

REGIONAL TRADE FOR DEVELOPMENT (RT4D)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Policy Review of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter to enhance MSME engagement

1. Summary

Title	Consultant to implement the project “Policy Review of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter to enhance MSME engagement”
Start Date	November 2026
Completion Date	July 2027
Reports to:	RT4D Manager: <i>Mai Nguyen, RT4D Regional Manager</i>
Interacts With	RT4D: Mai Nguyen, RT4D Regional Manager, Trang Duong, RT4D Program Officer Project Proponent: <i>Viet Nam E-commerce Agency (iDEA)</i>
Requires Approval from:	RT4D Facility Project Proponent: <i>Viet Nam E-commerce Agency (iDEA)</i>
Timetable for Tender Process	Request for Proposals: <i>12 October 2026</i> Closing Date for Queries: <i>27 October 2026</i> Closing Date for Proposals: <i>5 November 2026</i>
Submission Instructions	The provider should submit Technical and Financial submissions in alignment with requirements outlines in the Request for Proposal (RFP). The Submissions or any questions should be sent to the RT4D Manager at procurement@regionaltrade4dev.org by 5 November 2026 . Please also copy: trang.duong@regionaltrade4dev.org

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:

- Policy Review of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter to enhance MSME Engagement

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).

2. Background

Rapid growth in digital trade and e-commerce across the RCEP region has created new opportunities for MSMEs to access regional markets. However, since the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter was negotiated, the digital economy and regulatory landscape have evolved significantly, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Many RCEP Parties have introduced new laws, regulations and policy initiatives relating to e-commerce, digital trade, data governance and consumer protection, creating an increasingly diverse implementation landscape. At the same time, the 2027 General Review of the RCEP Agreement provides an important opportunity for Parties to assess implementation progress and identify areas for improvement.

Viet Nam therefore requires an up-to-date understanding of the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter across the region, including emerging policy developments, implementation gaps and practical lessons that can inform future policy development and strengthen support for MSMEs. This project responds to these needs through a comparative policy review, targeted stakeholder consultation and policy dialogue, providing evidence to support more effective implementation of RCEP's e-commerce commitments and greater participation of MSMEs in regional digital trade.

2.1 Project Objectives

The project aims to strengthen the capacity of government agencies and other relevant stakeholders to support the effective implementation of RCEP's E-Commerce Chapter, thereby contributing to a more enabling policy environment for MSMEs to participate in e-commerce and digital trade across the RCEP region. To achieve this objective, the project will:

- **Objective 1:** Strengthen government officials and relevant stakeholders' understanding of, and capabilities to implement RCEP's E-Commerce Chapter, including through policy review, comparative analysis, stakeholder consultation and identification of implementation developments across RCEP Parties, and emerging policy issues.
- **Objective 2:** Support the use of this evidence by relevant ministries and agencies in policy development and implementation planning, and in Viet Nam's preparation for the 2027 RCEP General Review, through the identification of implementation progress, regulatory gaps, emerging policy trends and practical good practices across RCEP Parties.

These objectives will be achieved through a combination of comparative policy research, targeted stakeholder consultations, validation through a regional workshop, and dissemination of the final Policy Review Report and associated knowledge products.

2.2 Intended Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of the project are government officials and policy makers from Viet Nam and other RCEP Parties whose responsibilities relate to e-commerce, digital economy, trade policy and MSME development. In particular, the project will support officials and government agencies responsible for reviewing, developing and implementing policies related to the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter.

The project's secondary beneficiaries include business associations, e-commerce associations, research institutions, universities, development partners and private sector representatives participating in stakeholder consultations and the regional workshop. Through these activities, they will gain a better understanding of the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter,

emerging policy developments across the RCEP region and the implications for businesses engaged in digital trade.

In the longer term, MSMEs, including women-owned enterprises and enterprises in ASEAN Least Developed Countries (LDCs), are expected to benefit indirectly from a more effective policy and regulatory environment that supports greater participation in e-commerce and regional digital trade. By strengthening institutional capacity and informing future policy development, the project aims to contribute to a more enabling environment for businesses to utilise the opportunities provided under the RCEP Agreement.

2.3 Project Outcomes

- **Outcome 1:** By the end of the project, government officials and relevant stakeholders should demonstrate an improved understanding of the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter, emerging policy developments across RCEP Parties, implementation gaps, and the implications for MSMEs to participate in regional digital trade. This contributes to the RT4D IO4¹ of strengthening the knowledge and skills of FTA Parties and their institutions to implement priority areas under FTAs.
- **Outcome 2:** By the end of the project, relevant government agencies demonstrate strengthened institutional capacity to review, interpret and implement RCEP e-commerce commitments by applying the project's evidence, comparative analysis and policy recommendations in their policy development and implementation processes. This contributes to the RT4D outcome of improving institutional capacity to implement priority FTA commitments.
- **Outcome 3:** By the end of the project, relevant government agencies use evidence, analysis and recommendations generated by the project to inform regulatory improvement, policy development, implementation planning, and Viet Nam's preparation for the 2027 RCEP General Review. This contributes to IO1² by providing evidence and practical policy options that government agencies can use to strengthen RCEP implementation and support Viet Nam's participation in RCEP processes.

