

REGIONAL TRADE FOR DEVELOPMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL/TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Gender and Intersectional Research and Capacity Enhancement and Support Networks
for Women MSMEs

I. Summary

Title	Consultant to implement the project “Gender and Intersectional Research and Capacity Enhancement and Support Networks for Women MSMEs”
Start Date	December 2025
Completion Date	July 2026
Reports to	RT4D Managers
Interacts With	RT4D: Mai Nguyen, RT4D Regional Manager, Trang Duong, RT4D Program Officer Project Proponent: Export Marketing Bureau, Department of Trade and Industry of the Philippines (DTI-EMB)
Requires Approval from:	RT4D Project Proponent: Export Marketing Bureau, Department of Trade and Industry of the Philippines (DTI-EMB) Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
Timetable for Tender Process	Request for Proposals: 30/10/2025 Closing Date for Queries: 10/11/2025 Closing Date for Proposals: 23/11/2025
Submission Instructions	The provider should submit Technical and Financial submissions in alignment with requirements outlines in Section XII of this ToR. The Submissions or any questions should be sent to RT4D at risp@regionaltrade4dev.org . Please also copy: trang.duong@regionaltrade4dev.org by 23 November 2025 .

Scope of Work Summary:

The Regional Trade for Development Facility (RT4D) is seeking a **consultancy firm/consortium partner** (hereafter “the Consultant”) to **manage and deliver both technical and event organisation services** for a project approved under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Implementation Support Program (RISP). Under the scope of services set in this ToR, the Consultant will manage the delivery of the following project:

- Gender and Intersectional Research and Capacity Enhancement and Support Networks for Women MSMEs

The Project Design will inform the implementation of this project.

The delivery will be guided by standard RT4D processes and template and be subject to comments, amendments, and approval from RT4D Team, the Project Proponent and Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

II. Background

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Implementation Support Program (RISP), implemented through the Regional Trade for Development (RT4D) Facility, aims to support ASEAN Member States to realise the full benefits of RCEP through the provision of capacity-building support and access to technical expertise.

The Consultant will manage and deliver all the Project deliverables outlined in Part IV, in close collaboration with RT4D and the Project Proponent. The final Project deliverables will be subject to comments, amendments, and approval from RT4D Team, the Project Proponent and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

III. Objectives, Beneficiaries, Outputs and Outcomes

The table below outlines the key features of the project.

Project Name	Gender and Intersectional Research and Capacity Enhancement and Support Networks for Women MSMEs
Project Objective	The DTI-EMB leverages free trade agreements (FTAs) such as the RCEP to achieve increasing women's participation in international trade and fostering an inclusive trade. Specifically, the Project seeks to implement interventions that reduce gendered barriers to trade participation that women traders experience with a focus on stakeholder collaboration from the private sector, other government agencies, and non-government organizations (NGOs). As a result, the DTI-EMB and its stakeholders will have enhanced capacity to develop successive programs that are comprehensive, gender-responsive, and tailored to the specific situation of women traders."
Beneficiaries	The Project's primary beneficiaries are women-led and women-owned businesses (WLBs/WOBs) who intend to participate in international trade. These WLBs/WOBs are specifically engaged for participation in FTAs, such as the RCEP, to increase gender equality in trade and economics. Through this Project, WLBs/WOBs will be the main informants of gender research on their export-readiness and the barriers and opportunities that they themselves experience and will benefit from tailored workshops that aim to minimize the gendered barriers they experience in participating in information and capacity enhancement workshops. They will also closely inform the Project stakeholders of their challenges and needs in participating in international trade. Other beneficiaries and stakeholders The first group of stakeholders are DTI and other government agencies, such as the DTI's Regional Operations Group - Resource Generation and Management Service (RGMS) and the Bureau of International Trade Relations (BITR) and the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), other national government agencies (NGAs) (such as Department of Agriculture (DA), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), and Small Business Corporation (SBCorp) providing trade assistance programs, and local

	government units (LGUs). The project outputs shall benefit them in their future work to develop interventions that enhance fair and equal trade participation, allowing the achievement of social inclusion and gender equality. Similarly, the project also benefits business support organizations (BSOs), NGOs in the Philippines, who, through the engagement with the projects and project outputs, have better-informed data and materials to develop new or to strengthen their existing initiatives to support women's participation in trade. The Project will also work with regional local government units to increase the participation of targeted WLBS/WOBs. Regional local government units have registered women's associations and assistance programs for women and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that could be pathways for WLBS/WOBs to participate in the Project. Regional local government units can also be engaged in a commitment to provide information on existing international trade assistance programs and assistance to WLBS/WOBs that need resources for capacity enhancement.
Project Activities and Outputs	1. Activity 1: Production of a Philippine WLB/WOB Database and Participatory Gender Research Report: Sex-Disaggregated database and Research Report on WOBs/WLBs in International Trade, offering insights into the typologies of products and services, trade readiness levels, gender-specific barriers and export-readiness gaps, policy/program recommendations for DTI-EMB and relevant stakeholders, and annexes. The report will be written in English. 2. Activity 2: Development of a Women MSME and International Trade Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Action Plan: The first output will be a Trade Stakeholder Map (visual chart and descriptive matrix) of national government agencies, non-government organizations, and WMSME support groups with a directory of trade stakeholders and offered services. The second output will be a Consortium Action Plan with Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with recommendations for DTI-EMB to leverage existing national government agencies, non-government organizations, and WMSME support groups to strengthen trade support systems for WOBs/WLBs. 3. Activity 3: Gender-Responsive RCEP and Trade Information-Sharing and Capacity Enhancement Workshops: The first output is a workshop in Davao or Cebu with approximately 60-80 WLBS/WOBs, containing one day on export readiness. The second output is a workshop in Manila with approximately 60-80 WLBS/WOBs, with one day on export readiness, and one day on business networking.

	4. Development of Knowledge Products to Support WOB/WLB Trade Participation: The first output is a final project documentation or report and evaluation that highlights activity processes and impact. The second output is video documentation of selected topics that could increase WOBs/WLBs' skills and knowledge on FTAs. The third output is gender-responsive guidebooks on how to increase trade participation (targeted to WOBs/WLBs). 5. Activity 5: Development of a Project Completion Report and one Post-Project Recap Video The first output is a project completion report, the second output is a post-project recap video.
Project Outcomes	To achieve both the Project Objectives of leveraging women's participation in international trade, and enhanced institutional capacity, the project intends to develop a more informed policy and assistance for WLBs/WOBs using a participatory and gender lens. Specifically, the project aims for the following: 1. DTI-EMB has a gender analysis on the barriers to international trade experienced by WOBs/WLBs and their export-readiness to enable DTI-EMB to develop more gender responsive, inclusive, and appropriate service provision and support to WLBs/WOBs. 2. WOBs/WLBs are aware of the support provided by DTI-EMB and trade stakeholders and have enhanced capacity in participating in international trade. 3. DTI-EMB have a stakeholder development plan that will support them with their future plans to engage trade stakeholders and establish a WOB/WLB support consortium to develop new and reinforce existing shared goals to increase WLBs'/WOBs' competitiveness in trade and enhance WOBs'/WLBs' participation in international trade. 4. WOBs/WLBs have better linkage with key stakeholders such as business support organizations, government agencies, and international traders.

