

REGIONAL TRADE FOR DEVELOPMENT

RCEP IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL/TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE

Development of Project Design for

Promoting the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade, through better understanding and enhanced engagement of the private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses

I. Summary

| | |
|--|--|
| Title | Promoting the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade, through better understanding and enhanced engagement of the private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses |
| Start Date | June 2025 |
| Completion Date | August 2025 |
| Reports to: | RT4D Manager: Mai Nguyen, Country Manager Vietnam |
| Interacts With <i>[stakeholders who will provide inputs]</i> | RT4D: Mai Nguyen, Country Manager Vietnam Trang Duong, Vietnam Country Project Officer Project Proponent: Multilateral Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam |
| Requires Approval from: <i>[stakeholders who will approve project outputs]</i> | RT4D Facility Project Proponent: Multilateral Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade |
| Timetable for Tender Process | Request for Proposals: 10 May 2025 Closing Date for Queries: 31 May 2025 Closing Date for Proposals: 03 June 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 Facility at risp@regionaltrade4dev.org by 03 June 2025 . Please also copy trang.duong@regionaltrade4dev.org . |
| Scope of Work Summary: <p>The Regional Trade for Development Facility (RT4D) is seeking a consultant (a firm or an individual expert) (hereafter “the Consultant”) to manage and deliver the end-to-end Project Design for a project approved under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Implementation Support Program (RISP). The Project Design will inform the implementation of the RISP project starting in the 2025-26 Financial-Year.</p> <p>Under the scope of services set in this ToR, the Consultant will manage the delivery of Project Design for the following project:</p> | |

- Promoting the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade, through better understanding and enhanced engagement of the private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses

The Project Design will follow a standard RT4D templates and be subject to comments, amendments, and the approval from the RT4D Facility 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 (a firm or an individual expert) will manage and deliver the end-to-end Project Design for an approved RISP Project, in close collaboration with the RT4D Facility and the Project Proponent. The final Project Design will be subject to comments, amendments, and the approval from the RT4D Facility Team, the Project Proponent and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

III. Objectives, Beneficiaries, Outputs and Outcomes

This Project aims to develop a high-quality and robust Project Design for the implementation of the approved RISP project *"Promoting the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade, through better understanding and enhanced engagement of the private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses"*. Project Design must demonstrate sound analysis, strong contextual understanding and consultation with the Project Proponent and the RT4D Facility. The table below outlines key features of the project.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Project Name | Promoting the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade, through better understanding and enhanced engagement of the private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses |
| Project Objective | <p>In celebration of the third anniversary of RCEP's entry into force, this project aims to reinforce the practical utilization of RCEP commitments by MSMEs and women-led enterprises through the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess the awareness and utilization of RCEP among MSMEs, women-led businesses in Viet Nam, identifying gaps and areas for improvement. • To address identified gaps by raising awareness and improving communication on RCEP benefits among MSMEs and women-led enterprises, especially in digital trade, through capacity-building workshops and the development of user-friendly materials to enhance understanding and utilization. • To strengthen collaboration between the MSMEs and women-led enterprises, and policymakers to improve FTA implementation and support. |
| Beneficiaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viet Nam's officials of relevant ministries and agencies • Private sectors, MSMEs and women led enterprises |