2.4 Complementarity with Other Efforts

This project complements Viet Nam's ongoing efforts to strengthen its legal, institutional and policy framework for e-commerce and the digital economy. Since 2023, the Government has accelerated regulatory reforms, culminating in the adoption of the Law on E-Commerce (Law No. 122/2025/QH15), effective from 1 July 2026, supported by Decision No. 776/QĐ-TTg (2026) and the National E-commerce Development Master Plan 2026–2030 (Decision No. 1568/QĐ-BCT, 3 June 2025). It also complements the USAID Vietnam Digital Trade project, which supports MOIT in strengthening digital trade policies, regulatory transparency, SME participation in digital trade and the development of the DECOBIZ platform. Rather than duplicating these initiatives, the project will provide a comparative assessment of RCEP e-commerce implementation, regional good

¹ IO4: FTA Parties and their institutions, particularly LDCs, have improved knowledge and skills to increasingly implement priority areas within FTAs.

² IO1: FTA workstreams supported by RT4D effectively assist economic cooperation and integration as prioritised by FTA Parties, particularly LDCs.

practices and practical recommendations to strengthen Viet Nam's implementation of RCEP commitments.

At the regional level, the project complements ASEAN and RCEP initiatives to advance digital economic integration, including negotiations on the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and preparations for the 2027 General Review of RCEP. It also aligns with iDEA's bilateral cooperation to promote cross-border e-commerce, including initiatives with international partners to expand market access for Vietnamese enterprises. The project will generate comparative evidence on the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter and emerging regulatory practices across RCEP Parties to support Viet Nam's participation in regional policy discussions and future regulatory development.

The project further complements RT4D's objective of strengthening FTA implementation through evidence-based policy development and institutional capacity building. By engaging government agencies, business associations, research institutions, universities and the private sector, it will strengthen the relevance of the Policy Review Report and support Viet Nam's implementation of RCEP e-commerce commitments and preparation for the 2027 General Review.

3. Scope of Services

The RT4D Facility is seeking a **consultancy firm/ consortium partner** (the Consultant) to support the delivery of project activities between November 2026 and July 2027. The selected Consultant will be responsible for the scope of services outlined in the sections below.

3.1 Project Activities

A.1 Activity 1 – Comparative policy review

Activity description

This activity will undertake a comparative review of the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter to provide an evidence base for strengthening Viet Nam's implementation of its commitments and supporting policy improvement and the 2027 RCEP General Review. The review will adopt a mixed-method approach, combining desk research, comparative policy analysis and targeted stakeholder consultations to ensure practical and evidence-based recommendations.

The review will assess Viet Nam's legal and regulatory framework against the commitments under the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter and analyse key policy developments during 2021–2026. It will identify areas of alignment, implementation gaps and emerging policy issues. Where evidence is available, the review will also consider whether the effective application of RCEP e-commerce commitments may create different opportunities or challenges for MSMEs, women-led enterprises, and other disadvantaged groups, including in areas such as compliance with data privacy and protection and cybersecurity requirements.

The study will also examine the e-commerce landscape across RCEP Parties, identify regulatory trends and good practices, and, where data permit, benchmark Viet Nam against selected member economies. Two illustrative case studies – one from an ASEAN Member State and one from a non-ASEAN RCEP Party–will provide a broader range of regional experience and illustrate how different regulatory and institutional contexts have approached implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter. The non-ASEAN case study will be selected based on the relevance and transferability of its experience, availability of reliable evidence, and feasibility of obtaining sufficient information, while taking account of any relevant political or regulatory sensitivities. If data is available and

sufficient, the project may include one case study that will highlight an approach or regulatory practice that supports inclusive participation in e-commerce.

The Policy Review Report will be developed through desk research and targeted consultations with relevant ministries, government agencies, business associations and the private sector. As the project proponent, the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) will facilitate coordination with participating agencies. Consultations with organisations such as the Viet Nam E-commerce Association and the Vietnam Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (VINASME) as well as relevant organisations representing women entrepreneurs, such as the Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council (VWEC) will ensure that the analysis reflects both policy priorities and business perspectives including underrepresented groups.

