh, and will also serve as the Advisory Committee for the Project.
- Component C: Improvements to Bangladesh Trade Portal and to set up a National Enquiry Point for Trade. The Bangladesh Trade Portal (BTP) was launched in March 2016. This component will support further up gradation of the BTP to expand its functionality to include information of relevance to potential Bangladesh exporters and to ensure that content is kept up to date. This component will also set up the National Enquiry Point for Trade, which will help Bangladesh to meet a key requirement of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

The Ministry of Commerce intends to apply part of the IDA Credit for procuring consultancy services from qualified research/consultancy firms or institutions to conduct two studies selected from the list of studies proposed by the Ministry of Commerce under NTFC activities of the project (Component B). These studies aim to develop in-depth understanding about two relevant areas of trade facilitation and are directly linked with the activities of three implementing agencies of the BRCP-1 umbrella project.

2. THE CONSULTANCY SERVICES:

The project will conduct the following two studies in 2024-25 fiscal year that are critical for export promotion and trade facilitation:

Study 1: Opening up of different service sectors—an impact analysis and policy recommendations

Study 2: Market access in China –finding the bottlenecks and policy recommendations

For 02/07/2024

02/07/2024

These studies will be conducted under a single package (Package No. SD-52) to explore best output from the study.

The detail scope of the proposed studies is given below:

2.1 Study 1: Opening up of different service sectors –an impact analysis and policy recommendations

2.1.1 Background and Rationale

The service sector has become a cornerstone of economic growth, employment generation, and development in Bangladesh. Contributing to around 50% of the national GDP, the sector demonstrates resilience and adaptability, especially amid global economic challenges. With Bangladesh on the verge of graduating from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, strengthening the service sector's competitiveness is crucial to support sustainable growth in this new economic phase. Liberalizing select service sectors, while aligning with global trade agreements and regulations, will enable Bangladesh to capitalize on both domestic potential and international opportunities.

However, this transition presents a range of challenges and opportunities that must be addressed strategically:

1. Preference Erosion After Graduation:

With the loss of preferential treatment tied to LDC status, Bangladesh faces increased competition in global markets. This necessitates policy interventions to enhance the competitiveness of the service sector, ensuring that it continues to contribute robustly to the economy despite the reduction in trade advantages.

2. Engaging in FTAs and EPAs:

To counter preference erosion and expand market access, Bangladesh is actively pursue FTAs and EPAs with developed and developing countries, which often include trade-in-services chapters requiring a strategic approach. Key considerations include choosing between the positive list (liberalizing only listed sectors) and the negative list (liberalizing all except excluded sectors), as each has implications for regulatory control and sectoral exposure. While liberalization can attract investment, foster innovation, and enhance global market access, it also poses risks to domestic industries and employment, necessitating thorough impact assessments. Bangladesh should also strategically negotiate access to high-potential sectors like IT, financial services, and skilled labor mobility in partner countries to capitalize on competitive advantages.

2.1.1.1 Global Context and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS):

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), established during the Uruguay Round, represents a foundational international framework governing trade in services. It underscores the importance of integrating services into national trade policies and provides a structured approach to sectoral liberalization. GATS includes four modes of service supply, each allowing countries to engage in service trade in specific ways:

1. **Cross-border Supply (Mode 1):** Services provided across borders without the movement of people (e.g., electronic banking, telemedicine, and e-commerce).
2. **Consumption Abroad (Mode 2):** Where consumers travel abroad to consume services, such as tourism and medical treatment.

3. **Commercial Presence (Mode 3):** When a foreign service supplier establishes a presence in another country to provide services, seen in sectors like insurance and hospitality.
4. **Movement of Natural Persons (Mode 4):** Professionals or workers enter another country temporarily to provide services, such as accountants, teachers, or medical professionals.

GATS commitments are categorized as **General Obligations** (e.g., Most-Favored Nation treatment and transparency requirements) and **Specific Obligations** (e.g., market access commitments that may limit factors like the number of suppliers or foreign investment). As GATS obligations offer multiple negotiation methods (request, offer, and plurilateral approaches), Bangladesh can leverage these frameworks to advance its position in key service sectors and gain preferential access, especially through the **LDC Services Waiver**.

