

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Project Director - Smallholder Agribusiness and Resilience Project

Introduction to the Smallholder Agribusiness and Resilience Project

The Smallholder Agribusiness and Resilience Project (SARP), a project jointly financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Government of Sri Lanka, aims to build resilience and market participation of 40,000 rural households in the climate change affected districts of Anuradhapura, Vavuniya, Matale, Mannar, Puttalam and Kurunegala. This is pursued through capacity building for climate resilience and inclusive value chains, combined with investments for climate resilience and inclusive value chains, including last-mile infrastructure. The lead program agency is the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands, and Irrigation (MoALLI), which established a dedicated project management unit (PMU) at the central level and two regional hub offices for the implementation of SARP.

The project's duration is six years, and is scheduled to be completed by 30 June 2027, with financial closure in December 2027.

Job Summary

The Project Director will oversee the project's strategic implementation, ensuring its development objectives are achieved. This role entails providing leadership, coordination, and guidance across all project components, including personnel management, financial oversight, procurement and contracts management, grants administration, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and cross-functional collaboration with other units within SARP, government stakeholders, implementing partners, and other relevant stakeholders.

Duties and responsibilities

Under the overall supervision and strategic guidance of the National Steering Committee (NSC), the project director will be responsible for the comprehensive management of SARP. Acting as the Secretary to the NSC, the project's legislative authority. Key responsibilities include:

1. Leadership and Team Management

- Lead the Project Management Unit (PMU), providing strategic and operational direction to achieve project outcomes and development objectives.
- Supervise regional hub officers and district offices, ensuring cohesive implementation and performance.
- Conduct regular performance and needs assessments for implementation units and develop/revise Terms of Reference (TORs) within the project framework.

- Coordinate and closely liaise with IFAD, Government stakeholders, implementing partners, and relevant stakeholders for effective project implementation.

2. Strategic and Operational Project Management

- Lead the preparation and implementation of annual work plan and budgets (AWPB) and other strategic and operational documents for the project.
- Ensure timely project execution within budget, reaching the beneficiaries according to the project's targeting strategy.
- Evaluate and refine project implementation plans, ensuring alignment with multi-year budgeting and government regulations.
- Ensure that the SARP budget (costabs) provides appropriate funding for project activities and to achieve project objectives.
- Conduct progress review meetings, document outcomes, and provide corrective leadership as needed.
- Oversee the preparation of monthly progress reports, financial reports, and ad-hoc reports for stakeholders and IFAD.
- Develop, update, and monitor operational plans, integrating administration, security, and logistics for effective project delivery.
- Oversee risk management activities, ensuring project risks are identified, assessed, monitored, and mitigated in coordination with the DPD and PMU staff.
- Conduct field visits to monitor implementation, identify gaps, and guide corrective action.

3. Fiduciary oversight and compliance

- Coordinate with MoALLI and the Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development on financial management.
- Oversee financial forecasting, budget tracking, and preparation of monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports.
- Lead the preparation and timely submission of interim financial reports and withdrawal applications to IFAD.
- Ensure compliance with SARP's Financial Operations Manual and Government/IFAD guidelines.
- Supervise procurement processes, including tender documentation, evaluations, purchasing, and equipment installation in compliance with IFAD and the Government of Sri Lanka procurement procedures.

- Ensure effective contract management and administration, including timely updating of status of contract management in IFAD client portal.
- Institutionalize appropriate monitoring mechanisms for successful contract execution and completion, both physical and financial.

4. Stakeholder engagement and partnerships

- Foster collaboration between private sector companies, Farmer Business Organizations (FBOs), financial institutions, and farmer groups to enhance business linkages.
- Build strategic partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, universities, research institutions, and private sector stakeholders to support project implementation.
- Publicize project initiatives to mobilize financing and strengthen public-private partnerships.
- Represents SARP at strategic forums, meetings, and external engagements with government agencies, development partners, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders, and facilitate SARP's policy engagement work.
- Facilitate IFAD supervision and implementation support missions, mid-term review, and other visits, ensuring full cooperation and documentation.
- Collaborate with related donor projects, e.g., SAPP, for cross-learning and mutual support.

5. Troubleshooting

- Address implementation bottlenecks by seeking guidance from relevant authorities, including IFAD.
- Adopt preemptive measures to proactively address implementation challenges before they escalate into major issues.

6. Any other business

- Perform any other tasks as required by the Government of Sri Lanka and IFAD in support of successful implementation of SARP.

Required Qualifications and Experience

- Bachelor Degree in Business Management or Agriculture field in a recognized University or qualification similar to Degree recognized by UGC or Associate membership / similar professional qualifications in the relevant field in a recognized Professional Body and at

least 12 years post qualifying experience at managerial level out of which 06 years should be in the senior Managerial Level.

OR

- Bachelor Degree in Business Management or Agriculture field in a recognized University or equivalent qualification to degree recognized by UGC or Associate Membership/ similar professional qualifications from a recognized Professional Body and Post Graduate Degree or Corporate / Chartered Membership or similar qualifications in a recognized Professional Body with at least 10 years post qualifying experience at managerial level out of which 05 years should be in the senior Managerial post.

OR

- Bachelor Degree in a recognized University in Business Management or Agriculture field or qualification similar to Degree recognized by UGC and a Post Graduate Degree in Business Management or Agriculture field with Corporate/Chartered Membership / similar professional qualifications in a recognized Professional Body with at least 08 years post qualifying experience at managerial level out of which 04 years should be in the senior Managerial post.
- Senior managerial level experience in Agriculture, Agri-Business, and Irrigation Management for five years would be highly desirable.
- Ability to analyze information, evaluate options, and think and plan strategically.
- Strong strategic leadership, management, and coordination skills.
- Proven experience in financial oversight, procurement, M&E, and working with government and donor-funded projects.
- Experience in building partnerships with the private sector and government agencies.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English and working knowledge of Sinhala and/or Tamil.

Duty Station:

- The project director will be based in Colombo and will have extensive travel to project areas.

Duration of Services:

- The incumbent will be appointed for the remaining program period up to 31 December 2027, subject to annual renewal based on the performance reviewed and assessed
- A 6-month probation period, and performance to be reviewed and assessed before confirmation

Salary Scale:

- Based on the Management Services Circular 01/2019

Process of Selection:

- Calling of applications by advertisements.
- Shortlisting of candidates using shortlisting criteria:

Qualification Score (out of 40 marks)	Bachelor's degree – 25 marks. Post Graduation or equivalent – 35 marks. Any relevant Professional Qualification, apart from degree: Additional 5 marks.
Experience Score (out of 60 marks)	Overall Experience (max. 40 marks): Basic range 8-12 years – 30 marks. Above 12 years – 40 marks. Less than 8 years – Nil marks. Senior Management Experience (max. 20 marks): 4-6 years – 15 marks. Above 6 years – 20 marks. Less than 4 years – Nil marks.
Total – 100 marks	Shortlisting Pass mark: 70

- Conducting interviews for the short-listed applicants. Written exam may be conducted before calling for an interview, on a need basis.
- **Method of Selection:** Experience & Qualifications: 60% (Other than the basic qualification), Interview Performance: 40%.
- Appointment of the selected candidate, after obtaining the required approvals.