IV. Activities, outputs and timeline

A. Project activities and outputs

A.1 Activity 1 – Production of a Philippine WLB/WOB Database and Participatory Gender Research Report

Activity description

Comprehensive research on national WLB/WOB trade information and gender analysis will be developed to provide an evidence base on sex-disaggregated MSME data, WLBs'/WOBs' trade information, their level of local and international trade readiness based on international trade standards, and the gendered constraints that they experience in accessing trade opportunities.

The research will provide DTI-EMB with insights on barriers and challenges that can be prioritized by DTI-EMB through the agency's programs and mandates, and WLBs/WOBs' needs in enhancing their international trade readiness.

Using a participatory framework, the activity will use a quantitative approach to identify the typologies of products and services offered, prevalence of gendered barriers disaggregated by type, and the level of WLB/WOB export readiness and a qualitative approach to define the gendered factors of unequal access to trade and trade readiness and the relationship between these factors. The activity will entail a desk review of sex-disaggregated data from the provincial and regional offices of DTI, focus group discussions (FGDs) with WLBs/WOBs, and key informant interviews (KIIs) of various stakeholders spread across Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. To ensure that the activity highlights how differences in income, location, culture, and voice affects results on the gender analysis, coordination and data gathering techniques will be implemented with an intersectional lens, such as the use of triangulation, collection of intersectional data, and participatory techniques.

The research result will be validated with participants in an online validation session among representatives from participant groups per regional or island group using the local language or Tagalog and English.

The sample will be determined using a purposive method, with participants sourced from DTI-EMB and regional local government units:

Stakeholder Group	Proposed Method	Indicative Sample Size	Notes / Rationale
DTI Regional and Provincial Offices	Desk review	17 regions, 82 provinces	Data on MSME to be disaggregated by sex and local/international trade, can be used for purposive sampling for WLB/WOB FGDs
	KIIs	~ 10 KIIs	Regional constraints to trade
DTI-EMB	KIIs	~ 2 KIIs	Trade requirement standards and pathways to certification
WLBs/WOBs (MSMEs)	FGDs	~ 4-6 FGDs × 6-8 participants each	Mix of sectors, regions, export-readiness levels
Business Support Organizations	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	Chambers, associations, export councils
Other Government Agencies (e.g. Philippine Commission on Women, Philippine Statistics Authority, DOST)	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	Cross-sector perspectives
Regional local government units	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	Support mechanisms, development priorities, regional constraints to trade
NGOs supporting women or gender equality in trade	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	Cross-sector perspectives

Activity output

- Output 1.1: Sex-Disaggregated database and Research Report on WOBs/WLBs in International Trade, offering insights into the typologies of products and services, trade readiness levels, gender-specific barriers and export-readiness gaps, policy/program recommendations for DTI-EMB and relevant stakeholders, and annexes. The report will be written in English.

Consultant responsibilities

The Consultant shall be responsible for ensuring the full implementation of the activity description to develop a sex-disaggregated database and Research Report on WOBs/WLBs in International Trade in English. This will include:

- Conduct the requested consultations with relevant stakeholders, including DTI Regional and Provincial Offices, DTI-EMB, women-led and women-owned businesses (WLBs/WOBs) among MSMEs, relevant business support organizations, concerned government agencies, regional and local government units, NGOs supporting women or gender equality in trade, and RT4D.
- Draft and submit the proposed framework of the sex-disaggregated database and the outline of the research report on WOBs/WLBs in international trade to DTI-EMB and RT4D, incorporating feedback and securing approval.
- Submit the draft databased and research report to DTI-EMB and RT4D for review; revise based on feedback (up to five times); then finalise and submit for approval.

A.2 Activity 2: Implementation of the National RCEP Knowledge and Needs Landscape Surve Development of a Women MSME and International Trade Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Action Plan

Activity description

The Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Plan will be focused on the development of a plan of action for gender responsive export support for WOBs/WLBs by examining and assessing gaps in existing gender, equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) and export policies and programs in the Philippines. The activity will be guided by women's empowerment and feminist-intersectional lens to ensure that service and support gaps experienced by WOBs/WLBs who have very low access to trade and export opportunities will be identified and used for the plan of action.

The activity will start with a mapping of trade-related stakeholders (public, private, development partners, and support organizations) relevant to WOBs/WLBs' export participation to describe the support opportunities they present to WOBs/WLBs and how they relate to each other. The stakeholder mapping will show how collaborations can be made to develop comprehensive assistance to WOBs/WLBs, given the gendered barriers they experience and their trade readiness. The activity will also involve consultation with relevant government agencies and private sector partners of WLBs and through FGDs to analyze the impact of government programs and trade agreements on the WLBs'/WOBs' level of participation trade.

The results of the stakeholder mapping will be used to develop an action plan for the formation of a WMSME consortium that will continually support the international trade participation of WOBs/WLBs. In particular, the stakeholders' shared and diverging mandates and goals will inform DTI-EMB on shared commitments that can be signed off by selected stakeholders in supporting WOBs/WLBs, as well as gaps in resources and support that the WOBs/WLBs need to advocate for.

This activity will entail a desk review of trade, MSME, and GEDSI policies in the Philippines; relevant FTAs; and other literature on the Philippines' governance on MSMEs. Beginning on the coordination with stakeholders, the activity will entail the advocacy to and mobilization of stakeholders to participate in the WMSME consortium. Next, a series of consultations (KIIs) with representatives of Business Support Organizations, national government agencies, local government units, other government offices, and NGOs will be conducted to look at respective GEDSI and MSME goals and challenges they experience in assisting WOBs/WLBs.

The sample will be determined using a purposive method, with participants listed below:

Stakeholder Group	Proposed Method	Indicative Sample Size	Notes / Rationale
DTI-EMB	KIIs	~ 2 KIIs	Challenges and opportunities for collaboration, GEDSI implementation, MSME assistance, legal mandates, capacity to participate in a WMSME Consortium
DTI National Office GAD	KII	~ 1 KII	
Regional DTI GAD	KIIs	~ 10 KIIs	
Business Support Organizations	KIIs	~ 10 KIIs	
Other Relevant Government Agencies (e.g., Philippine Commission on Women, Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Science and Technology (DOST))	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	
Regional local government units	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	
NGOs supporting women or gender equality in trade	KIIs	~ 5 KIIs	

Activity outputs

- Output 2.1: Trade Stakeholder Map (visual chart and descriptive matrix) of national government agencies, non-government organizations, and WMSME support groups with a directory of trade stakeholders and offered services
- Output 2.2: Consortium Action Plan with Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with recommendations for DTI-EMB to leverage existing national government agencies, non-government organizations, and WMSME support groups to strengthen trade support systems for WOBs/WLBs.

Consultant responsibilities

The Consultant shall be responsible for ensuring the full implementation of the activity description to develop a Trade Stakeholder Map and a Consortium Action Plan. This will include:

- Facilitate meetings (or a series of meetings) as requested to consult with required stakeholders, including DTI-EMB, DTI National Office GD, regional DTI GAD, relevant business support organisations, concerned government agencies, regional and local government units, NGOs supporting women or gender equality in trade and RT4D.

- Draft and submit the proposed framework/ matrix of the Trade Stakeholder Map and the outline of the Consortium Action Plan to DTI-EMB and RT4D, incorporating feedback and securing approval.
- Submit the draft Trade Stakeholder Map and the Consortium Action Plan to DTI-EMB and RT4D for review; revise based on feedback (up to five times); then finalise and submit for approval.