2.1.1.2 Bangladesh's Perspective:

The service sector in Bangladesh has immense potential, but thus far, commitments to liberalization have been limited. Currently, Bangladesh has undertaken commitments in two subsectors: five-star hotels and lodging services under tourism, allowing 100% foreign investment, and telecommunications within communication services. Despite these advances, many other areas remain largely untapped. As service sectors rapidly expand and adapt to changing needs, sectors such as health, education, financial services, transport, and information technology present further opportunities for sustainable growth and investment.

Key Considerations for Bangladesh's Service Sector Liberalization:

1. Limited Experience in Service Negotiations:

Bangladesh has limited experience in negotiating service chapters in FTAs/EPAs, including within BIMSTEC. It is crucial to highlight this gap and assess the country's current status in negotiating the service sector under the EPA framework to identify areas for improvement and build capacity for future negotiations.

2. **LDC Services Waiver:** Bangladesh has an opportunity under the WTO's LDC Services Waiver to seek preferential treatment from WTO members for its service exports. This waiver, originally set to expire within 15 years, has been extended to 2030. However, despite the availability of this waiver, Bangladesh has not yet fully leveraged its benefits. The recent preparation of a request list for Mode 1, Mode 3, and Mode 4 requests to developed countries highlights an active step towards securing preferential access, which would enhance export competitiveness.
3. **Economic Diversification and GDP Growth:** Services liberalization offers Bangladesh an opportunity to diversify its economy, lessening dependency on traditional industries like garment manufacturing. Liberalizing service sectors can stimulate economic growth by attracting foreign investment, promoting innovation, and creating new jobs. By removing barriers to entry and competition, the study will identify opportunities to foster a vibrant and dynamic service economy.
4. **Competitiveness in Key Sectors:** Liberalizing high-potential service sectors can significantly improve the quality and availability of essential services, such as telecommunications, financial services, healthcare, and education. Access to cutting-edge technology, capital, and skills would enable local businesses to compete more effectively in regional and global markets.
5. **Employment and Mode 4 Export Potential:** Mode 4 holds particular promise for Bangladesh, given the potential to export skilled labor and expertise to international

markets. Focusing on this mode could result in enhanced employment opportunities, both domestically and abroad, while contributing to human capital development.

6. **Policy Framework and Regulatory Safeguards:** The liberalization process must be accompanied by a strong policy framework that addresses potential risks, particularly to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and domestic service providers. Careful consideration of market access limitations, restrictions on foreign capital participation, and other regulatory safeguards will be essential to ensure balanced growth.
7. **Case for a Structured Approach:** Considering the extensive scope of services, which encompasses sectors such as business services, communication, construction, education, and health, a phased, evidence-based approach to liberalization will allow Bangladesh to maximize benefits while minimizing disruptions. As such, the study's findings will guide the government in establishing sectoral priorities, structuring commitments, and formulating policies that align with national development goals.

2.1.2 Objective of the Study

The primary objectives of this study are to:

Assess the Current Status of Bangladesh's Service Sectors: Analyze the existing landscape of service sectors (GDP contribution, service sector targets/ export statistics etc.) in Bangladesh, focusing on their performance, competitiveness, and readiness for liberalization in the context of global trade dynamics.

Identify High-Potential Sectors for Target Markets: Identify service sectors with significant potential for export growth in key destinations, particularly among FTA/EPA partners, with an emphasis on developed countries.

Highlight Sectors for FDI Attraction: Pinpoint service sectors with strong potential to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) and explore the implications of opening these sectors to partner countries.

Analyze Trade-in-Services Chapters: Examine the structure and approach of Trade in Services chapters in FTAs/EPAs of potential partner countries to derive lessons and identify best practices relevant to Bangladesh's negotiations.

Evaluate Economic and Social Impacts: Analyze the potential economic, social, and employment-related impacts of liberalizing key service sectors. This includes assessing contributions to GDP, job creation, foreign direct investment (FDI), technology transfer, and service quality improvements.