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|--------------------------------|--|
| Project Activities and Outputs | <p>The project consists of three key activities to improve awareness and understanding of RCEP benefits among MSMEs and women-led businesses, especially in digital trade:</p> <p>Activity 1: Assess RCEP utilisation landscape [July/August 2025-October 2025]</p> <p>Design tools and assess the level of awareness and utilization of RCEP among MSMEs and women-led enterprises, including their understanding of commitments and benefits, to identify any knowledge gaps and what are the most needed support towards effectively utilizing RCEP. Share the outcome as a report.</p> <p>The study/survey will have support from provincial departments of industry and trade and relevant business associations such as VCCI, VINASME, VAWE to ensure the full participation of local MSMEs and women-led enterprises.</p> <p>Activity 2: Develop materials to enhance and improve the utilisation of RCEP among MSMEs and women-led enterprises [October/November 2025-January/February 2026]</p> <p>Based on the outcome of the survey, design and develop appropriate materials (handbooks, video clips, etc ...) to introduce, share information, provide guidance, with a view to raise knowledge and understanding of MSMEs and women-led enterprises across Viet Nam about RCEP and how to utilise the benefits thereof, especially in digital trade.</p> <p>Activity 3: Provide and widely share designed materials through capacity building workshops in 02 cities of Viet Nam where most MSMEs and women led enterprises are located [February/March 2026-May 2026]</p> <p>Conduct capacity building workshops with tailored agendas in 02 cities to share the outcome of the study/survey and provide designed materials to MSMEs and women-led enterprises to enhance their understanding and promote the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade and regional supply chains participation, etc. Additionally, the workshops will serve as a platform for public-private sector dialogue, ensuring businesses receive necessary support from local authorities.</p> |
| Project Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study/survey on awareness and understanding of RCEP among MSMEs and women-led enterprises. • Books/Handbooks/Video clips for knowledge raising and information sharing. • Two workshops on awareness raising, information sharing, capacity building for MSMEs and women-led enterprises. |

IV. Project Deliverables and Timeline

A. Project Deliverables

The Consultant will be responsible for a coherent set of deliverables centred around the development of the Project Design for Promoting the utilisation of RCEP, especially in digital trade,

through better understanding and enhanced engagement of the private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses:

- Deliverable 1: Project Design Work Plan
- Deliverable 2: Stakeholder Consultations
- Deliverable 3: Project Design Draft
- Deliverable 4: Project Design Finalisation and Approval

A.1 Deliverable 1 – Project Design Work Plan

The Consultant will produce a Project Design Work Plan that provides the tasks and timelines associated with the completion of the design. The Work Plan should include:

- Approach to stakeholder engagement and consultations, including a list of stakeholders to be engaged in the development of the design. This will include any practical and logistical considerations regarding stakeholder engagement, detail specific stakeholders to engage with (e.g. key government agencies) and the expected outputs and outcomes from each of the consultations.
- Detailed and updated information on project timelines and key risks and mitigation.

In developing the Work Plan the Consultant will have access to: (i) an approved Project Concept noting the objectives, outputs, outcomes and other key details of the Project and (ii) a Project Design Template. The Consultant should consult the RT4D Facility and the Project Proponent.

Output: One Project Design Work Plan, submitted to the RT4D Facility and the project proponent for inputs and approval.

A.2 Deliverable 2 – Stakeholder Consultation Report

The Consultant will hold consultations with stakeholders as outlined in the approved Project Design Work Plan. The consultations will gather information, perspectives and feedback from key stakeholders to ensure key sections of the Project Design reflect the needs and priorities of government and non-government stakeholders key to the implementation of the project.

Output: One Stakeholder Consultation Report (maximum of 3 pages), submitted to the RT4D Facility and the project proponent for inputs and approval.

A.3 Deliverable 3 – Project Design

Based on inputs collected from stakeholder consultation and in line with the Project Design Template prepare a Project Design draft. The table below provides a summary of key areas within the Project Design Template.

| | |
|---|---|
| Project Overview | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the project objectives, beneficiaries and connection to other initiatives in line with the approved Project Concept |
| Project Description | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative description all project activities (including outputs, deliverables, and key tasks associated with the implementation of each activity) |
| Project Work Plan and Timeline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary work plan that (i) lists all activities, outputs, deliverables and tasks, (ii) responsible parties for each task and (iii) starting and completion dates for all tasks. |
| Project Risk Management and Sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify risks that affect the achievement of project objectives and mitigating measures. |

