

## TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

### International Individual Consultant

Assignment Title: *Expert on World Bank's B-READY Report*

Reference No. (as per Procurement Plan): IC-08

Country: Republic of Uzbekistan

Project: *Project Preparation for the Financial Inclusion for Growth, Returns, and Opportunities for Work (FINGROW) MPA Phase 1 Project P181972 (P511700)*

Funding Source: *Grant Facility for Project Preparation (GFPP) Grant No. TF0C8835*

Implementing Agency: *Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) of the Republic of Uzbekistan*

## 1. Background

The Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan (GoU), through the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF), is carrying out project preparation activities for the Financial Inclusion for Growth, Returns, and Opportunities for Work (FINGROW) Project. These preparatory activities are financed by the Grant Facility for Project Preparation (GFPP) of the World Bank.

In 2025, Uzbekistan adopted the SME Development Strategy for 2025–2030, approved by Presidential Decree No. PD-50 dated March 19, 2025. The Strategy outlines seven priority pillars and a comprehensive policy agenda to foster SME growth, improve the business climate, and support private sector competitiveness. Project preparation activities will also contribute to the effective implementation of the SME Development Strategy.

To support coordinated and high-quality execution of the SME Development Strategy, the MoEF is establishing an Excellence Center (EC), comprising national and international specialists in SME development. The EC will function as a platform for policy coordination, monitoring, evaluation, advisory support, and cross-institutional cooperation.

The Department for Analysis, Support, and Coordination of State Policy for the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (hereinafter “the Department”) within the MoEF will lead and oversee all EC activities.

One of the EC’s core positions is *Expert on Feasibility Study under the B-READY project* (hereinafter “the Consultant”), who will provide analytical, advisory, and strategic support throughout the assignment.

## 2. Objectives of the Assignment

The main objective of the Consultant's assignment is to assist the Department in effectively preparing and positioning Uzbekistan for the World Bank's B-READY (Business Ready) Program by:

- Providing high-level technical expertise on the B-READY methodology, indicators, and data requirements.
- Conducting a comprehensive analysis of Uzbekistan's current business environment performance against all B-READY indicators.

- Developing a detailed Road Map of reforms aimed at improving Uzbekistan’s business and investment climate in line with the World Bank’s B-READY methodology.
- Serving as the primary technical liaison between the Government of Uzbekistan’s inter-agency working group and the World Bank B-READY team, ensuring effective coordination, communication, and alignment throughout the process.
- Supporting capacity building within relevant government institutions on the B-READY framework, including indicator methodology, data collection, validation, and quality assurance processes.
- Preparation of a draft legislative act covering the following elements:
  - Identification of authorized state bodies responsible for individual B-READY indicators and their respective components;
  - Conduct of periodic surveys among the business community and topic experts to collect perception-based and factual data in line with the B-READY methodology;
  - Introduction of a “shadow client” or “mystery shopper” mechanism to assess the actual practice and quality of public service delivery by relevant institutions;
  - Development of a national business environment indicator based on the B-READY methodology, adapted to national conditions;
  - Development of B-READY Indicators Dashboard, ensuring online real time monitoring and analytics through the unified government system (*run by Ministry of Digital Technologies*).
  - Establishment of a system for periodic publication of a Business Review Report on the business environment of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
  - Development of a justification and inclusion of a proposal for conducting a Subnational study in the regions of the country based on the B-Ready methodology
- Development of the Concept and Technical Specifications (Terms of Reference) for a B-READY Indicators Dashboard.

### 3. Scope of Work

The Consultant will carry out the following tasks during the 11-month assignment. All tasks must be evidence-based, supported by structured data, and prepared in close coordination with the Department.

#### 3.1 B-READY Assessment and Analysis

- **Conduct Comprehensive Analysis:** Conduct an analysis of Uzbekistan's performance across the 10 (ten) B-READY indicators based on the program methodology. Carry out preliminary assessments and compare national legislation and practice against the B-READY report methodology requirements. Identify factors that are negatively affecting Uzbekistan’s potential ranking.
- **Data Collection and Validation:** Develop a plan for collecting and studying data on negative factors in collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies.

Establish working groups for each B-READY indicator. Ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the data submitted to the World Bank team.

### 3.2 Reform Road Map and Liaison

- Road Map Development: Based on the analysis, develop a "Road Map" outlining specific reforms and actions to improve Uzbekistan's performance across all B-READY report indicators.
- Monitoring and Coordination: Monitor the implementation of reforms outlined in the Road Map. Act as the "bridge" between Uzbekistan and the World Bank team regarding the B-READY report. Prepare arguments (justifications) for disputed indicators and participate in the defense (discussion) with World Bank experts.

### 3.3 Regulatory Framework Development and Institutionalization of B-READY

- Prepare draft legislative act aimed at institutionalizing B-READY implementation in Uzbekistan, covering:
- Designation of authorized state bodies responsible for individual B-READY indicators and their components;
- Procedures for conducting periodic surveys of the business community to collect perception-based and factual data in line with B-READY requirements;
- Introduction of a "shadow client" or "mystery shopper" mechanism to assess the actual quality and consistency of public service delivery;
- Development of a national business environment indicator based on the B-READY methodology, adapted to national conditions;
- Establishment of a system for periodic publication of a Business Review Report on the business environment of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
- Ensure alignment of the draft legislative act with existing legislation and international best practices.