The report will conclude with evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the implementation of RCEP e-commerce commitments, inform future policy and regulatory reforms, and support Viet Nam's preparation for the 2027 RCEP General Review. Where supported by the review evidence and stakeholder consultations, the recommendations will also identify measures to better address the needs and barriers faced by women, people with disability, MSMEs and other relevant groups in participating in digital trade. The draft report will be validated through MOIT's consultation process before being finalised as a practical reference for policymakers and future programme development.

Activity outputs

- Output 1.1: Stakeholder consultation report
- Output 1.2: Policy review report

Consultant responsibilities

The Consultant shall be responsible for the full implementation of the activity description and delivery of the Comparative Policy Review Report. This will include:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of Viet Nam's implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter through a mixed-method approach, combining desk research, comparative analysis, and targeted stakeholder consultations. The review should include relevant legal and regulatory developments during 2021–2026, implementation gaps, emerging issues, and benchmarking Viet Nam against selected RCEP Parties where data permit.
- Develop two illustrative case studies, one from an ASEAN Member State and one from a non-ASEAN RCEP Party, highlighting relevant regulatory approaches and good practices, including GEDSI considerations where supported by available evidence.
- Develop the stakeholder mapping, consultation approach and consultation questions/tools, and submit them to iDEA and RT4D for review prior to consultations.
- Conduct targeted consultations with relevant government agencies, business associations, private sector representatives and organisations representing MSMEs, women entrepreneurs and other relevant groups, in close coordination with iDEA as the Project Proponent.
- Analyse and synthesise findings from the research and consultations and prepare Output 1.1: Stakeholder Consultation Report for review by iDEA and RT4D, revise based on feedback, finalise and submit for approval.

- Develop Output 1.2: Policy Review Report, including evidence-based recommendations to strengthen RCEP e-commerce implementation, inform policy and regulatory reforms, and support Viet Nam's preparation for the 2027 RCEP General Review. Where supported by evidence and consultations, incorporate recommendations addressing barriers and opportunities for MSMEs, women, people with disability and other disadvantaged groups. Submit the draft report to iDEA and RT4D for review and progressively revise it, including preparing a near-final version for validation at the Regional Workshop under Activity 2. Following the workshop, synthesise and incorporate relevant stakeholder feedback, and finalise the report for approval.

A.2 Activity 2 – Policy validation and regional capacity building workshop

Activity description

The project will organise a two-day policy validation and capacity building workshop to present the findings of the Policy Review Report, enhance understanding of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter, and discuss the identified implementation gaps, challenges and recommendations with government officials and other relevant stakeholders.

The workshop will provide a platform for government agencies and stakeholders to validate the findings of the Policy Review Report, exchange implementation experiences and align on priority areas for strengthening Viet Nam's implementation of RCEP's E-Commerce commitments. The discussions and feedback will also contribute to refining the final recommendations and strengthening institutional capacity to support future policy and regulatory improvements.

The workshop will follow the following approach:

- **Location** – A two-day workshop will be held in Da Nang, Central Viet Nam, providing convenient access for participants from across the North, Central and South of Viet Nam as well as invited representatives from relevant RCEP member countries. As Vietnam's leading city for ICT readiness and digital transformation—having ranked first nationally in the Vietnam ICT Index for 14 consecutive years—Da Nang serves as one of the biggest hubs for ICT and for discussions on digital trade and e-commerce policy.
- **Participants** – Approximately 40–50 participants, including 3 representatives from relevant ministries and government agencies of each selected RCEP country; as well as local provincial authorities, business associations, research institutions, and the private sector.
- **Content** – The workshop agenda and materials will be developed in close consultation with RT4D and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT). The programme will combine presentations of the Policy Review Report, policy dialogue, comparative case studies and interactive group discussions to validate findings, exchange practical experiences and identify priority actions for strengthening the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter.

Activity outputs

- Output 2.1: One regional capacity-building workshop
- Output 2.2: One workshop report

Consultant responsibilities

In close consultation with iDEA and RT4D, the Consultant shall be responsible for the full implementation of Activity 2 and delivery of the required outputs.

Technical responsibilities

- Develop the workshop delivery approach, two-day agenda and workshop materials, including presentations of the Policy Review Report, comparative case studies, policy dialogue and interactive group discussions, and submit them to iDEA and RT4D for review and approval.
- Identify and propose appropriate participants, speakers, moderators and facilitators, including representatives from relevant RCEP Parties, government agencies, local authorities, business associations, research institutions and the private sector, in consultation with iDEA and RT4D.
- Secure and coordinate the participation of approved speakers, moderators and facilitators, including two international expert speakers for technical sessions, and manage all necessary briefings and preparation arrangements.
- Manage the end-to-end delivery of the workshop, ensuring effective coordination and smooth, professional implementation of all sessions.
- Capture and synthesise stakeholder feedback from the workshop to inform refinement of the Policy Review Report and its recommendations.
- Prepare Output 2.2: Workshop Report using the RT4D template; submit to RT4D for review; revise based on feedback; and finalise and submit for approval.