Identify Key Opportunities and Challenges: Determine the specific opportunities and challenges of opening service sectors to foreign competition, including Mode 1 (cross-border supply), Mode 2 (consumption abroad), Mode 3 (commercial presence), and Mode 4 (movement of natural persons). Potential challenges and opportunities associated with liberalization include issues related to domestic capacity, infrastructure, and regulatory readiness.

Formulate Policy Recommendations: Develop actionable, evidence-based policy recommendations to ensure that service sector liberalization aligns with Bangladesh's economic goals, national interests, and social equity considerations.

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Provide a Strategic Roadmap for Phased Liberalization: Propose a clear, phased roadmap for liberalizing key sectors, with specific timelines, regulatory adjustments, and necessary safeguards to protect local industries and ensure smooth integration into the global services market.

2.1.3 Scope of the Study

The study will comprehensively cover the following areas:

1. **Sectoral Landscape and Benchmarking:**
 - Conduct an in-depth analysis of Bangladesh's major service sectors, including their current growth, contribution to GDP, regulatory framework, and level of foreign participation.
 - Benchmark Bangladesh's service sectors against those in comparable economies to identify areas with high liberalization potential.
2. **Identification of Key Service Sectors for Liberalization:**
 - Analyze and identify specific service sectors that hold the most promise for liberalization, prioritizing those with high growth potential, alignment with national development goals, on-going efforts in FTAs and EPAs and potential for foreign direct investment (FDI).
 - Evaluate which sectors (e.g., financial services, healthcare, education etc) offer the best balance between economic benefits and manageable risks to local industries.
 - Provide a sector-wise analysis to determine the priority level for liberalization, including criteria for selecting sectors for phased opening.
3. **Analysis of the Trade in Services Chapter in FTAs/EPAs of Potential Partner Countries**
 - Analyze the structure and provisions of Trade in Services chapters in FTAs/EPAs signed by potential partner countries, focusing on key components such as market access, regulatory commitments, and sectoral liberalization approaches.
 - Identify best practices and successful strategies implemented by partner countries, drawing lessons that could inform Bangladesh's own service sector negotiations.
4. **Impact Analysis by Sector and Mode:**
 - Analyze the economic and social impacts of liberalizing key sectors, including potential gains in productivity, consumer choice, service quality, employment and opportunity in FTA/EPA negotiation.
 - Evaluate impacts specific to each GATS mode (Mode 1, Mode 2, Mode 3, Mode 4), detailing which sectors would benefit most from each mode.
 - Focus on potential risks, such as over-reliance on foreign suppliers, erosion of domestic capabilities, and social equity issues, particularly in Mode 4.
5. **Identification of Potential Investment Sources:**
 - Identify and analyze potential sources of investment, including target countries (potential FTA and EPA countries) and leading international companies interested in service sector expansion in Bangladesh.
 - Highlight specific opportunities for investment from countries with robust service sector industries, emphasizing potential partnerships, technology transfer, and capacity-building benefits.
 - Provide a list of potential investors by sector, detailing each country or company's competitive advantages and alignment with Bangladesh's service sector needs.
6. **Regulatory Review and Requirements for Reform:**

- Review existing regulations, policies, and market access limitations in Bangladesh's service sectors.
 - Identify regulatory adjustments needed to facilitate sectoral liberalization while safeguarding national interests, including market access provisions (e.g., restrictions on the number of suppliers, capital requirements, or legal structures) and sector-specific regulations.
- 7. Case Studies and International Best Practices:**
- Analyze case studies from other countries that have liberalized their service sectors, highlighting successful policies, regulatory reforms, and risk mitigation strategies. Draw lessons from other LDCs and developing economies to tailor best practices for Bangladesh's context.
- 8. Risk Mitigation and Safeguards:**
- Develop a risk assessment framework to identify and address potential negative impacts of liberalization, including effects on local businesses and employment.
 - Recommend safeguards, such as regulatory adjustments, phased liberalization timelines, and support measures for SMEs to foster a balanced approach.
- 9. Policy Recommendations and Implementation Roadmap:**
- Provide detailed, actionable policy recommendations to guide the phased liberalization of selected sectors, ensuring alignment with Bangladesh's economic, social, and developmental goals.
 - Outline a practical roadmap for implementation, including key milestones, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms to track progress and adapt to emerging challenges.