A.3 Activity 3: Gender-Responsive RCEP and Trade Information-Sharing and Capacity Enhancement Workshops

Activity description

The DTI-EMB will organize two targeted workshops where WOBs/WLBs and trade stakeholders exchange practical information on market opportunities, export requirements, capacity-enhancement on existing trade readiness, and linkage strategies. The activity aims to enhance WOBs/WLBs' knowledge on opportunities for trade and export requirements; skills on linking with potential partners, business and finance, and entrepreneurship; and gender training.

To ensure access among WOBs/WLBs that have locational, income, and identity barriers to training, the activity will be held in two locations. Each targeted workshop in Davao/Cebu and Metro Manila will feature a diverse slate of speakers and carefully selected resources to deliver market, export, capacity, and linkage content, integrated with gender-sensitive facilitation for inclusion of women of all backgrounds.

In addition, the workshop in Metro Manila will include a one-day inclusive networking event in which the Women MSME Consortium formed in Activity 2, trade aggregators, export enablers, and foreign buyers will be guided by the Project implementer among participating WLBs/WOBs to establish contacts with stakeholders and to strengthen stakeholder commitments.

Locations and participation: The two workshops shall be held in two big cities of the Philippines, hubs for MSMEs/WLBs/WOBs, namely:

- Davao or Cebu: one-day workshop with 60-80 WLBs/WOBs, DOST, DTI, Business Support Organizations, Landbank of the Philippines, and other trade support institutions in Visayas and Mindanao that have reached a set export-readiness threshold from the WLB/WOB data from Activity 1.
- Metro Manila: two-day workshop (one-day workshop with 60-80 WLBs/WOBs, DOST, DTI, Business Support Organizations, Landbank of the Philippines, and other trade support institutions in Luzon that have reached a set export-readiness threshold from the WLB/WOB data from Activity 1 and one-day and networking with trade stakeholders mapped in activity 2, Business Support Organizations, trade aggregators, and foreign buyers).

The workshops will seek participants from 17 administrative regions, including a target number of persons with disabilities and rural women. To ensure that WOBs/WLBs gain usable skills and knowledge from the sessions, the selection of WOBs/WLBs who will be participating in the workshops will be done using the Activity 1 WOBs/WLBs roster of those who have passed an export-readiness threshold determined by DTI-EMB.

Sector specialists, such as representatives from DTI, International Trade Centre (ITC) SheTrades, WomenBizPH, and other business mentors will guide participants on requirements and global trends. Initial suggestions are listed below:

Session Theme	Speaker Type	Notable Organizations
Product Development and Value-Adding	Sector specialists	DOST, DTI, Business Support Organizations, Great Women, etc.
Marketing	Sector specialists	DOST, DTI, Business Support Organizations, Great Women, etc.
Market Opportunities	Successful WOBs/WLBs, DTI-EMB staff	ITC, DTI-EMB, other WOBs/WLBs
Export Requirements and RCEP Provisions; FTA Information Portal (FIP) and Origin Management System (OMS) of DTI-EMB	Compliance/legal experts, customs officials	DTI-EMB, Customs
Capacity Building, including Digital tools for WLBs/WOBs	Digitalization/finance resource persons	Landbank of the Philippines, Banks, DTI mentors
Onboarding of WLBs/WOBs to the SheTrades Hub and Linkage Strategies	Sector and advocacy leaders	WomenBizPH, SheTrades, grassroots leaders
Gender Training and Management	Expert facilitator	Gender/trade consultants

Activity outputs

- Output 3.1: One workshop in Davao or Cebu with approximately 60-80 WLBs/WOBs, containing one day on export readiness.
- Output 3.2: One workshop in Manila with approximately 60-80 WLBs/WOBs, with one day on export readiness, and one day on business networking.

Consultant responsibilities

In close consultation with DTI-EMB and RT4D, the Consultant is required to undertake the following responsibilities:

Technical responsibilities

- Develop workshop delivery approach, agenda for the training course, seek feedback and approval, prepare comprehensive training materials.
- Identify and suggest appropriate participants and potential speakers/ panelists, taking into consideration the objectives of the event and in consultation with DTI-EMB and RT4D.
- Secure workshop trainers/ facilitators/ coordinators and facilitate the delivery of the workshops.
- Draft the post-workshop report using RT4D's template; submit to RT4D for review and feedback; revise up to three times as required; and finalise for RT4D's approval.

Event organising responsibilities

- Workshop organisation
 - Under the guidance of RT4D and DTI-EMB, secure a suitable venue and manage all logistical arrangements, including seating, accessibility, catering, and venue point-of-sale materials (POSMs) such as backdrops and standees.

- Handle technical setup, including audio-visual equipment, the internet network system, and provide qualified technical support personnel to assist throughout the event.
- Provide logistical and administrative support services, including overseeing participant registration as requested by RT4D and supplying reception staff to assist attendees, interpretation (if required) and MC services (if required).
- Ensure smooth coordination of schedules, materials distribution, and on-site support during the event.
- Deliver high-quality photos and a recap video featuring the key proceedings of the workshops.
- After the workshops: Compile participant feedback and the check-in list in accordance with RT4D's required standard/ template to produce a comprehensive post-workshop report and finalize all expense reports with required supporting documentation for the RT4D payment process.
- Participant and technical consultant accommodation and travel reimbursement
 - Coordinate with RT4D Facility and DTI-EMB to follow up on participant registrations for the workshop.
 - Facilitate travel arrangements, as needed.
 - Coordinate and provide suitable lodging arrangements.
 - Facilitate the payment of per diems and travel expenses.
- Media-related support
 - Draft and submit the press release in English and Tagalog to DTI-EMB and RT4D for review, feedback and approval.

A.4 Activity 4: Development of Knowledge Products to Support WOB/WLB Trade Participation

Activity description

To ensure the most sustainable impact and wider benefits for businesses beyond the completion of the workshops, a package consisting of one video and one guidebook will be developed to support the workshops.

The guidebook and video will provide practical information on some selective topics in regard to the skills and knowledge to utilize free trade agreements such as RCEP, such as trade and export requirements; skills on linking with potential partners, identifying market opportunities, branding and positioning in the international market, etc.

The key topics will be determined in close consultation with DTI-EMB and relevant stakeholders and will be shared in DTI's public information channels and forums to increase WOB/WLB reach.

Activity output

- Output 4.1: One video documentation of selected topics that could increase WOBs/WLBs' skills and knowledge on FTAs
- Output 4.2: One gender-responsive guidebook on how to increase trade participation (targeted to WOBs/WLBs)

Consultant responsibilities

The Consultant shall be responsible for ensuring the full implementation of the activity description to develop a one video of selected topics and a gender-responsive guidebook. This will include:

- Draft and submit the proposed video concept/ topics and guidebook outline to DTI-EMB and RT4D, incorporating feedback and securing approval.
- Submit the draft video and guidebook to DTI-EMB and RT4D for review; revise based on feedback (up to five times); then finalise and submit for approval.