Event organising responsibilities

- Workshop organisation and logistics
 - In consultation with RT4D and iDEA, identify and secure a suitable venue and manage all venue-related arrangements, including, but not limited to, room setup and seating arrangements, accessibility requirements, catering, and the design, production and installation of event branding and visibility materials, such as backdrops, e-standees and branded stationery.
 - Provide and manage all technical infrastructure required for the workshop, including LED screen(s), high-quality audio-visual and sound systems, interpretation equipment, reliable high-speed internet connectivity, and hybrid meeting facilities where required. Ensure all equipment is tested and fully operational prior to the event and provide qualified technical personnel throughout the workshop.
 - Manage participant and event support services, including registration and check-in in accordance with RT4D requirements, reception/event support staff, and professional interpretation and MC services where required.
 - Prepare and provide all required workshop materials and manage their distribution, while coordinating the workshop schedule and providing on-site operational support to ensure smooth delivery of the event.
 - 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 accommodation and travel reimbursement

- Coordinate with RT4D Facility and iDEA to follow up on participant registrations for the workshop.
- Facilitate travel arrangements.
- Coordinate and provide suitable lodging arrangements at a four-star hotel.
- Facilitate the payment of per diems and travel expenses.
- Prepare, collect and compile all required data, records and documentation throughout the workshop preparation, delivery and completion process, and submit them in accordance with RT4D requirements and templates.
- Media-related support
 - Draft and submit the press release in Vietnamese and English to iDEA and RT4D Facility for review, feedback and approval.
 - Prepare and conduct 2–3 interviews with selected workshop participants and/or stakeholders, as required, to support the production of a workshop recap video featuring key proceedings, highlights of the workshop and participants reflections.
 - Deliver high-quality photographs and all video footage from the workshop, including complete, unedited footage of opening remarks delivered by VIP guests.

Project Completion Report

- Prepare and finalise the Project Completion Report (PCR) in accordance with the RT4D template, incorporating feedback from RT4D/ DFAT, and submit for approval.

4. Project Work Plan

Working closely with the RT4D team and the Project Proponent team, the Consultant is expected to deliver the outlined deliverables in line with the work plan and timeline below.

The support from the selected Consultant, will be undertaken over a continuous effective period of **9 calendar months**. Work will commence immediately after contract signing.

Activity/Task	Responsible Party	Deadline
Activity 1: Comparative policy review and stakeholder consultation		
• Task 1.1: Develop the research methodology, analytical framework and work plan. Obtain required feedback and approval.	Implementing Partner, RT4D and iDEA for approval	November 2026
• Task 1.2: Conduct research and data collection/stakeholder consultations.	Implementing Partner	Nov 2026
• Task 1.3: Develop the outline of the Report. Obtain required feedback and approval.	Implementing Partner, RT4D and iDEA for approval	Nov 2026
• Task 1.4: Conduct further research, data collection, and stakeholder consultations to develop the draft Report.	Implementing Partner	Dec 2026-Jan 2027
• Task 1.5: Conduct revisions in accordance with the guidance and feedback of relevant stakeholders.	Implementing Partner	Jan 2027-Mar 2027
• Task 1.6: Conduct stakeholder validation of the draft report through consultations coordinated by iDEA (MOIT).	iDEA	Mar 2027
• Task 1.7: Finalise the Policy Review Report. Obtain final approval.	Implementing Partner, RT4D and iDEA for approval	Apr - May 2027
Activity 2: Policy validation and capacity building workshop		
• Task 2.1: Coordinate with RT4D and MOIT to confirm date, venue, and participant outreach strategy.	Implementing Partner, RT4D, iDEA	Apr 2027
• Task 2.2: Prepare logistics, develop the workshop agenda and training materials. Obtain required feedback and approval.	Implementing Partner, RT4D, iDEA for approval	Apr 2027
• Task 2.3: Deliver a two-day capacity-building workshop	Implementing Partner, RT4D, iDEA	Apr-May 2027
• Task 2.4: Collect participant feedback and prepare the workshop reports. Obtain required feedback and approval.	Implementing Partner, RT4D for approval	2 weeks after the workshop
Prepare and submit the Project Completion Report. Obtain required feedback and approval.	Implementing Partner, RT4D for approval	4 weeks after project completion

5. Gender Equality Disability and Social Inclusion

All RT4D projects mainstream Gender Equality Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) throughout the project cycle. The Consultant will be responsible for ensuring that project implementation embeds GEDSI in line with the requirements set in this ToR. The Consultant should consult and work closely with the RT4D Manager, RT4D GEDSI & Trade Manager, Project Proponent and other stakeholders in ensuring that the project implementation addresses these requirements.