### 3.4 Digital Monitoring and Reporting Tools

- Develop the Concept and Technical Specifications (Terms of Reference) for a B-READY Indicators Dashboard.
- Ensure the proposed dashboard supports:
- Online and real-time monitoring of indicator performance;
- Analytical visualization and reporting;
- Institutional access control and data update protocols.
- Coordinate with relevant IT units and stakeholders to ensure feasibility and sustainability of the proposed solution.

### 3.5 Capacity Building and Strategic Input

- Capacity Building: Organize and conduct seminars and trainings for staff from ministries and agencies on the B-READY report methodology.
- strategic Input: Prepare a well-justified reform concept related to B-READY implementation (e.g., establishing a permanent B-READY working structure or digitalizing a key business process) and a draft one policy concept for the 2026 Open Dialogue with Entrepreneurs.

### 3.6 Coordinate Activities for a Subnational B-READY Study

- Preparation of a justification note (analytical brief) for conducting the first subnational study, including participation in discussions with relevant ministries and agencies on agreeing funding arrangements under the Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS) modality.

## 4. Deliverables

The Consultant shall submit high-quality, evidence-based deliverables according to the schedule below. All deliverables must be prepared in English, using formats agreed with the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF). The deliverables are designed to align directly with the B-READY analysis and road mapping required in the Scope of Work.

No.	Deliverable Title	Content Description	Timeline	Payment Percentage (tentative)
1	Monthly Progress Reports (M1-M11)	Monthly reports (approx. 10 pages) summarizing conducted activities, findings, coordination efforts, and next steps. Submission accompanied by the Department's confirmation of satisfactory performance. Required for continuation of services.	Monthly <i>(Due 5th day of the following month)</i>	-

2	Inception Report	Inception Report outlining the consultant’s proposed methodology, scope of work, sequencing of activities, depth of analysis, data sources to be used, stakeholder engagement approach, and expected form of deliverables. The Report shall also include proposed working arrangements and a semi-resident presence plan, with an indicative schedule of in-country missions and confirmation of approximately 50% physical presence. The report will be discussed and agreed with the Department prior to commencement of substantive analytical work.	Month 1	10%
3	B-READY Baseline Assessment and Gap Analysis	Full analytical report on current performance across all 10 B-READY indicators. Comparison of national practice against B-READY methodology requirements. Identification of negative factors and a detailed plan for data collection and working group establishment.	Month 2	15%

4	B-READY Improvement "Road Map"	<p>Comprehensive Road Map detailing specific, sequenced reforms and actions required to improve Uzbekistan's B-READY score.</p> <p>Includes identification of responsible agencies and preliminary timelines.</p> <p>Analytical justification notes for the first subnational B-READY study, including proposed scope and summary of coordination with relevant ministries on potential RAS funding.</p>	Month 3	20%
5	Reform Concept for Open Dialogue & Data Validation Report	Submission of One substantiated reform concept (min. 10 pages) derived from B-READY assignment findings (Section 3.3)	Month 6	15%
6	Regulatory Framework and Digital Dashboard ToR	<p>Draft regulatory legal act institutionalizing B-READY implementation;</p> <p>Concept and Technical Specifications (ToR) for a B-READY Indicators Dashboard.</p>	Month 9	25%

7	Final B-READY Implementation and Capacity Report	Final report summarizing the monitoring of Road Map implementation, detailing arguments prepared for disputed indicators, and documentation of at least 6 seminars/trainings conducted for ministry staff on the B-READY methodology.	Month 11	15%
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## 5. Duration, Location, Payment

The assignment will last 11 months, with the possibility of extension depending on performance and project needs.

- Duty Station: Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- The Consultant is required to spend at least 50% of working time physically at the Department office within the Ministry of Economy and Finance, to ensure close coordination, daily interaction, and effective knowledge transfer.
- The Consultant will also be expected to undertake regular field visits across regions jointly with Department staff for data collection, consultations, monitoring missions, and stakeholder engagements.
- Contract Type: Lump sum- Time based contract.
- Payments will be made according to the payment schedule linked to deliverables and milestones agreed in the contract.
- All payments will be conditional on the acceptance of deliverables by the Department Director and confirmation of satisfactory performance.

## 6. Reporting and Supervision

The Consultant will report directly to the Director of the Department.

- The Consultant will work in daily collaboration with the Department's staff and experts, participating in internal meetings, technical sessions, and field missions as needed.
- Regular progress updates will be provided to senior management of the MoEF.
- The MoEF will provide the Consultant with workspace, access to relevant available data, and logistical support for official travel.

## 7. Qualifications

- The Consultant should possess the following qualifications:

- Advanced degree in economics, business administration, public policy, or a related field.
- At least 10 years of international experience in business environment reform, competitiveness analysis, or international development indices.
- Proven, in-depth technical experience with the methodology, data requirements, and government processes related to the World Bank B-READY (Business Ready) Program or its predecessor, the Doing Business Report.
- Proven experience in successfully assisting national governments in improving their ranking in major international business/economic indices.
- Demonstrated ability to serve as a high-level technical liaison between government bodies and International Financial Institutions (IFIs).
- Demonstrated ability to conduct complex legislative and regulatory gap analysis.
- Experience in transition economies or developing countries; experience in Central Asia is an asset.
- Ability to reside in Tashkent for extended periods.
- Fluency in English; knowledge of Russian or Uzbek is an asset.

## 8. Remuneration

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers. Remuneration will be commensurate with experience and qualifications, aligned with international consultancy standards. Payments will be tied to contractually agreed deliverables and subject to satisfactory performance. Travel and other assignment-related expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the contract provisions and World Bank guidelines.