A.5 Activity 5: Development of a Project Completion Report and one Post-Project Recap Video

Activity description

Upon completion of all project activities, the Consultant shall prepare a Project Completion Report (PCR) in accordance with the RT4D reporting template and requirements, highlighting key activity processes, achievements, and overall project impact. The Consultant will work in close coordination with DTI-EMB and RT4D throughout both the drafting and finalization stages. Preparation of the PCR is expected to commence in June 2026 and conclude by June or July 2026.

In addition, the Consultant shall produce a high-quality Post-Project Recap Video that highlights and summarizes all project activities and showcases the project's outcomes and impact.

Activity output

- Output 5.1: A Project Completion Report
- Output 5.2: One Post-Project Recap Video

Consultant responsibilities

The Consultant shall be responsible for ensuring the full implementation of the activity description to develop a project completion report and one post-project recap video. This will include:

- Draft and submit the proposed video concept to RT4D, incorporating feedback and securing approval.
- Submit the draft video and report to RT4D for review; revise based on feedback (up to five times); then finalise and submit for approval.

B. Tasks and Timeline

Working closely with the Proponent and RT4D, the Consultant is expected to deliver the specified activities/tasks outlined in part IV, in line with the work plan and timeline below.

The support from the selected Consultant, will be undertaken over an intermittent effective period of **8 calendar months with an estimation of 120 professional working days**. The actual number of professional working days will be agreed in negotiation with the selected Consultant. Work will commence immediately after contract signing.

Activity/Task	Responsible Party	Deadline
Activity 1: Production of a Philippine WLB/WOB Database and Participatory Gender Research Report		
• Task 1.1: Develop methodology, data gathering tools, and literature review for research (Inception planning), obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Dec 2025
• Task 1.2: Data gathering activities with research participants and partners	Consultant, DTI-EMB	Dec 2025-Jan 2026
• Task 1.3: Data analysis	Consultant	Jan 2026

Activity/Task	Responsible Party	Deadline
• Task 1.4: First draft report writing, obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Feb 2026
• Task 1.5: Validation meeting with research participants and partners	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Feb 2026
• Task 1.6: Revised drafts (up to 5 revisions) of report writing with inputs from the validation meeting, obtain required feedback and approval	• Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Mar 2026
• Task 1.7: Submission of the Sex-Disaggregated Database and Research Report on WOBs/WLBs in International Trade, obtain required feedback and approval.	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Apr 2026
Activity 2: Development of a Women MSME and International Trade Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Action Plan		
• Task 2.1: Develop methodology, consultation tools, and literature review for planning (Inception planning), obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Dec 2025
• Task 2.2: Consultation activities with stakeholders	Consultant, DTI-EMB	Jan 2026
• Task 2.3: Data analysis	Consultant	Feb 2026
• Task 2.4: Development of the first draft of the Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Plan, obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Mar 2026
• Task 2.5: Validation meeting with stakeholders	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Mar 2026
• Task 2.6: Revised drafts (up to 5 revisions) of the final draft of the Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Plan, obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Apr 2026
• Task 2.7: Submission of the Stakeholder Engagement and Consortium Plan with a stakeholder map, obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Apr 2026
Activity 3: Gender-Responsive RCEP and Trade Information-Sharing and Capacity Enhancement Workshops		
• Task 3.1: Develop methodology, workshop tools, training guides, and materials (workshop planning), obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Feb 2026
• Task 3.2: Coordination with speakers, workshop participants and partners.	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Feb 2026
• Task 3.3: Workshop activities with WLBs/WOBs selected from different regions in Davao/Cebu and Metro Manila	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	Mar 2026
• Task 3.4: Submission of the Workshop Proceedings Report, obtain required feedback and approval	Consultant	May 2026
Activity 4: Development of Knowledge Products to Support WOB/WLB Trade Participation		
• Task 4.1: Develop production plan (Inception planning), obtain required feedback and approval	GEDSI-MSME Consultant & DTI-EMB	Jan 2026

Activity/Task	Responsible Party	Deadline
• Task 4.2: Documentation (acquiring footage, process documentation)	GEDSI-MSME Consultant	Feb-Mar 2026
• Task 4.3: Editing and styling of video, documents, and guidebooks based on feedback and approval	GEDSI-MSME Consultant	Apr 2026
• Task 4.4: Final production and rendering of video, documents, and guidebooks, obtain required feedback and approval	GEDSI-MSME Consultant	May 2026
• Task 4.6: Revised drafts (up to 5 revisions) of the final video, documents, and guidebooks, obtain required feedback and approval	GEDSI-MSME Consultant & DTI-EMB	May 2026
• Task 4.7: Submission of the Final Knowledge Product Package, obtain required feedback and approval	GEDSI-MSME Consultant	June 2026
Activity 5: Development of a Project Completion Report and one Post-Project Recap Video	Consultant, DTI-EMB, RT4D	June – July 2026

V. Monitoring & Evaluation

Suggested Performance Indicators and Target

#	Suggested Indicator	Indicator Type	Target	Activity Number	GEDSI Mainstreaming
1	<u>Research</u> : gender-responsive research report	Output/ Outcome	1 research report	1	Gender-responsive analysis
2	<u>Research</u> : Number of WOB/WLB participants covered in research report	Output	Minimum 36 participants	1	Representative sampling across all 17 regions
3	<u>Strategy paper</u> : Number of strategy paper	Output	1 strategy paper	1	Gender-responsive policy development based on intersectional analysis
4	<u>Strategy paper</u> : Number of stakeholders mapped and analyzed in consortium action plan	Output	Minimum 15 stakeholders	2	Gender-responsive stakeholder analysis with focus on women-led organizations
5	<u>Workshop</u> : Number of WOB/WLB participants in trade workshops, disaggregated by gender and disability	Output	60 each in Davao/Cebu and Metro Manila	3	Culturally sensitive workshops in multiple languages with accessibility features
6	<u>Workshop</u> : Percent of workshop participants demonstrating improved knowledge of RCEP benefits	Output	75% improvement score	3	Inclusive capacity building with accessibility accommodations
7	<u>Workshop</u> : Number of WOB/WLB participants in workshops that have gained awareness of support provided by DTI-EMB and stakeholders	Output/ Outcome	75%	3	Culturally sensitive workshops in multiple languages with accessibility features

#	Suggested Indicator	Indicator Type	Target	Activity Number	GEDSI Mainstreaming
8	Package of material: one package consisting of one guidebook and one video	Output	1 package	4	Gender-responsive and accessible

VI. Gender Equality Disability and Social Inclusion

A. GEDSI Dimension of the Project

The Project will directly respond to the gendered barriers that women entrepreneurs face in participating in international trade, both at the market and policy levels. Project beneficiaries will all be WLBs and WOBs.

The Project will also respond to the unequal distribution of support among the Philippines' administrative regions, which have varying socioeconomic development achievements. The Project will engage women entrepreneurs from the 17 administrative regions to participate in voicing their concerns through the gender research and in capacity enhancement for trade readiness.

The gender research will implement GEDSI standards as it will analyse WLB/WOB barriers with a gendered and intersectional lens. In particular, the research will not only look at the unique position and difficulties experienced by women but will also look into how women subgroups (lesbian women, transwomen, women with disabilities, women of different faiths, rural women, single mothers, etc.) experience barriers. In turn, the findings will feed into the workshop design and stakeholder engagement plan under this Project.