The consultant is expected to adhere to the following RT4D Guidelines as required:

- Embedding GEDSI considerations into the methodology, work plan, stakeholder engagement and activity delivery.
- Identifying and addressing barriers to the participation, access, influence and benefit of women, people with disability and other relevant or underrepresented groups.
- Applying inclusive and accessible approaches to consultations, workshops, training, communications and other activities.
- Ensuring that relevant GEDSI perspectives are reflected in project outputs, recommendations, tools and other deliverables.
- Collecting disaggregated participation data.
- Reporting on GEDSI actions, participation, results, risks and lessons through the agreed project reporting and MEL processes.

The Consultant must ensure that appropriate technical expertise and resources are available throughout implementation to support the effective integration of GEDSI requirements into project activities, outputs, communications, monitoring and reporting.

5.1 GEDSI Dimensions of the Project

The project adopts a GEDSI-informed approach throughout the policy review and stakeholder consultation process. While the project primarily supports government institutions, it will ensure that the Policy Review Report considers the implications of RCEP e-commerce commitments for different groups of businesses, including MSMEs, women-led enterprises and other underrepresented groups participating in digital trade.

The project will encourage balanced representation of women and diverse stakeholder groups in consultations and the policy validation workshop, including relevant business associations, research institutions and organisations representing women entrepreneurs and people with disability. When engaging experts and resource persons, the project will also seek an appropriate gender balance. These measures will help ensure that the project's analysis and recommendations reflect diverse perspectives and contribute to more inclusive policy development.

5.2 GEDSI Dimensions of the Sector

E-commerce has the potential to improve market access and business opportunities for a wide range of enterprises, particularly MSMEs, women-led businesses and enterprises owned or operated by other underrepresented groups. However, these groups often face greater barriers to participating in digital trade, including unequal access to digital skills, technology, finance and market information. Effective implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter therefore requires policy and regulatory frameworks that support inclusive participation in the digital economy.

Although this project does not directly support enterprises, it contributes to more inclusive policy development by incorporating GEDSI considerations into the comparative policy review, stakeholder consultations and policy recommendations.

5.3 Approach to 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?

- Where evidence is available, the review will also consider whether the effective application of RCEP e-commerce commitments may create different opportunities or challenges for MSMEs, women-led enterprises, and other disadvantaged groups.
- If data is available and sufficient, the project may include one case study that will highlight an approach or regulatory practice that supports inclusive participation in e-commerce. The project will seek to achieve at least 30% female participation in the policy validation workshop and at least 30% female representation among speakers, facilitators and resource persons.
- If available and relevant, stakeholder consultations will include organisations representing women entrepreneurs and, organisations supporting people with disability and other underrepresented groups to ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in the project's findings and recommendations.

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?

- The project primarily targets government officials responsible for e-commerce, digital economy and trade policy, together with representatives from business associations, research institutions and the private sector.
- The project aims to achieve at least 30% female participation across project activities. Invitations will be extended to organisations representing women entrepreneurs, people with disability, ethnic minorities, and at least one organisation representing people with disability to encourage diverse participation.
- Participants will be drawn from both central and provincial organisations to ensure broad geographic representation.

C. How does this project benefit disadvantaged groups (e.g. people with disability, ethnic minorities, MSMEs)? What will the project do to apply the "Do No Harm" principle?

- Although the project does not directly support enterprises, it contributes to more inclusive policy development by incorporating GEDSI considerations into the comparative policy review, stakeholder consultations and policy recommendations.
- The project will apply the Do No Harm principle by promoting inclusive consultation, ensuring equitable opportunities for participation, and avoiding recommendations that may unintentionally disadvantage particular groups or create unnecessary barriers to participation in digital trade.

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 and incorporated? What measures will the project take to incorporate the views and input of women, people with disability and other marginalise groups in the various stages of project implementation?

- Stakeholder consultations and the policy validation workshop will be designed to encourage active participation from all attendees through facilitated discussions, interactive group work and structured feedback sessions.
- The project will actively seek participation from organisations representing women entrepreneurs and other underrepresented groups. Feedback received during consultations and the workshop will be documented and considered in refining the final Policy Review Report and recommendations.

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

The project will follow the RT4D Guidelines for Inclusive Events and Communications by:

- Selecting venues that are physically accessible, including step-free access and accessible facilities for participants with disabilities.
- Preparing workshop materials and communications in clear, accessible formats and distributing materials in advance where possible to support participants with different accessibility needs.
- Encouraging inclusive participation by providing equal opportunities for participants to contribute to discussions and ensuring balanced representation among speakers and panel members.
- Working with the project proponent to identify and, where feasible, accommodate any reasonable accessibility or participation requirements raised by participants during registration.