2.1.4 Methodology

The study will use a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research:

1. **Desk Research:** Review existing reports, policy documents, and international studies on service sector liberalization and Bangladesh's current policies. It will include an analysis of FTAs/EPAs signed by potential partner countries of Bangladesh to understand how these agreements address service sector liberalization, market access, and regulatory frameworks.
2. **Sectoral Analysis:** Analyze Bangladesh's service sectors, growth trends, foreign participation, and barriers. Benchmark against global counterparts to identify liberalization opportunities.
3. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, including government officials, industry representatives, civil society organizations, and international experts.
 - a. KII: At least 20 individuals (including notable foreign service sector investors)
 - b. FGD: At least 02 (Participants at least 10 each)
 - c. Public Consultation: 01 (Participants 40: 20 Public Sector, 20 Private Sector)
4. **Case Studies:** In-depth case studies of specific service sectors or countries with successful liberalization experiences.
5. **Econometric Analysis:** Quantitative analysis of the economic impacts of liberalization, using appropriate econometric models and data. The economic impacts of liberalizing sectors include growth, employment, and service quality etc. Well established models (such as by UNCTAD) may be considered for this analysis.
6. **Regulatory Review:** Assess existing regulations and identify reforms necessary to facilitate liberalization while protecting national interests.

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7. **Risk Assessment:** Identify risks from liberalization and propose mitigation strategies to protect domestic industries and workers.

2.2 Study 2: Market access in China –finding the bottlenecks and policy Recommendations

2.2.1 Background and Rationale

In recent years, Bangladesh and China have made notable strides in strengthening their economic ties. China is one of Bangladesh's largest trading partners, while Bangladesh is China's third-largest trade partner in South Asia, after India and Pakistan. However, the trade balance is heavily skewed in favor of China, with Bangladesh facing a trade deficit of \$18.67 billion in 2021-2022. China's exports to Bangladesh have surged in recent years, rising from \$7.5 billion in 2012-2013 to \$19.35 billion in 2021-2022, primarily comprising manufactured goods like textiles, electronics, and machinery. These goods meet the growing demand in Bangladesh, driven by a rapidly expanding economy and large population.

The textile industry is one of the key sectors where China has a significant presence, exporting textile machinery and equipment that support Bangladesh's textile sector. These high-quality Chinese products help improve productivity and efficiency in the Bangladeshi textile industry. In addition to textiles, China exports a wide range of electronics, construction equipment, and machinery, which are in high demand in Bangladesh's growing construction and electronics sectors.

On the export front, Bangladesh's exports to China have steadily increased over the years, from \$0.5 billion in 2012-2013 to \$1.2 billion in 2022-2023. Key exports include jute, leather, seafood, and textiles. Bangladesh is the world's largest producer and exporter of raw jute, a key material in products like carpets, packaging, and clothing, which China imports in large quantities. Leather products and seafood, including shrimp, fish, and crab, also form significant export categories.

Despite these developments, Bangladesh's export profile to China remains dominated by raw materials, which have lower market value compared to China's high-value manufactured goods. Furthermore, non-tariff barriers such as strict regulations, technical standards, and food safety requirements pose significant challenges to Bangladesh's agricultural exports, particularly to the Chinese market. While Bangladesh enjoys 98% duty-free and quota-free access to China, the lack of product diversification, issues with standardization, inadequate infrastructure at land ports, and logistical challenges, such as road and shipping connectivity, continue to hinder the expansion of exports.

To address the trade imbalance and meet its goal of \$40 billion in bilateral trade by 2030, Bangladesh needs to diversify its export base and focus on higher-value products. Key sectors with high export potential include value-added readymade garments, footwear, pharmaceuticals, ICT products, and agro-processed goods. Additionally, China's growing demand for diverse products like frozen fish, electronics, light engineering, and handicrafts presents significant opportunities for export growth.