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|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and describe the approach to ensure project remains relevant to the needs of beneficiaries beyond its implementation |
| Project Management and Reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify all key actors and governance bodies who will need to be engaged in activity implementation. |
| Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with the Project Concept outline GEDSI dimensions of the Project and GEDSI Dimensions of the Sector Outline the project's approach to mainstreaming GEDSI (e.g. how the activity content, practitioners, and delivery will reflect RT4D's GEDSI requirements) |
| Communications and Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with Project Concept, outline how the project objectives or outcomes support Parties in communicating the benefits of the RCEP/AANZFTA to their populations |
| Business Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with Project Concept, outline how the project objectives or outcomes support Parties in engaging, building relationships or facilitating feedback from businesses |
| Monitoring Evaluation and Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with the Project Concept, outline Project Outcome(s) In line with the Project's Outputs/Outcomes, please specify Performance Indicators to measure the success of the project. |

The Consultant will revise the Project Design in line with written feedback from the RT4D Facility and the Project Proponent. In revising the Project Design, the Consultant may organise additional meetings with RT4D to ensure clear understanding of the feedback before proceeding with edits to the document. It is expected that revisions may take at least two rounds of feedback.

The final Project Design will require approval from RT4D, the Project Proponent and DFAT.

Output: One Project Design, approved by the RT4D Facility, the Project Proponent and DFAT.

B. Deliverables, Tasks and Timeline

Working closely with the RT4D 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 an intermittent effective period of **2.5 calendar months with an estimation of 15-20 professional working days**. The actual time will be agreed in negotiation with the selected Consultant. Work will commence immediately after contract signing.

| Deliverable | Tasks | Responsible Party | Deadline |
|---|---|--|--------------|
| Deliverable 1: Project Design Work Plan | Task 1.1 Inception Meetings with RT4D and the Project Proponent. | RT4D Facility/Consultant/Project Proponent | 15 June 2025 |
| | Task 1.2 Develop and submit Project Design Work Plan, obtain required feedback and approval (up to three revisions) | RT4D Facility/Consultant/Project Proponent | 30 June 2025 |
| Deliverable 2: Stakeholder Consultation Report | Task 2.1: Conduct required consultations with approved list of stakeholders | Consultant | 13 July 2025 |

| Deliverable | Tasks | Responsible Party | Deadline |
|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| | Task 2.2. Develop the drafts (up to three revisions) of the Stakeholder Consultation Report, obtain required feedback and approval | RT4D Facility/Consultant/ Project Proponent | 31 July 2025 |
| Deliverable 3: Project Design | Task 3.1 Develop the drafts (up to three revisions) of the Project Design in line with RT4D template. The draft should have an annex of stakeholder consultation result. | Consultant | 10 August 2025 |
| | Task 3.2 (if required) Hold optional consultation with RT4D or the Project Proponent to clarify expectations on key sections of Project Design template. | RT4D Facility/Consultant/ Project Proponent | 10 August 2025 |
| | Task 3.3: Develop the final draft of the Project Design, obtain required feedback and approval. | RT4D Facility/Consultant/ Project Proponent | 24 August 2025 |

V. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

The Consultant will be responsible for the development of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) components of the Project Design. The MEL component addresses the following questions:

- What would a successful activity look like? What change do you expect in knowledge, behaviour, or policy as a result of the activity? Please describe as concretely as possible. What performance indicator do you suggest measuring whether the activity is successful? [this should be worded as Number of... Percent of...]
- What performance indicator do you suggest to measure whether the activity is successful? [this should be worded as Number of... Percent of...]
- What performance indicator do you suggest to track whether the activity has contributed to gender equality mainstreaming? What quantitative and qualitative indicators would you suggest to measure the impact of this activity on gender equality?
- How will RT4D obtain the data for the indicators above? Who is responsible for collecting the datapoint? What kind of tools need to be used (questionnaires, administrative forms, online surveys)?

The consultant should consult the RT4D MEL Manager to ensure relevant outputs are delivered in line with RT4D MEL requirements.

VI. Gender Equality Disability and Social Inclusion

The Consultant will be responsible for the development of the Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) components of the Project Design. The GEDSI component addresses the following questions:

- How does this sector/activity impact men and women differently? Please cite gender disaggregated data if available. If you believe that your activity has no GEDSI dimensions, please justify here.