B. GEDSI Dimensions of the Sector

Women entrepreneurs may be more hesitant to apply for funding due to perceived complexity of application processes, documentation requirements, and associated costs (Asian Development Bank, 2023). The Project aims to respond to this challenge by increasing WLBs'/WOBs' participation in trade policy development by being the main informants for policy development and women MSME stakeholder consortium establishment.

Traditional gender roles and expectations continue to constrain many women entrepreneurs. The Project will schedule and organize activities that will fit into women's existing responsibilities and ensure that they are participating in a safe and secure place.

The distribution of development support across the Philippines' administrative regions reflects significant inequalities that affect women entrepreneurs differently. The National Capital Region, Calabarzon, and Central Luzon account for almost half of micro and small businesses, indicating a concentration of business activity and support services in these economically advantaged areas.

This concentration leaves women entrepreneurs in other regions, particularly in Mindanao and the Visayas, with limited access to business development services, export promotion programs, and international trade facilitation.

Rural women entrepreneurs face compounded challenges in accessing international trade capacity enhancement opportunities, since they have limited access to technology infrastructure, including erratic power supply and connectivity issues. Rural women also face geographical isolation from export-oriented industries and trade facilitation services. Infrastructure and service design barriers also prevent women with disabilities from fully participating in entrepreneurship and trade activities.

The Project will ensure that the beneficiary group will represent women from different locations in the country (cover all administrative regions, rural, and urban areas) and include women with disabilities and varying age groups.

Language barriers significantly impact Filipino women entrepreneurs' ability to participate in policy development and workshops that could enhance their capacity for international trade. The research, workshop sessions, and communications will be conducted using languages (aside from Tagalog, including Filipino Sign Language and regional languages) that participating women understand.

C. GEDSI Mainstreaming

A. *How will this project mainstream gender considerations? Describe how the project's content, practitioners, and delivery will reflect RT4D's GEDSI requirements?*

The Project brings a comprehensive gender mainstreaming approach that addresses RT4D's GEDSI requirements across content, practitioners, and delivery:

- Content Mainstreaming
 - **Gender-specific research focus:** Activity 1 will employ participatory gender research to analyse barriers faced by WLBs/WOBs
 - **Intersectional gender analysis:** The research will examine not only women's unique barriers but also considers subgroups including lesbian women, transwomen, women with disabilities, women of different faiths, rural women, and single mothers ([Neimanis, 2021](#))
 - **Gender-responsive workshop design:** Activity 3 will integrate gender-sensitivity in both content and facilitation methods for trade information-sharing and capacity enhancement workshops
 - **Policy integration:** The project will align with existing GEDSI frameworks including the Philippines' Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Plan and ASEAN's gender mainstreaming commitments
- Practitioner Approach
 - **Women-centred beneficiary focus:** Primary beneficiaries will exclusively be WLBs/WOBs across all 17 administrative regions of the Philippines
 - **Stakeholder gender analysis:** Activity 2 will include SWOT analysis and stakeholder mapping with explicit attention to gender-responsive support systems ([Neimanis, 2021](#))
 - **Multi-level engagement:** The Project will involve the PCW as a key stakeholder to ensure institutional gender expertise
- Delivery Mechanisms
 - **Participatory methodology:** The Project will employ gender-sensitive participatory approaches throughout all activities, ensuring women's voices inform policy development and consortium establishment, with a recommended 75% composition of women decision-makers in the consortium ([Gurung and Leduc, 2009](#))
 - **Regional representation:** The Project will ensure geographic inclusivity across all 17 administrative regions to address unequal development distribution
 - **Flexible scheduling:** Activities will be organized to accommodate women's existing responsibilities and care work burdens

- **Multi-language accessibility:** Research, workshops, and communications will be conducted in local languages, including Filipino Sign Language and regional languages

B. Who are the targeted participants of the project's activities? What will be the planned proportion of male and female participants? Will there be participants with disabilities and/or other participants representing under-represented and/or under-privileged groups?

- **100% women-focused:** All primary beneficiaries are WLBs/WOBs who intend to participate in international trade, with a special attention given to those from underrepresented groups, (e.g.: women with disabilities, small and micro WOBs/WLBs, WOBs/WLBs from rural areas, LGBTQ+, age and marital status representation).
- **Regional representation:** Women entrepreneurs from each of the 17 administrative regions in the Philippines
- **Diversity inclusion:** Explicit inclusion of women with disabilities, varying age groups, and women from different locations (rural and urban areas)
- **Secondary participants (stakeholders):** Ensuring that stakeholders fully represent women in stakeholder consultations
 - Government agencies: DTI's Regional Operations Group, Resource Generation and Management Service (RGMS), PCW
 - Business support organizations (BSOs): Regional and local organizations specifically supporting women entrepreneurs
 - Local government units (LGUs): Encourage municipal and provincial representatives to be women with decision-making power
 - NGOs and development partners: Organizations specifically working on women's economic empowerment

C. How does this project benefit disadvantaged groups (e.g. disabled, ethnic minorities, MSMEs)? Are any measures needed to ensure that work in this sector, and specific to the subject of the project, "Does No Harm"?

- **Benefits for Disadvantaged Groups**
 - **Women with Physical, Psychosocial, Medical Disabilities:**
 - Explicit inclusion in beneficiary criteria with accommodations for participation
 - Use of Filipino Sign Language in communications and workshops
 - Accessible venue selection following universal design principles
 - **Rural Women:**
 - Specific attention to geographical barriers and infrastructure limitations
 - Recognition of compounded challenges in accessing international trade opportunities
 - Regional representation ensuring rural voices are included
 - **MSMEs Led by Women:**
 - Targeted capacity building for export readiness
 - Direct linkages with international buyers and trade stakeholders

- Access to gender-responsive trade support services
- **Ethnic Minorities and Marginalized Communities:**
 - Multi-language approach accommodating diverse linguistic backgrounds
 - Cultural sensitivity in research methodology and workshop facilitation
 - Recognition of intersectional barriers faced by different women subgroups
- **"Do No Harm" Measures**
 - **Gender-based Violence Prevention** ([IWDA, 2018](#))
 - Safe space creation for workshops and consultations
 - Assessment of potential backlash risks from increased women's economic participation
 - Partnership with experienced women's rights organizations for support
 - **Economic Displacement Mitigation:**
 - Analysis of who bears costs of project implementation
 - Consideration of time poverty and additional labour burdens on women
 - Flexible scheduling to accommodate women's care work responsibilities
 - **Cultural Sensitivity:**
 - Respect for local norms while promoting women's economic empowerment
 - Community leader engagement balanced with direct women's participation
 - Recognition of varying cultural contexts across the 17 regions
 - **Power Dynamics Management:**
 - Separate women-only sessions when culturally appropriate
 - Female facilitators for sensitive discussions
 - Mechanisms to prevent reinforcement of existing hierarchies

D. How will the proposed project activities ensure the voices and aspirations of all participants, including those representing woman and other marginalised groups, be heard? What mechanism is provided to solicit input from participants or stakeholders that may not proactively contribute? Please elaborate

- **Inclusive Participation Mechanisms**
- **Proactive Outreach** ([Thomas et al., 2020](#))
 - Direct engagement with women's organizations and networks
 - Multiple communication channels using appropriate languages and formats
 - Partnership with local women leaders and community gatekeepers
- **Diverse Research Methods:**
 - Visual and participatory tools (social mapping, VENN diagrams, transect walks) appropriate for women with varying literacy levels
 - Focus group discussions separated by gender when culturally necessary
 - Key informant interviews to capture individual experiences
- **Safe Space Creation:**