Bangladesh's efforts to increase exports are constrained by barriers that need targeted policy intervention. Special attention must be given to overcoming product standardization challenges, improving infrastructure, and removing both para-tariff and non-tariff barriers. While Bangladesh has duty-free access for many products, further trade facilitation and regulatory reform are essential to unlock the full potential of trade with China. If these barriers are addressed,

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Bangladesh can significantly increase its share in China's \$2.4 trillion import market, achieving a stronger and more diversified presence in this vast and growing market.

From a graduation perspective, it is crucial to assess what happens to Bangladesh's trade and service sector access post-graduation from LDC status, particularly in relation to risk factors like tariff reductions. This includes understanding the impacts of transitioning from preferential treatments under the LDC framework to full WTO rules, which could affect sectors like textiles and electronics. Additionally, the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), which provides preferential tariff treatment, will be evaluated in terms of its relevance after graduation and how Bangladesh can navigate the risk of preference erosion.

2.2.2 Objective of the Study:

The primary objectives of this study are to:

1. **Analyze the Current Trade Landscape:** Evaluate the current trade relationship between Bangladesh and China, focusing on trade flows, product composition, and key trends.
2. **Assessment of Chinese Import Market:** Assess China's import markets on a product-wise basis and identify trade opportunities for Bangladesh.
3. **Identify Market Access Barriers:** Examine the specific barriers hindering Bangladeshi exports to China, including tariffs, non-tariff barriers, and regulatory challenges such as customs procedures, quality standards, and certification requirements.
4. **Assess Domestic Market Access Bottlenecks:** Identify domestic challenges such as product diversification, trade facilitation, and logistical issues that hinder export growth.
5. **LDC Graduation Impact Assessment:** Analyze the potential impacts of Bangladesh's graduation from LDC status on its trade relations, especially with China.
6. **Evaluate CEPA Potential:** Assess the economic benefits and opportunities of establishing a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between Bangladesh and China.
7. **Develop Policy Recommendations:** Formulate actionable policy recommendations to improve Bangladesh's market access in China and boost its export potential.

2.2.3 Scope of the Study

- **Trend Analysis of Bilateral Trade:** Analyze the current trade trends between Bangladesh and China, including average tariff rates, and identify the reasons behind significant fluctuations in trade patterns (both increases and decreases).
- **Market Access Status:** Assess the current market access conditions for Bangladeshi exports to China, highlighting key areas where access could be enhanced.
- **Identification of Bottlenecks:** Identify and analyze the bottlenecks that restrict Bangladeshi exports to China, and assess the economic impact of these barriers on Bangladesh's trade benefits.
- **Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) and Barriers (NTBs):** Examine the existing Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs), Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs), and Para-Tariff Barriers (PTBs) between Bangladesh and China, which hinder the expansion of Bangladeshi exports.
- **LDC Graduation Impact Assessment:** Analyze the potential consequences of Bangladesh's transition from Least Developed Country (LDC) status to a developing country, particularly concerning trade relations with China. This includes evaluating the loss of preferential treatment under the LDC framework, such as duty-free, quota-free access to certain markets, and how this might affect Bangladesh's export competitiveness.

The assessment will focus on the risks associated with tariff increases, the potential erosion of preferences, and changes in market access.

- **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA):** Explore the possibility of entering into a CEPA with China, including its potential impact on Bangladesh's GDP, Revenue (Tariff), Export, Import, Labor, Job Market, and Domestic industry, and key sectors (such as agriculture, industry, and services).
- **Legal and Policy Constraints:** Identify major legal, policy, and procedural barriers within Bangladesh's trade facilitation and cross-border management systems, focusing on implementation gaps and challenges.
- **Efficient Export Procedures:** Develop a flowchart illustrating the efficient procedures for exporting Bangladeshi goods to various Chinese provinces, highlighting key steps and requirements.
- **Market Demand Analysis:** Evaluate the market demand in China for existing and diversified products from Bangladesh that have potential for export growth.
- **Policy Recommendations:** Recommend applicable policy guidelines or regulatory measures that can promote trade between Bangladesh and China, facilitating smoother trade flows and addressing identified barriers.