- B. How does this sector/activity give benefits to disadvantaged groups (e.g. disabled, ethnic minorities, MSMEs, the poor)? Are any measures needed to ensure that work in this sector, and specific to the subject of the activity, “Does No Harm”?
- C. How can the activities/facilities offered by this project be accessed by the different groups of people and/or by the targeted participants of the project?
- D. Does the proposed project provide a space or a mechanism for providing feedback and suggestions? If yes, who can provide those feedback and suggestions?
- E. How will this activity mainstream gender considerations? Please describe how the activity content, practitioners, and delivery will reflect RT4D’s GEDSI requirements:

The consultant should consult the RT4D GEDSI Manager to ensure relevant outputs are delivered in line with RT4D GEDSI requirements.

VII. Communications, Media, and Business Engagement

The Consultant will be responsible for the development of the Communication and Business Engagement components of the Project Design. The GEDSI component addresses the following questions:

- A. How will this activity identify specific communications objectives and core messages for identified beneficiaries and partners.
- B. How will this activity support the development of relevant communications activities & channels across activity implementation cycle: (i) before the activity (e.g. materials, participant outreach, press release, event POSMs, etc), (ii) during activity implementation (e.g. media, interview, broadcasting), and after activity implementation (e.g. news article)?

The consultant should consult the RT4D Communications and Business Engagement Manager to ensure relevant outputs are delivered in line with RT4D GEDSI requirements.

VIII. Reporting and Program Management

All deliverables are subject to feedback and amendments from the RT4D Facility team and the Project Proponents. The Consultant will engage regularly with these stakeholders in the drafting process, including seeking comments and adjustments and revising documents 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:

RT4D:

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

Project Proponents:

- Multilateral Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam 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.

IX. Risk Management

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

| Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation Plan |
|--|------------|--------|--|
| Stakeholders are not available for consultations and/or do not provide timely feedback approval needed to complete the task. | Medium | Medium | RT4D will work closely with the Proponent to build an efficient approach to engaging key stakeholders. |
| Stakeholders engaged for consultation in the design process don't take a unified position on priorities or specific elements of the design document. | Medium | Medium | The RT4D Facility will promote open dialogue with the support of the consultant to help stakeholders reach consensus on priorities or specific elements on the design document. |
| The design is not aligned with cross cutting issues (MEL, GEDSI, Comms and Business Development). | Low | High | The RT4D Manager will work closely with the consultant to incorporate feedback from RT4D experts in MEL, GEDSI, Comms and regularly reviewing the design to ensure it is aligned to MEL, GEDSI, Comms and Business Development requirements. |

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 Secretariate and by RCEP and their 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 (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. 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 individuals/ organisations have:

- Skilled and experienced expert/team of Experts with the technical expertise, bandwidth, and capabilities to support the RT4D Facility to deliver all outputs in alignment with the remit and timelines set within this Scope of Services.
- Demonstrable technical and subject matter expertise in the field of trade, especially digital trade and private sector, MSMEs and women-led businesses.
- 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 ASEAN governments, ASEC and/or AMS is a distinct advantage.
- Proven excellent report drafting experience, with ability to incorporate comprehensive feedback at multiple stages.
- Experience working with the Multilateral Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam, and 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 a critical consideration for the achievement of 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 the RT4D Facility refers to DFAT's [Aid Adviser Remuneration Framework](#) to estimate the cost of contracting international advisers for the delivery of projects and activities.

XII. 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, organisation 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project plan that specifies deliverables, 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 the RT4D Facility to complete the project. | 20 |
| A.3 Organizational Capabilities and Experience – Please specify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |

| Component | Score |
|---|------------|
| 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | |
| <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional services fees for completing all deliverables in accordance with the uncosted resource plan. 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. <p>Project costs for experts and participants such as reimbursable expenses for airfare, other travel costs and daily subsistence allowance for workshops, meetings, and all other agreed activities need to be included in the Financial Component.</p> | 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

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| 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 | |