6. Communications and Media

The Consultant will support the RT4D Facility in meeting any Communications and Media objectives through the course of the Project.

All reports, presentations, invitations, event materials and other communications products must be accurate, evidence-based, fit for purpose, accessible and of a high professional standard. Materials must comply with RT4D branding, acknowledgement and approval requirements, as advised by the RT4D Communications Team.

The Consultant is expected to adhere to following RT4D guidelines as required:

- Use approved RT4D branding, templates, logos and acknowledgement wording in project documentation and materials (e.g. reports, PPTs, invitations).
- Provide timely project information, verified evidence, photographs, participant inputs, quotations, testimonials and other materials required for RT4D communications and reporting.

- Collect photographs, video or other visual materials during project activities, where appropriate and with the required consent and permissions.
- Ensure that communications use inclusive and respectful language, representative imagery and accessible formats, including alt text, captions, transcripts or plain-language summaries where relevant.
- Obtain the required consent and permissions for the use of personal information, images, video, quotations, testimonials and case studies, including any additional safeguards required for children, people with disability or other vulnerable groups.
- Submit public-facing communications products to the RT4D Manager and Communications Team for review and approval before publication or distribution.

RT4D will retain oversight of communications quality, branding, messaging, approvals and release. The Consultant must not publish or distribute public-facing communications products relating to the Project without the required RT4D and, where relevant, Project Proponent, partner or donor clearance.

In addition, the Consultant is expected to manage the implementation of the project so that it adheres to communications objectives and planned outputs outlined in the sections below.

6.1 Communications Focus, Key Messages and Audiences

The project's communication activities will focus on increasing awareness and understanding of the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter among government agencies and relevant stakeholders. Through the Policy Review Report and policy validation workshop, the project will communicate how RCEP's e-commerce commitments have been implemented across RCEP Parties, highlight good practices and implementation gaps, and identify practical opportunities to strengthen Viet Nam's implementation.

The key message is that effective implementation of RCEP's E-Commerce Chapter can create a more enabling environment for digital trade and help Vietnamese enterprises, particularly MSMEs, better utilise opportunities under the Agreement.

The primary audience comprises government officials and policymakers from relevant ministries and agencies responsible for trade, e-commerce, digital economy and related regulatory areas. The secondary audience includes provincial authorities, business associations, research institutions, universities, development partners and private sector representatives involved in e-commerce and digital trade. Together, these stakeholders play an important role in supporting the implementation of RCEP commitments and promoting greater utilisation of RCEP by Vietnamese enterprises.

6.2 Communications Outputs

The project's communication outputs will include the Policy Review Report, executive summaries and presentation materials, together with the Policy Validation and Capacity Building Workshop. These products will communicate key findings, comparative experiences, implementation challenges and practical recommendations to support stronger implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter and contribute to Viet Nam's preparation for the 2027 RCEP General Review. The executive summary will be made publicly available through appropriate communication channels.

7. Business Engagement

A. Business relevance

Although the project primarily supports government institutions, it has a strong business relevance. The effective implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter directly influences the policy and regulatory environment for digital trade, affecting businesses' ability to participate in regional e-commerce and utilise RCEP commitments. By identifying implementation gaps, regulatory challenges and regional good practices, the project will support more effective implementation of RCEP commitments and contribute to a more enabling environment for businesses, particularly MSMEs, to engage in cross-border digital trade.

B. Reflection of business needs in project delivery

Business perspectives will be incorporated throughout the Policy Review Report through targeted consultations with business associations and private sector representatives. These consultations will help identify practical implementation challenges, regulatory barriers and opportunities for improvement from the perspective of businesses using e-commerce and digital trade.

Business feedback will also inform the design and content of the Policy Validation and Capacity Building Workshop, ensuring that discussions and recommendations are practical, evidence-based and responsive to the needs of businesses operating in the RCEP market.

C. Direct business engagement, if relevant

The project will undertake targeted consultations with at least two business associations, including the Viet Nam E-commerce Association and the Vietnam Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (VINASME), or other relevant organisations as detailed under activity description. Consultations will be conducted through structured interviews or focused discussions to gather practical insights on the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter and the challenges faced by businesses participating in digital trade.

D. Use of business input

Input collected from business consultations will be used to:

- Validate the findings of the comparative policy review and identify practical implementation issues;
- Strengthen the evidence base and recommendations of the Policy Review Report;
- Inform the content and discussion topics of the Policy Validation and Capacity Building Workshop;
- Develop practical recommendations to improve the implementation of RCEP e-commerce commitments; and
- Refine and finalise the Policy Review Report to ensure that it reflects both policy priorities and business experience.