- Women-only consultation sessions to address cultural barriers to speaking in mixed-gender settings
 - Female facilitators for sensitive topics
 - Confidentiality protocols to protect participants from potential backlash
- **Accessibility Accommodations:**
 - Multiple format materials (audio, large print, as needed)
 - Sign language interpretation for Deaf participants
 - Venues with physical accessibility features
- **Mechanisms for Non-proactive Contributors**
 - **Structured Consultation Processes:**
 - Anonymous feedback options through surveys and written submissions
 - Multiple touchpoints throughout the project cycle for input
 - **Cultural Mediation:**
 - Use of female community liaisons to reach women who may not participate directly
 - Respect for cultural norms while creating alternative participation pathways
 - Family and community leader engagement to support women's participation
 - **Technology-enabled Participation:**
 - Online and mobile-based consultation options for remote participants
 - Recorded sessions allowing asynchronous participation
 - Digital platforms accessible to women with varying technical skills

E. How will you ensure the organisation and/or implementation of project activities is inclusive (refer to the RT4D Guidelines for Inclusive Events and Communications)?

- **RT4D Guidelines for Inclusive Events and Communications Compliance**
 - **Pre-Event Planning:**
 - Accessibility needs assessment integrated into event planning checklist
 - Accommodation request processes clearly communicated in all materials
 - Venue selection based on universal design principles including physical, sensory, and cognitive accessibility
 - **Event Accessibility Features:**
 - Wheelchair accessible venues with ramps, elevators, and accessible bathrooms
 - Reserved seating for participants with disabilities near presenters/interpreters
 - Assistive listening devices, captioning, and sign language interpretation as requested
 - Sensory limited environments for participants with sensory sensitivities
 - Private rooms for participants needing quiet time during sensory or information overload
 - **Communication Accessibility:**

- Materials available in multiple formats (audio, large print, digital, local languages)
- Clear navigation information and guided maps for venues
- Advance copies of presentations and materials for participants and interpreters
- **Inclusive Facilitation Practices:**
 - Diverse facilitation teams reflecting participant demographics
 - Cultural competency training for all project staff
 - Gender-sensitive facilitation techniques that encourage equal participation
- **Documentation and Follow-up:**
 - Accessible formats for all project outputs and reports
 - Multiple channels for ongoing feedback and engagement
 - Transparent reporting on GEDSI outcomes and impacts
- **Budget and Resource Allocation**
 - **Dedicated GEDSI Resources:**
 - Specific budget allocation for accessibility accommodations
 - Gender expertise consultation fees included in project budget
 - Transportation and childcare support for participants as needed
 - **Capacity Building Investment:**
 - GEDSI training for all project staff and implementing partners
 - Gender-sensitive facilitation skills development
 - Partnership with specialised women's rights and disability organizations

VII. Communications, Media, and Business Engagement

1. Communications and media

Clarity of Message

The DTI-EMB initiative demonstrates strong clarity in communicating its objectives to all stakeholders. The project clearly articulates its purpose through well-defined activities and outcomes (see Section 2: Project Overview).

The project will employ multi-linguistic and culturally sensitive communication approaches, conducting research, workshops, and communications in local languages including Filipino Sign Language and regional languages. This ensures stakeholders across all 17 administrative regions understand the project's direction and purpose.

Alignment with RCEP Communication Objectives

The Project objectives will directly support Parties in communicating RCEP benefits through several mechanisms that align with established best practices for trade agreement promotion. Activity 3 (Gender-Responsive RCEP and Trade Information-Sharing Workshops) will specifically focus on sharing practical information about market opportunities, export requirements, and RCEP participation guidelines.

Using a stakeholder approach, the Project will address the critical challenge identified by trade experts: low RCEP utilization rates due to insufficient awareness. By targeting women entrepreneurs, the project could create multiplier effects for RCEP awareness across business networks.

Public Dissemination Outputs

Where appropriate, project outputs will be shared with the public to support the wider community and RCEP Parties. These inputs include the video and guidebooks developed under Activity #4, which shall be shared across public channels of DTI, Business Support Organizations, social media, etc.

Follow-Up and Sustained Engagement

The project demonstrates planning for post-implementation sustainability:

- **Institutional Framework for Continuity:**
 - Women MSME Stakeholder Consortium establishment provides ongoing platform for RCEP promotion
 - Formal partnership agreements with BSOs, LGUs, and government agencies ensure continued support
 - Integration with existing DTI programs like SheTrades Philippines Hub for sustained engagement
- **Capacity Building Replicability:**
 - Replicable methodology **allows for program expansion to additional regions**
 - Gender-responsive workshop design **can be adapted for other trade agreements**
 - Stakeholder directory and engagement protocols provide blueprint for future initiatives

External Communications and Media Adaptation

The project outputs can be readily adapted for media and public communications. The Project can present Inclusive Trade Growth, Economic Empowerment, and Regional Leadership as key communication messages.

2. Business Engagement

The Project includes comprehensive mechanisms for engaging businesses and building relationships with private sector partners through its four core activities.

Marketing and Branding Opportunities

The project could create significant opportunities for joint marketing efforts to enhance visibility and reputation. Activity 3 will establish a public launch event for the Women MSME Stakeholder Consortium, featuring the DTI Undersecretary and PCW representatives. This creates a prestigious platform for business partners to showcase their commitment to gender-inclusive trade.

The project will also leverage the existing SheTrades Philippines Hub as a comprehensive resource centre. This provides business partners with an established platform for joint branding and marketing activities targeting women entrepreneurs globally.

The project will also produce multiple public dissemination outputs including workshop proceedings reports, research publications, and stakeholder directories. These materials enhance both the project's credibility and that of participating business partners through documented collaboration and expertise sharing.

Collaborative Partnerships

The Project will explicitly facilitate ongoing collaborative partnerships. A formal consortium structure from Activity 3 will establish the Women MSME Stakeholder Consortium as a permanent partnership framework, creating sustained collaboration beyond the project timeline.

Official partnership documentation will be produced in Activity 2 that formalize relationships and commitments among stakeholders, providing a foundation for continued cooperation in supporting women entrepreneurs.

The project builds on established DTI initiatives including the Negosyo Center Programme and incubator programs, creating opportunities for business partners to engage with proven support mechanisms. In addition, the Project aims to develop international trade and support linkages from the demand market and trade stakeholders to WOBs/WLBs, creating initial steps in direct business-to-business partnership opportunities.

Leveraging Business Expertise

The project will leverage private sector knowledge and expertise. A Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis (Activity 2) will include comprehensive stakeholder mapping and SWOT analysis that draws on BSO industry knowledge and private sector market intelligence. This ensures business expertise informs project strategy and implementation.

Knowledge Transfer

The Project will facilitate comprehensive knowledge exchange. Information-Sharing Workshops (Activity 3) will be specifically designed that WOBs/WLBs and trade stakeholders exchange practical information. This creates structured opportunities for businesses to share market intelligence and receive insights from women entrepreneurs.