2.2.4 Methodology

To achieve the study's objectives, a mixed-methods research approach will be employed, combining both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The methodology will involve the following steps:

1. Literature Review

- **Desk Research:** A comprehensive review of existing literature, including academic papers, government reports, industry publications, and international organization reports.
- **Policy Analysis:** Analysis of relevant trade policies, regulations, and agreements between Bangladesh and China.
- **FTAs/EPAs Analysis:** Review Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) in which China is a party to identify key provisions and implications for Bangladesh.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

- **Trade Data Analysis:** Analysis of trade data from reliable sources such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and national statistical agencies (Bangladesh Bank, NBR, BBS, EPB etc).
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** In-depth interviews with government officials, industry experts, exporters, importers, and other relevant stakeholders to gather insights into the challenges and opportunities in bilateral trade.
 - KII: At least 20 individuals (including government agencies, and notable private sector- exporters and importers, trade associations)
 - FGD: At least 02 (Participants at least 10 each)
 - Public Consultation: 01 (Participants 40: 20 Public Sector, 20 Private Sector)
- **Case Studies:** Case studies of successful and unsuccessful Bangladeshi exporters to China to identify best practices and lessons learned.

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3. Data Analysis

- **Descriptive Analysis:** Descriptive statistics to summarize the key findings from the data collected.
- **Comparative Analysis:** Comparison of Bangladesh's trade performance with other countries to identify best practices and potential areas for improvement.
- **Econometric Analysis:** Econometric modeling to analyze the impact of specific factors on Bangladesh's exports to China, such as GDP, Revenue (Tariff), Export, Import, Labor, Job Market, and Domestic industry, non-tariff barriers, and exchange rate fluctuations etc.

4. Policy Recommendations

- **Identification of Key Bottlenecks:** Based on the analysis, identify the primary bottlenecks hindering Bangladesh's exports to China.
- **Policy Recommendations:** Develop specific policy recommendations to address the identified bottlenecks, such as tariff reduction, non-tariff barrier elimination, trade facilitation measures, and capacity building initiatives.

3. TIMEFRAME OF THE SERVICES

The total duration for the comprehensive package of studies is estimated to be six (06) months. Studies can be clustered based on similarities in scope to ensure timely implementation of the same.

4. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES FROM THE FIRMS/INSTITUTIONS

- Inception Report:** A detailed report outlining the study's objectives, methodology, timeline, and key milestones. This report should include an overview of the research approach and any initial findings or insights. It will serve as a foundational document that aligns the project team with the expectations of the project authority.
- Comprehensive Research Reports:** Detailed reports for each study, including findings, analyses, and recommendations tailored to specific scope of each studies. Each report should clearly outline the methodology used, data sources, and any stakeholder consultations conducted. The reports may be categorized into:
 - Interim Report:** A mid-term progress report covering data collection, initial quantitative analysis, and preliminary findings.
 - Draft Final Report:** A comprehensive analysis of the specific agenda of the study, including assessments, qualitative and quantitative findings, and policy recommendations.
 - Final Report:** The final report incorporating feedback from relevant stakeholders, complete with policy recommendations and a detailed action plan.
- Presentation of Findings:** A presentation (PowerPoint or similar format) summarizing the main findings and recommendations from each study, suitable for stakeholder meetings and policy discussions.
- Policy Briefs:** Short policy briefs summarizing the key recommendations from each study, intended for distribution to relevant government departments, industry stakeholders, and other interested parties.
- Validation Workshops:** Organization of two (02) workshops to present findings to government officials, industry stakeholders, and other relevant audiences. (All costs associated with the workshops must be borne by the consulting firm)

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- f) **Final Report:** Final reports that incorporates feedback from participants of the validation workshop on the draft report. This document will present the complete findings, analyses, and actionable recommendations for tariff policy development.
- g) **Copy of the reports:**
- Inception Report: At least 03 copies
 - Draft Reports: At least 03 copies of each the studies
 - Final Reports: At least 10 copies (color) and 10 copies (black and white)
 - Policy Briefs: At least 10 color copies for each study.
 - Compiled summary report including key recommendations: 10 color pieces

5. METHODOLOGY OF STUDY:

Each study will have specific methodology as mentioned in this ToR. However, for reference purposes, it has been summarized below:

Study	Desk Research	Quantitative/ Economic Modelling	KII	FGD	Case Study	Public Consultation
Study 1: Opening up of different service sectors – an impact analysis and policy recommendations	Yes	Yes	20	02	Yes	Yes
Study 2: Market access in China –finding the bottlenecks and policy Recommendations	Yes	Yes	20	02	Yes	Yes

6 PROPOSED TEAM

The proposed team structure is provided below:

Study 01	Study 02
Team Leader (01)	
Service Sector Development Specialist (01)	Trade Expert (01)
Trade and Economic Analyst (01)	
Legal Expert (01)	
Research Associate (01)	Research Associate (01)

The details of the positions are provided below:

Sl No	Position	Person Month	Role	Qualification
01	Team Leader (01)	0 6 months	Oversee the entire research initiative, ensure alignment with objectives, and	Education: Ph.D. in Economics or international trade/ international

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			<p>coordinate between various study teams.</p> <p>Must attend regular meeting with the PIU for timely implementation of the assignment.</p> <p>Responsible for final reporting and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Must remain present in all major public engagement/ validation workshops.</p> <p>Ensure quality of the reports and research outputs.</p>	<p>business/ finance/ from a reputed university.</p> <p>Bachelor's in economic or business administration, development studies is required.</p> <p>Work Experience:</p> <p>a. At least 15 years of academic/ research experience with 05 years of experience in bilateral or regional trade/ export import related research.</p> <p>b. Demonstrated expertise in trade related policies will be an added advantage.</p> <p>c. Publication on peer-reviewed journals on trade issues will be an advantage</p> <p>d. Proven expertise in econometric/ economic modelling will be an added advantage.</p> <p>e. Experience in WTO related issues will get an advantage</p>
02	Service Sector Development Specialist (01)	04 months	<p>Analyze the current state and potential of various service sectors.</p> <p>Identify challenges and barriers to sector growth, including regulatory and infrastructural issues.</p> <p>Provide policy recommendations for sectoral liberalization and market access.</p> <p>Collaborate with stakeholders to design and implement strategies for service sector development.</p>	<p>Education: At least Master's degree in Economics, International Trade, Business, Finance.</p> <p>Bachelor's in economic or business administration, development studies is required.</p> <p>Experience: General experience of 10 years of which at least 07 years in service sector development, policy analysis, or international trade.</p> <p>Familiarity with WTO trade agreements and</p>

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			Prepare reports, policy briefs, and presentations for policymakers.	service sectors investment facilitation (IT, healthcare, etc.) is preferable.
03	Trade Expert (01)	04 months	<p>Analyze the trade policies, tariffs, and non-tariff barriers (NTBs) affecting Bangladesh's market access to China.</p> <p>Identify bottlenecks in trade procedures, including customs, logistics, and regulatory compliance.</p> <p>Assess the impact of existing trade agreements and propose strategies to overcome market access challenges.</p> <p>Evaluate the economic benefits of expanding exports to China, focusing on priority sectors.</p> <p>Prepare detailed reports and policy recommendations for enhancing market access to China.</p>	<p>Education: Master's degree in International Trade, Economics, or finance, or business.</p> <p>Bachelor's in economic or business administration, or development studies is required.</p> <p>Experience: General experience of at least 10 years of which at least 07 years in in trade policy analysis, market access assessments, or international trade negotiations.</p> <p>Experience with China's trade policies will be an added advantage.</p> <p>Experience in conducting quantitative research on bilateral trade relations will be an added advantage</p>
04	Trade and Economic Analyst (01)	6 months	<p>Analyze the economic impact of opening up service sectors and the associated policy recommendations (Study 1).</p> <p>Evaluate trade barriers, tariffs, and market access issues in the context of Bangladesh-China trade relations (Study 2).</p> <p>Conduct market demand analysis for both service sector growth and product</p>	<p>Education: At least Master's degree in Economics, Applied Economics, International Trade, or a related field. Ph.D. in the same fields will be an added advantage.</p> <p>Professional Experience:</p> <p>a. A minimum of 07 years of experience in economic analysis or research.</p> <p>b. Proven track record (at least 03 years) of conducting rigorous</p>