8. Support to Lesser Developed Economies

A. How will this activity recognise and address knowledge, capacity, or institutional needs specific to ASEAN LDE governments?

This project is a demand-driven initiative proposed by the Government of Viet Nam to address identified institutional needs in implementing the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter. It has been designed in close consultation with the Viet Nam E-commerce Agency (iDEA), Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) to ensure that the project scope, activities and outputs respond directly to Viet Nam's policy priorities and implementation challenges.

The project will strengthen the Government's capacity to review, interpret and implement RCEP e-commerce commitments through comparative policy analysis, stakeholder consultation and evidence-based recommendations. By aligning with Viet Nam's regulatory context and institutional priorities, the project will provide practical support that can inform both ongoing policy implementation and the country's contribution to the 2027 RCEP General Review.

B. How will this activity ensure relevant ASEAN LDE government institutions and representatives can engage and make the most out of all activity outputs, at a pace that supports their capacity and institutional needs/constraints?

The project will be implemented under the close guidance and oversight of iDEA (MOIT) to ensure continuous government ownership throughout project implementation. Government representatives will be engaged at key stages, including the development of the analytical framework, validation of findings, stakeholder consultations and the policy validation workshop, ensuring that outputs remain relevant, practical and aligned with institutional priorities.

The project adopts a collaborative and iterative approach, allowing government agencies to provide feedback throughout implementation rather than only at project completion. This process will help ensure that the Policy Review Report and workshop outcomes are readily applicable to policy development and institutional decision-making, while supporting sustainable capacity within the Government of Viet Nam.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

The project's performance will be monitored against the activities, outputs, outcomes, indicators and evidence sources specified in this ToR. The Consultant will support the RT4D Facility to collect, manage and report reliable evidence on project delivery, participation, output quality, GEDSI integration, stakeholder feedback, outcomes and learning.

The Consultant must ensure that sufficient appropriately skilled personnel, time and other resources are available throughout implementation to meet the MEL requirements set out in this ToR. This will include, but not be limited to:

- Standardised participant registration forms (online).
- Standardised participant sign-in sheet and attendee tracking (online or paper form) for virtual and in-person consultation and workshops.
- Standardised participant feedback forms (online).
- Consolidated participant, attendance and feedback data (MS Excel in standardised RT4D template)

- Workshop Report using standardised RT4D template (due within two weeks after a workshop or training) summarising workshop participant and feedback information, workshop proceedings, outputs and key achievements and lessons learned.
- Relevant GEDSI participation data, including sex and disability disaggregation.
- Progress and Project Completion Reports, using the standardised RT4D template, documenting delivery against the approved activities, outputs and work plan, and assessing whether the project met or contributed to its intended outcomes. In assessing project outcomes reports must describe observed changes, including who changed, what changed, when and where the change occurred, the supporting evidence and the significance of the change.

The Consultant should consult RT4D's MEL team to:

- Verify that participant registration, attendance tracking and feedback arrangements comply with RT4D requirements.
- Obtain guidance on using MEL templates.
- Seek support with data collection during implementation, where required;
- Obtain guidance on the tabulation and analysis of participant, attendance and feedback data required to complete the Workshop Report
- Seek guidance on assessing and documenting whether the project achieved or contributed to its intended outcomes, including identifying observed changes, supporting evidence, significance and contribution to the relevant project outcomes.

Result level	Project result	Indicator	Target	Evidence/ Source	GEDSI consideration
Output	Evidence base generated	Policy Review Report completed	One Policy Review Report	Final Policy Review Report approved by RT4D and IDEA	Yes - Report incorporates GEDSI considerations
Output	Policy Validation and Capacity Building Workshop delivered	Number of workshops delivered and participants trained	1 workshop, 40–50 participants	Workshop report; participant list	≥30% female participants
Outcome	Improved understanding of the implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter among government officials and stakeholders	Percentage of workshop participants improved knowledge and understanding of RCEP e-commerce implementation and policy issues and implications for their work	≥70% of workshop respondents	Post-workshop evaluation	Yes – results disaggregated by sex
Outcome	Strengthened institutional	Percentage of participants reporting increased confidence	≥70% of workshop respondents	Post-workshop evaluation	Yes – results disaggregated by sex

Result level	Project result	Indicator	Target	Evidence/ Source	GEDSI consideration
	capacity to support implementation of the RCEP E-Commerce Chapter	to apply the knowledge and recommendations in their work; MOIT and/or relevant government partners reference or intend to apply project-generated findings in preparation for the 2027 General Review or other relevant policy/regulatory processes.		Follow-up interviews/ email confirmation	

10. Reporting and Program Management

Deliverables are subject to feedback and amendments from the RT4D Facility 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.