Workshop proceedings reports will also document best practices in GEDSI and MSME support, creating a knowledge repository accessible to all participants. Activity 1 will produce a research report with "policy/program recommendations for DTI-EMB and relevant stakeholders," ensuring research findings inform business partner strategies and government policy.

The Project also includes methodology for replication in research annexes, enabling business partners to adapt successful approaches in other contexts or regions.

Capacity Building

The project provides structured training and learning opportunities. Activity 3 delivers "gender-responsive trade information-sharing and capacity enhancement workshops" that build both women entrepreneurs' and stakeholders' understanding of inclusive trade practices.

Strategic Alliances

The project outcomes create strong potential for strategic alliance formation. The Women MSME Stakeholder Consortium will represent a formal strategic alliance bringing together government agencies (DTI, PCW), BSOs, LGUs, and private sector partners with shared objectives for supporting women entrepreneurs.

The project will create a comprehensive support program for WOBs/WLBs through coordinated stakeholder engagement, establishing a network that can pursue mutual objectives beyond the project timeline. Further, sustained commitment framework can be produced from Activity 3 as it should result in documented agreements by DTI-EMB, BSOs, and other stakeholders to assist WLBs/WOBs in fulfilling agreements with international buyers, creating ongoing mutual obligations and shared success metrics.

VIII. Reporting and Program Management

Deliverables are subject to feedback and amendments from RT4D team, the Project Proponent, and DFAT. The Consultant will engage regularly with these stakeholders in the drafting process, including seeking comments and adjustments and revising deliverables as directed.

RT4D will support with standard procedures required to receive feedback and endorsement from key stakeholders. A full list of stakeholders the Consultant will engage with is outlined below:

RT4D:

- The RT4D Managers are the main point of contact for the Consultant and will project manage the Assignment throughout the project lifespan. The RT4D Managers and relevant RT4D team members will provide oversight and quality assurance through project implementation and ensure relevant approvals are obtained from RT4D Team and the Project Proponent.
- Members of the RT4D team, including Mai Nguyen and Trang Duong will provide inputs to relevant activity outputs.

Project Proponent:

- The Department of Trade and Industry - Export Marketing Bureau (DTI-EMB) is the Project Proponent. The Project Proponent will closely monitor, provide inputs and approve all listed project deliverables. The Consultant will be expected to consult and closely liaise with the project proponents' stakeholders throughout project implementation.

Stakeholder and Contact Points	Responsibilities
Department of Trade and Industry - Export Marketing Bureau (DTI-EMB)	• Coordination with Consultant and RT4D on project design and project implementation • Oversight of project implementation
RT4D Managers Contact person: Ms. Mai Nguyen, Regional Manager Ms. Trang Duong, Program Officer	• Coordinating between the Proponents and the Subject Matter Expert, or Technical Consultant • Overseeing and quality assurance of Project implementation, includes budget monitoring and reporting.
External consultants (Subject Matter Experts, and Consultant).	• Conducting and facilitating delivery of all activities for this project work as stated in this project design and relevant TORs to ensure project deliverables are successfully completed. • Provide logistics and event management support, to relevant events for this project.

IX. Risk Management

The Consultant will support RT4D in the management and mitigation of activity risks as outlined in the table below.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Plan
Low awareness and participation of WLBs/WOBs	Medium	High	Multi-channel outreach, participatory and gender-sensitive methodologies, communications in local languages, use of

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Plan
due to limited outreach or complex procedures			women's networks, and accessibility accommodations
Insufficient stakeholder engagement and lack of shared goals among government / private sector	Medium	High	Early stakeholder mapping, SWOT analysis, formal consultation and partnership agreements, consortium framework, validation meetings, and inclusion of key partners like PCW, LGUs, BSOs
Persistence of gender, geographic, or disability barriers in access to project benefits	Medium	High	Regional representation requirements, explicit inclusion of women with disabilities, universal design venues, sign language and accessible materials, flexible scheduling, targeted rural outreach, intersectional analysis
Inadequate institutional capacity of stakeholders to sustain project activities	Medium	Medium	Capacity building workshops, replicable methodologies, integration with existing DTI programs, ongoing engagement within the Women MSME Consortium, clear definition of consortium responsibilities and sustainability planning
Cultural resistance or backlash from increased women's participation in trade	Low to Medium	Medium to High	Safe space creation, cultural sensitivity protocols, female facilitators, partnership with women's rights groups, separate women-only sessions where needed, confidentiality protocols, community leader engagement
Data collection or privacy risk (e.g. unsafe sharing, backlash)	Low	Medium	Anonymous feedback channels, confidentiality procedures, proactive outreach to marginalized groups, data protection protocols, gender-sensitive facilitation in research activities
PSEAH or child protection risk during workshops, study visits, or fieldwork	Low to Medium	High	Adherence to DFAT/Tetra Tech safeguarding policies, multi-facilitator staffing, gender balance, anonymous reporting, safeguarding focal points, pre-deployment training, vetting of all staff and consultants
Logistical/technical barriers for remote/rural participants (power, connectivity, travel)	Medium	Medium	Flexible delivery modes (virtual/hybrid), transport/childcare support, accessibility assessment, materials in local languages and formats, contingency planning for technology or venue disruptions
Duplication or overlap with existing programs	Low	Medium	Consortium coordination, stakeholder mapping, complementarity analysis with other DTI/ASEAN programs, regular communication and joint planning sessions

X. Privacy and Confidentiality

Regional Trade for Development Facility (RT4D) is committed to ensuring and maintaining the security and confidentiality of all documents and information produced by its development programs

and by its partners and clients. This includes ensuring the security and confidentiality of all information and documents produced by the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) and by AANZFTA/ RCEP FJC and their Subsidiary Bodies that are shared with RT4D's AANZFTA Implementation Support Program (AISP) and RCEP Implementation Support Program (RISP). RT4D security and confidentiality measures and protocols are underpinned by Tetra Tech (the managing contractor) systems.

All files/outputs associated with the delivery of outputs set in this TOR will be stored on a secure file-sharing platform (Egnyte). Access to Egnyte is controlled and will only be granted to non-RT4D users on a needs basis and as agreed with ASEC and or Subsidiary Bodies.

All RT4D sub-contractors and consultants will sign a Code of Conduct, a Deed of Confidentiality, and a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration before starting their tenure/assignment. These documents specify acceptable behaviours on confidentiality, handling of sensitive information, and information security. Training on these topics is also provided on regular basis to ensure compliance.

All personnel engaged by RT4D for the delivery of outputs set in this Scope of Services are expected to sign these documents before the implementation of this activity.

XI. Child Protection¹, PSEAH² (Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment) and other Policy Considerations

The project is fully committed to safeguarding all participants and strictly upholding **DFAT and Tetra Tech's policies on Child Protection, Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)**. Safeguarding principles will be embedded in every stage of implementation, ensuring safe, respectful, and inclusive engagement with all beneficiaries, particularly women and persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Safeguarding Orientation and Awareness

All project team members and contracted personnel will undergo training on DFAT's Child Protection and PSEAH policies and commit to the highest ethical standards of behaviour.

Addressing Risks and Power Imbalances

The project recognises that activities involving rural entrepreneurs, women, and PWDs across multiple provinces may create vulnerabilities and power imbalances. To mitigate these risks:

- All project staff, consultants, and trainers will be **vetted and reference-checked** before engagement.
- Mixed-gender facilitation teams will be prioritised to create supportive environments.
- Scheduling will take into account **caregiving responsibilities**, while venues will be chosen for **accessibility, safety, and inclusiveness**, with appropriate accommodations provided if overnight stays are required.

