PROJECT PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT
UNITE DE PREPARATION ET DE DEVELOPPEMENT DES PROJETS
UNIDADE DE PREPARAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO DE PROJECTOS

Terms of Reference: Selection of An Individual Consultant for the Evaluation of AECID Support to ECOWAS Project Preparation and Development Unit (PPDU)

1. Context and Justification

The Project Preparation and Development Unit (PPDU) is a specialized agency of the ECOWAS Commission established by Regulation C/REG.5/08/11 and is based in the Togolese Republic. Article 5 of the Regulation C/REG.5/08/11 establishes a Steering Committee, the decision making and strategic organ of the unit composed of the representatives of the ECOWAS Commission, the ECOWAS Bank (EBID), ECOWAS Member States, Development Partners and the Private Sector, chaired by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Infrastructure.

In terms of strategic positioning, the PPDU is a unique instrument within ECOWAS, which will be responsible for the preparation and development of infrastructure projects. In this respect, it will develop projects to make them "bankable" so that the necessary investments can be easily mobilized. It will be able to directly receive project preparation and capacity building requests from both the public and private sectors for PPP projects.

In February 2015, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the ECOWAS Commission and the Spanish Cooperation for International Development Agency (AECID) with the overall aim of supporting the PPDU to better fulfill its mandate and the implementation of infrastructure actions.

Within this framework of the MoU, a dedicated fund of €5 million was made available to ECOWAS with the objective of establishing a Project Preparation and Development Unit (PPDU) and supporting institutional capacity building in member states.

Activities in this fund have been directed towards three main areas of work: (1) support for the development of regional infrastructure projects and the mobilization of key stakeholders; (2) technical capacity building in ECOWAS member states in priority infrastructure-related areas; and (3) the institutional development of the PPDU as a specialized agency mandated to implement the ECOWAS Regional Infrastructure Master Plan.

As the implementation period of the MoU draws to a close on 31st December 2025, AECID and the PPDU are seeking to engage an independent individual consultant to conduct an analysis of lessons-learned on the implementation of the MoU and provide strategic recommendations for future collaborations. This analysis will be done in the light of the newly adopted PPDU Strategic Business Plan 2026-2030 and the renewal of the PPDU's mandate to lead the review and update of the ECOWAS Regional Infrastructure Master Plan. To recall, the PPDU Business plan identified the following four strategic objectives:

(1) internal processes, and autonomy with other areas, including procurement: (a) Improve efficiency and procedures, including: (b) align procurement processes with the overall

goals and objectives of PPDU; (c) review manual of procedures and operations; (d) create an HR strategy); (d) project preparation and sequencing.

(2) Reinforce Portfolio management framework: (a) create sub-portfolio of regional infrastructure projects -complement existing approach with secondary, non-exclusive criteria that will group projects based on profiles -, (b) improve project preparation management and reporting through a PM software (Planisware has been recommended by the Business Plan).

(3) Create a long-term resource mobilization plan for PPDU operations

(4) Develop relationships and improve recognition with stakeholders.

2. PPDU Mandate

The main functions of the PPDU as outlined in Regulation C/REG.5/08/11 relating to the denomination, functions, organization and operation of the PPDU adopted in August 2011, are as follows:

- preparing and developing regional integration infrastructure projects in ECOWAS Member States;
- management of a dedicated infrastructure fund for preparation of the projects;
- promotion of public/private partnerships in investment financing and project management in ECOWAS.
- discharging such other tasks as may be assigned to it by its governance organs.

To achieve this, the PPDU shall:

a. Identify, select and prioritize regional integration infrastructure projects in collaboration with ECOWAS Commission, Member States and the private sector.
b. Mobilize the resources required for preparation and development of infrastructure projects.
c. Undertake the studies and activities required for preparation and development of infrastructure projects with a view to making the projects bankable.
d. Create a more attractive climate for regional infrastructure projects financing and investment.
e. Manage the Infrastructure Funds, and all the other Funds placed at its disposal.
f. Serve as regional focal point for capacity-building of similar structures in ECOWAS Member States;
g. Negotiate and conclude cooperation and/or partnership agreements with regional and sub-regional institutions in infrastructure project preparation and development.

3. Objective of the assignment

The overall objective of this evaluation is to examine the implementation of the MoU according to its objectives, including the assessment of its management, the results obtained, the effectiveness and efficiency of the actions, as well as to evaluate the ability of PPDU processes to incorporate the partnership and collaboration with financial partners, with a particular focus on AECID future support, also in the perspective of operating as Team Europe in close

coordination with the EC NDICI Cooperation with ECOWAS 2021-2027. It will also assess the effects and / or impacts of its interventions with attention to the sustainability of the PPDU and the achievement of its strategic positioning.

4. Scope of Services

The nature and scope of services are outlined below. The consulting services ("the Services") shall include but not necessarily limited to the duties and responsibilities outlined below:

PHASE 1. INCEPTION

TASK 1. Inception notes

Establish a clear analytical framework and set the operational foundation for the assignment focused on the Methodological Note and the Workplan.