The RT4D Facility 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:

Stakeholder and Contact Points	Responsibilities
Project Proponent <i>Viet Nam E-commerce Agency (iDEA), Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT)</i>	Provide strategic direction and technical guidance; facilitate coordination with relevant government agencies, business associations and other stakeholders; facilitate stakeholder consultations and workshops; review and endorse key project deliverables together with RT4D; support dissemination and ongoing utilisation of project outputs.
RT4D Facility	Provide overall project management, technical oversight, and quality assurance; review and endorse key project deliverables together with the project proponent; facilitate communication between Proponent and the Implementing Partner; monitor project progress and reporting.
Implementing Partner <i>(Contact point to be determined)</i>	Deliver project activities in accordance with the approved Project Design and work plan; coordinate stakeholder engagement; prepare project deliverables and progress reports; and integrate monitoring, evaluation, learning (MEL), GEDSI, and communications requirements throughout project implementation.

11. Child Protection, PSEAH (Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment) and other Policy Considerations

For this specific project, and all other activities undertaken through RT4D, it is expected that anyone involved in the delivery must operate in strict compliance with DFAT's [Child Protection](#) and [Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\)](#) Policies. In the design of stakeholder consultations and workshop or trainings the project should consider the importance of managing risks associated with the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Child Protection and PSEAH Policies.

The project should refer to Tetra Tech's policy on PSEAH for additional guidance on risk assessment and management. The project should also note that any activities that require personnel to be deployed outside their usual location or country of residence (e.g. consultations and regional workshops) may pose higher PSEAH risks.

The Consultant will work closely with the RT4D Facility to ensure that all project activities set in place adequate risk management measures including, but not limited to:

- **Safe and inclusive activities:** Stakeholder consultations and the Policy Validation and Capacity Building Workshop will be conducted in professional, accessible and appropriate venues that promote a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all participants.
- **Safeguarding compliance:** All consultants and project personnel engaged under the project will be required to comply with applicable safeguarding requirements, including relevant Codes of Conduct, contractual obligations and reporting procedures relating to child protection and PSEAH.
- **Inclusive participation:** Project activities will be organised in a manner that promotes respectful participation, gender balance and equal opportunity for all participants, while ensuring that engagement arrangements are appropriate, inclusive and free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation and abuse.
- **Risk management and reporting:** Any safeguarding concerns identified during project implementation will be managed in accordance with RT4D Facility and DFAT safeguarding policies and reporting requirements. Participants will also be informed of the designated project safeguarding focal point and the confidential channel for raising concerns.

12. 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 and by RCEP FJC and its Subsidiary Bodies that are shared with RT4D's 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 (SharePoint). Access to SharePoint 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 project.

13. Risk Management and Safeguards

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

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Plan
Government delegations, business association representatives, and expert/resource persons engaged in consultations and the workshop skewed toward central-level, male, or urban-based participants, resulting in limited GEDSI perspectives informing the Policy Review Report.	Medium	Medium	Undertake proactive outreach to women's business associations and organisations representing people with disability, encourage gender-balanced government nominations, and track GEDSI participation data against the 30% female participation target and engagement of people with disability and other relevant groups throughout implementation.
Limited availability of data or publicly available information for the comparative policy review across RCEP Parties.	Medium	Medium	Combine desk research with stakeholder consultations and official government sources; validate findings through expert consultation and comparative analysis.
Business participation in stakeholder consultations is lower than expected, limiting practical implementation insights.	Low	Medium	Work closely with iDEA (MOIT), VCCI, VINASME and other relevant business associations to identify suitable participants and encourage active engagement.
Recommendations are not sufficiently aligned with government priorities or practical implementation needs.	Low	High	Engage iDEA (MOIT) throughout project implementation, including methodology development, validation of findings and review of draft recommendations to ensure relevance and government ownership.
Changes in policy priorities or timing of the 2027 RCEP General Review affect project implementation.	Low	Medium	Maintain regular communication with iDEA (MOIT) and RT4D; adjust the workplan and consultation schedule as required while ensuring delivery of agreed outputs within the project timeframe.

About RT4D

Regional Trade for Development (RT4D) is an AUD53.3 million, 6-year initiative funded by the governments of Australia and New Zealand to support the effective implementation of ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreements.

RT4D is delivered through 3 programs: the AANZFTA Implementation Support Program, the RCEP Implementation Support Program and the Australia-funded Trade and Gender Equality Incubator. Through these programs, RT4D provides targeted technical expertise, supports planning and coordination with ASEAN partners, focuses on less developed ASEAN economies, and facilitates selected FTA implementation in ways that support inclusive development outcomes.

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