Implementation Measures

¹ [Child Protection Policy | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)

² [Protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)

- **Clear reporting mechanisms** will be established in line with RT4D procedures, including confidential channels and trained provincial focal points to receive and escalate concerns appropriately.
- All project personnel will be oriented on **recognising and responding** to potential safeguarding issues, with reporting pathways clearly communicated.
- Mobile consultation clinics and e-commerce support services will operate with explicit protocols for respectful, safe engagement in one-on-one or small group settings.

Compliance and Accountability

- Safeguarding requirements will be **explicitly stated in Terms of Reference** for consultants, trainers, and event organisers.
- All activities will comply with **international safeguarding standards** and DFAT/Tetra Tech policies.
- Regular monitoring will ensure that child protection and PSEAH measures are not only in place but actively practiced throughout implementation.

XII. Criteria for Issuing Tasking Note

A. Technical Soundness Considerations

To ensure the above can be effectively managed and completed in alignment with this TOR, it is recommended that interested organisations have:

- Skilled and experienced expert/team of Experts with the technical expertise, bandwidth, and capabilities to support RT4D to deliver all outputs in alignment with the remit and timelines set within this Scope of Services.
- Demonstrable technical and subject matter expertise in gender and intersectional research, particularly in the context of women's economic empowerment, MSME development, and inclusive trade, with a strong understanding of capacity building and network support for women entrepreneurs.
- Demonstrable technical and subject-matter expertise in event organisation, with a proven track record in managing large-scale national or regional events.
- Demonstrated experience in engaging with key stakeholders, including DTI-EMB, DTI Regional and Provincial Offices, WLBs/WOBs (MSMEs), business support organizations such as chambers of commerce, industry associations, and export councils, as well as the Philippine Commission on Women, Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), NGOs supporting women and gender equality in trade, and relevant regional and local government units in the Philippines.
- Demonstrable experience developing program and project plans and designs that consider and incorporate the needs, priorities and concerns of diverse government stakeholders (i.e. stakeholders representing countries with different priorities and capacity constraints and agencies with different mandates and priorities).
- Demonstrable experience designing, facilitating and delivering online and on-site consultations and workshops that effectively engage a diverse government audience.
- Experience working and engaging with ASEC and/or ASEAN Member States (AMS) is a distinct advantage.

- Proven excellent report drafting experience, with ability to incorporate comprehensive feedback at multiple stages.
- Experience working with Australian and New Zealand officials is a distinct advantage. The organisation must be comfortable with ASEAN stakeholders and following ways of working (or comparable governance arrangements).
- Strong understanding of and ability to operationalise the Monitoring & Evaluation, GEDSI, Communications and Program Management considerations outlined in the above sections of this ToR.

B. Value for Money Considerations

Proposals to deliver this project should adhere to DFAT's Value for Money Principles, outlined below.

Achieving value for money is critical for achieving DFAT's strategic objectives. It is a requirement under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act (2013) and the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. Building on these requirements, DFAT has developed eight Value for Money Principles to guide decision-making and maximise the impact of its investments. DFAT's [website](#) includes a detailed description of VfM indicators (outlined in the table below). We expect all our delivery partners to give effect to these principles and value for money performance is measured in DFAT's Aid Performance Framework.

Economy	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Ethics
1. Cost consciousness 2. Encouraging competition	3. Evidence based decision making 4. Proportionality	5. Performance and Risk Management 6. Results Focus 7. Experimentation and innovation	8. Accountability and transparency

Bidders should note that RT4D refers to DFAT's [Aid Adviser Remuneration Framework](#) to estimate the cost of contracting international advisers for the delivery of projects and activities.

XIII. Annexes

Annex A - Response from Tenderers and Evaluation Criteria

Interested bidders should submit a Technical and Financial proposals that respond to the selection criteria outlined in the table below. As part of their Technical Proposal submission, organisational bidders should also provide their information as outlined in Annex B.

If a bidder finds any discrepancy, error or omission in the ToR or wishes to make any enquiry concerning the ToR, the bidder is to notify risp@regionaltrade4dev.org in writing by the last queries date indicated in the ToR summary. All answers to any such notices or questions will be provided to all registered tenderers in the form of addenda.

Response from Tenderers and Evaluation Criteria

Component	Score
Part A – Response to Technical Component	
A.1 Approach and Methodology - Outline approach to completing the stated scope of services. The approach should include: • A brief discussion indicating your understanding of project requirements. • A description of the methodological approach to achieving the project objectives and completing project deliverables. This may include an analysis of key issues, analytical strategies that will underlie the approach, specific tools or techniques that will be employed, and practical discussion of methodological limitations.	20
A.2 Project Plan and Risk Management – Please provide the following: • A project plan that specifies outputs, tasks and timelines in line with section IV of the ToR. • Identify your approach to mitigating the project risks outlined in Section IX of this ToR. • Indicate how the project will be monitored and reported in line with section VIII of this ToR to ensure it is delivered in terms of quality, timeliness and cost. • Indicate the level of support that will be required from RT4D to complete the project.	20
A.3 Organizational Capabilities and Experience – Please specify the following: • Outline general organisational capability that is likely to affect performance of project in line with ToR requirements (e.g. size of the organisation, in-house expertise, strength of project management support, networks, etc.). • Describe past experience in undertaking similar work and provide brief summaries of relevant projects undertaken. • Explain whether any work would be subcontracted, to whom, how much percentage of the work, the rationale for such, and the roles of the proposed sub-contractors.	20

A.4 Project Team and Resourcing – Describe approach to staffing including details of all proposed experts and their role in the delivery of the required services. This should include: • Key members of the project team, including their CVs, and demonstrate their skills and expertise essential to the delivery of this project. • Roles, responsibilities, and level of participation of the project team members. • An uncosted resource plan proposing the number of person days you expect each team member to undertake in delivering this project.	20
TOTAL – Technical Proposal	80
Part B – Response to Financial Component	
Complete a Financial Proposal for the delivery of the scope of services in alignment with RT4D Value for Money Principles. The Financial Proposal should specify all direct and indirect costs for undertaking the project, including: • Professional services fees for completing all deliverables in accordance with the uncosted resource plan. • Indirect costs for undertaking the project, including costs for experts and participants such as reimbursable expenses for travel costs, daily subsistence allowance for workshops, meetings, and all other agreed activities. • Costs related to event organisation, including venue arrangements, materials, communication, logistical expenses, and other items necessary to cover all agreed activities. • Management and/or operational fees (if any), which include all costs incurred by the person/entity/company for internal coordination, communication, travels and any other associated project management cost; • Applicable taxes such as VAT, GST, PPN.	20
TOTAL – Financial Proposal	20
GRAND TOTAL – Evaluation Criteria	100

Annex B - Bidder Information

(This section is only applicable for organisations)

Consultant's general information – to be submitted together in the Technical Proposal

Name of Assignment	
Tenderer's Organisation or Person	
Address	
Contact Person and Title/Position	

E-Mail	
Telephone / Mobile Phone	
Business Name Registration (if applicable)	
Tax Registration Number (if applicable)	
Indicative number of years involved in similar business/work	
Date	