Task 1.1 – Stakeholder Mapping and Documentary Inventory

- Identify and categorize relevant stakeholders (ECOWAS directorates, PPDU units, AECID, Member States, financiers, consultants).
- Map their roles, responsibilities, and expected contributions.
- Compile and classify relevant documentation (procurement files, portfolio records, PPP training materials, institutional plans).

Task 1.2. – Theory of Change (ToC) Reconstruction

- Reconstruct the ToC of the PPDU–AECID cooperation, showing intended results, causal pathways, and underlying assumptions.
- Link ToC to the four thematic areas (procurement, portfolio management, PPP capacity building, institutional strengthening).
- Identify data gaps and areas requiring validation during later phases.

Task 1.3. – Methodological Note

- Refine evaluation scope and questions in alignment with ToR and ToC.
- Define evaluation criteria (aligned with DAC), sampling strategy, and data collection methods (document review, interviews, surveys, case vignettes).
- Develop an evaluation matrix linking questions, indicators, sources, and tools.
- Identify potential risks and propose mitigation strategies.

Task 1.4. – Workplan

- Prepare a detailed 12-week timeline, specifying sequencing of activities across the five phases.
- Define roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team.
- Outline engagement strategy with PPDU, ECOWAS, AECID, and Member States.
- Establish deliverables calendar.

Results 1

- Stakeholder mapping and document inventory
- Reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC)
- Methodological framework and evaluation matrix

- Detailed workplan and timeline

Deliverable Task 1

- Inception Note (ToC, methods, matrix, timeline)

PHASE 2. DATA COLLECTION AND SYNTHESIS (WEEKS 3 – 6)

TASK 2. Related to the improvement of processes and procedures: Conduct a Comprehensive Assessment of Procurement Process of ECOWAS and PPDU and propose areas of improvement within the current framework:

Task 2.1.

- Review documentation produced in relation to the procurement of studies commissioned by the PPDU/Spain Infrastructure fund.
- Assess AECID related PPDU procedures and advice on the application of these procedures in procurement processes related to PPDU.
- Formulate an assessment of gaps and provide practical and actionable recommendations for PPDU and ECOWAS based on the existing framework.

Task 2.2.

- Based on the above, conduct interviews with PPDU internal and external stakeholders:
  - *ECOWAS sector directors (infrastructure)*
  - *ECOWAS procurement and finance departments*
  - *Regional and international financiers related to regional infrastructure in West Africa (e.g., MAP, PICU/AfDB, EU, KfW)*
  - *Member States' infrastructure departments in the priority subsectors for the Master Plan of PPDU Consultants.*

Task 2.3

- Following the above, provide practical and actionable recommendations for PPDU and ECOWAS based on the existing framework.

Results 2

- Internal procurement processes of the PPDU evaluated and reviewed under key
- Stakeholder needs and feedback analyzed.
- Lessons learnt and technical recommendations for the improvement of procurement processes formulated.

Deliverables

- Report of procurement processes.

TASK 3. Reinforce Portfolio management framework - Evaluation of Project Pipeline and Implementation Barriers:

- Analyze PPDU's project portfolio over the last decade, including current practices related to project identification including (1) coordination with ECOWAS infrastructure

directors and member states; project preparation units in national governments; (3) private investors and infrastructure stakeholders.
- Identify design flaws, implementation bottlenecks, and project feasibility issues.
- Identify good practices and lessons learned to incorporate PPPs
- Geographic distribution and development balanced
- National contributions
- Key development process and Global Europe.
- Evaluate alignment of national projects with regional priorities.
- Evaluate alignment of PPDU with cross-cutting and soft elements: consideration related to gender, environment and social impact (ESG).
- Propose a comprehensive plan for the improvement of project portfolio management and sequencing to be implemented, incorporated in the review of the ECOWAS master plan.

Results 3

- A detailed analysis of PPDU-AECID MoU pipeline challenges and enabling factors for implementation.
- Identify good practices and lessons learned and propose project selection and portfolio management criteria including geographic definition, thematic balance, alignment with national and regional priorities, national contributions and private sector developers.
- Identify synergies with potential co-financiers willing to join AECID support to PPDU (NDICI and EFIs, with specific focus on the on-going Global Gateway flagship corridors for WA),
- Recommendations for improved project design and prioritization, including project preparation of projects structured as PPPs.

Deliverable:

- Report on the evaluation of project portfolio management with implementation recommendations.

TASK 4. Evaluation of the PPP capacity building plan to national units and its incorporation in project processes

Evaluate best practices and successes of the PPDU in the implementation of the PPP support plan for national PPP offices and their integration in project preparation processes.

Results 4

- Evaluate training outcomes of the PPP training programme
- Identify training needs in the framework of the implementation of the master plan.
- Formulate actionable recommendations for the incorporation of the PPP capacity building component to the PPP project preparation practice with a specific focus onStrategic corridors / PPP and Water projects.