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			<p>exports, particularly towards China.</p> <p>Prepare detailed economic reports, data visualizations, and policy briefs based on the findings.</p> <p>Identify sector-specific opportunities, economic impacts, and policy gaps for Bangladesh's growth in both studies.</p>	<p>econometric analysis and modeling is a must.</p> <p>c. Experience in trade and quantitative analysis will be given preference.</p> <p>d. Proficiency in econometric software (e.g., STATA, R, EViews) and statistical analysis tools, with strong capabilities in data visualization and interpretation is a must.</p>
04	Legal Expert (01)	03 months	<p>Analyze legal frameworks for liberalization of service sectors in Bangladesh.</p> <p>Review trade agreements and identify legal barriers to Bangladesh's market access in China. Assess the potential impact of agreements like CEPA and legal constraints on trade facilitation.</p> <p>Draft policy recommendations to address legal barriers and improve market access.</p>	<p>Education: At least LLM. LLM in International Trade Law or related field will get an advantage.</p> <p>Experience: At least 10 years of general experience in trade law, legal analysis, or international commercial law, particularly related to Bangladesh-China trade.</p> <p>Experience in international trade laws and trade agreements will get an advantage.</p>
05	Research Assistants (02)	05 months each	<p>Support data collection, conduct literature reviews, and assist with administrative tasks across various studies.</p> <p>Help prepare reports and presentations based on research findings.</p>	<p>Education: Masters's degree in Economics, Business, or a related field.</p> <p>Professional Experience:</p> <p>a. At least 05 years of experience in the field of research/ academic.</p> <p>b. Experience in trade/ investment research is a must (at least 02 research projects).</p>
06	Non Key Experts	To be proposed	Support the project with relevant tasks	Each Non-key expert including the enumerators will be reviewed by the PIU

20/03/2024

20/03/2024

		by the consultant	during the implementation phase.
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8. CONSULTANT'S QUALIFICATIONS

Interested consulting firms are invited to submit their applications, demonstrating their qualifications and relevant experience in the following areas:

- **Legal Capacity:** The consulting firm must possess the legal capacity to enter into a contractual agreement with the project authority, confirming their ability to engage in business activities in accordance with local and international laws.
- **Experience:** The firm should have a minimum of 10 years of comprehensive experience in providing consulting services, including at least 5 years focused specifically on national and/or international trade-related research or studies for both public and private sectors. This experience should showcase a robust understanding of trade dynamics and the ability to deliver effective consulting outcomes.
- **Successful Project Completion:** The consulting firm must have successfully completed at least three (3) study contracts related to national or international trade, trade facilitation, or export promotion within the past 10 years. These projects can be for the public sector, or development partners, and should highlight the firm's capability to deliver quality research and actionable recommendations.
- **Economic Modeling Experience:** The firm having a proven track record in economic modeling and quantitative analysis, particularly in relation to trade impacts will be given a preference.
- **Development Partner Projects:** The firm should have experience in managing and implementing projects funded by development partners, showcasing their ability to work collaboratively in multi-stakeholder environments and adhere to donor requirements.
- **Capacity Statement:** A detailed capacity statement should be provided, outlining the firm's available training facilities, IT equipment, logistics support, transport, and office space.
- **Ethical Standards:** The firm must submit an undertaking that it has not been blacklisted or debarred by any government organization or by the International Development Association (IDA), ensuring their compliance with ethical business practices.
- **Professional Staff:** A comprehensive list of key professional staff, including the proposed core team for the assignment, should be provided.
- **Annual Turnover:** Averaging BDT 50 lac over the past three consecutive years.
- **Required Documentation:** The consulting firm must submit the following documents as part of their application:
 - a) Company Registration Certificate, up-to-date Tax Payment Certification, and VAT Registration Certificate.
 - b) Audited Financial Statements for the last three years, demonstrating the firm's financial stability and capacity to undertake the project.
 - c) Company Brochure outlining the firm's background, services, and notable achievements.

9. SELECTION CRITERIA:

The selection criteria for this package will be Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) Method described in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016, updated on November 2020.

05/02
225

Sheila Yasmin
Project Director (Joint Secretary)
(Additional Charge)
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1
Ministry of Commerce

— : The End! : —