Deliverables 4

L4-Evaluation report of the capacity building,

TASK 5. Institutional and Capacity Assessment of the PPDU

- Assess internal structure, resources, and service delivery of the PPDU.
- Benchmark current performance against its Business Plan and mandate.
- Identify capacity gaps and propose measures for PPDU to act as key partner in major regional investment frameworks.

Results 5

- Organizational performance, strengths, and weaknesses identified.
- Strategic areas for institutional strengthening proposed.
- PPDU positioning reviewed in relation to donors and regional frameworks.

Deliverables 5

- Report on Capacity Building Initiatives

PHASE 3 — FORWARD STRATEGY AND DESIGN (WEEKS 9–10)

TASK 6. Strategy Brief and High-Level Results Framework

Task 6.1. Propose a short and mid-term priority line (2025-2030; 2030–2035)

- Define strategic pillars, intended outcomes, pathways of change, modalities of support, and partnership model.
- Align cooperation line with ECOWAS priorities, PPDU mandate, and donor frameworks.

Task 6.2 — High-Level Results Framework

- Develop an indicative framework with outcomes, indicators, and a learning agenda.
- Integrate cross-cutting themes (gender, environment, social safeguards, regional integration).
- Ensure framework supports monitoring, accountability, and adaptive management.

Task 6.3 — Risk, Assumptions, and Resourcing Scenarios

- Identify and assess key risks (institutional, financial, political, operational).
- Outline underlying assumptions for successful implementation.
- Propose resourcing scenarios (baseline, optimistic, constrained).

Results:

- High-Level Results Framework (2025-2035) linking strategic objectives to measurable indicators and learning priorities clarifying articulation with ECOWAS Infrastructure department
- Risk-informed strategic design with feasible implementation scenarios
- Define risks, assumptions, and resourcing scenarios

Deliverable (Task 6):

- L6-Strategy Brief and High-Level Results Framework, including risks, assumptions, and resourcing options.

PHASE 4 — REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION (WEEKS 11–12)

TASK 7. Final Report

Task 7.1 — Draft and Finalize Report

- Prepare final evaluation report (≤30 pages + annexes), consolidating findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- Incorporate validated inputs from Phase 3 and strategic design from Phase 4.
- Include an executive summary highlighting key insights for decision-makers.

Task 5.2 — Communication and Dissemination Products

- Develop an executive slide deck for high-level presentation of results and recommendations.
- Produce a concise 2-page decision brief (optional) for policymakers and partners.

Results:

- Comprehensive and accessible final report with actionable recommendations for 2024–2033.
- Clear and tailored dissemination materials to support uptake by ECOWAS, PPDU, AECID, and Member States.

Deliverables (Task 7):

- **Final Report** with 2024–2033 strategic recommendations (≤30 pages + annexes).
- **Executive Slides** summarizing findings and strategic options.
- **Optional Decision Brief** (2 pages).

Annexes to Final Report:

- Interview summaries
- Document review matrix
- Project case studies
- Institutional assessment tools
  Recommendations for coordination with donors and partners

5. Key Deliverables

The key deliverables expected from the assignment are underlisted below.

Timeline	Results	Deliverables
Phase 1 – Inception (weeks 1-2)	• Stakeholder mapping, document inventory, ToC reconstruction • Confirm scope, questions, sampling, tools, workplan	**Deliverable 1:** Inception Note
Phase 2 – Data collection and synthesis (weeks 3 – 6)	• Document/data extraction, interviews, optional survey • Select and develop 2-3 cases	**Deliverable 2:** Evidence matrix and preliminary findings deck

Timeline	Results	Deliverables
	vignettes	
Phase 3 – Analysis and validation (weeks 7-8)	• Contribution analysis, synthesis by DAC criteria and cross-cutting themes • Validation workshop (AECID-PPDU) to refine recommendations	**Deliverable 3:** Validated findings and strategic options
Phase 4 – Forward strategy and design (weeks 9-10)	• Draft 10-year cooperation line: pillars, outcomes, pathways, modalities, partnership model • High-level results framework (outcomes, indicative indicators, learning agenda) • Risks/assumptions and resourcing scenarios	**Deliverable 4**: Strategy brief and results framework
Phase 5 – Reporting and dissemination (weeks 11-12)	Final report (≤30 pages + annexes), executive summary, slide deck, and optional 2-page decision brief	**Deliverable 5:** **Final report** and Tools

All reports will be subject to review and validation by AECID and PPDU.

6. Outcomes expected from the assignment

The following are the main outcomes expected from the assignment:

1. Comprehensive Assessment of the implementation of the MoU including impacts on interventions
2. Recommendations to Improve Internal Processes, especially in relation to Procurement Processes
3. Recommendations on Future Collaborations

7. Duration of the assignment and payment schedule

- The duration of the contract is 3 calendar months