

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Programme Officer (Agri Business Development) – Individual Consultancy Basis Full Time

Background

The Smallholder Agribusiness Resilience Project jointly funded by International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and Government of Sri Lanka is implementing under the purview of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation. This is a six-year project implemented in selected districts of Matale, Mannar, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya, Puttalam and Kurunegala. The total target is to reach 40,000 smallholder households in selected project locations of the above districts. The total project cost is US\$82 Million.

Development Objective: The goal of SARP will be to contribute to Sri Lanka's smallholder poverty reduction and food security in the Dry Zone region. The development objective is to build resilience and market participation of 40,000 rural smallholder households in the project area (180,000 persons). It is expected 50% income improvement of the SARP beneficiaries with the SARP assistance.

Project Area: SARP will focus on priority districts in the North, North Central, Central, and North West provinces of the dry zone. The project will focus on selected 260 tanks forming water management cascades in three river basins – the Malwathyu Oya, Mi Oya and Deduru Oya - identified jointly with the Department of Agrarian Development (DAD) as most vulnerable, ecologically and socially. The selected cascades are located in the so called 'hot spot' geographical areas where farmers and farming livelihoods are highly exposed and vulnerable to increasing climatic variability.

Target Group: SARP will target two categories of households – the farmers producing surpluses for the market. This group of farmers are considered as market-oriented smallholder poor farmers (90%) and more commercially oriented farmers (10%). The main category of farmers will be moderately poor (not extreme poor) households that are economically active in agriculture and are located in cascades with minor irrigation systems.

Landholding size – 90% of the selected farmers are in size class of less than 1 hectare. The land holding size of the more commercially oriented farmers having land parcels less than 2 hectares will be considered.

Project implementation arrangement - Project Management Unit has been established under the Lead Programme Agency (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation) and it will be supported by technical lead agencies under the Ministry that include the Department of Agrarian Development, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Animal Production and Health, Department of Irrigation and other line Ministries and agencies and relevant Provincial Departments.

Matching grant and credit facilities will be arranged to encourage project investment. In addition, capacity building trainings will be provided for the selected beneficiaries, farmer groups, service providers etc.

Project Components: The development objective of the project will be achieved through implementing two technical components focusing on capacity building for climate resilience and inclusive value chains (Component 1) and climate sensitive investments for climate resilience and inclusive value chains including last mile infrastructure (Component 2). Each of these components comprise two technical sub-components supported by a cross-cutting component that will service the project through effective coordination and management.

The project financing by components is tentatively: USD10.5 million for Component 1 – Capacity building for climate resilience and inclusive value chains (24.0 percent of project costs) and USD58.3 million for Component 2 – Investments for climate resilience and inclusive value chains (70 percent of project costs). For Component 3 – Programme management and coordination, project costs came to USD4.4 million (6.0 percent of project costs). Physical and price contingencies were estimated at 3.6 and 5.1 million respectively.

Component 1 of SARP will be implemented through two sub-components

The objective of sub-component 1.1 is to strengthen the capacity and skills of local service providers (ex; line agencies), water user associations, watershed management organizations and farmers to adapt to climate change/build climate resilience. This capacity building component will ensure effective implementation of sub-component 2.1 whilst contributing to policy dialogue. It will include a number of interrelated activities intended to improve service delivery by strengthening the human resource capacity of service providers and farmers to mobilize the community to prepare natural resource management plans, adapt to climate change through the use of climate smart technologies and have the skills and know-how to diversify livelihoods.

The objective of Sub-Component 1.2: Strengthening capacity for inclusive value chain development is to strengthen capacity for inclusive value chain development and value chain participation through trainings in business management, finance and marketing for producer organizations, Self Help Groups and individuals. This aims at improving their access to markets and enhancing their profitability and income. The Farm Business School methodology will be used as a main instrument for reaching target households within the community.

The Component 2 of SARP will be implemented through two sub-components,

Sub-Component 2.1: Investments for climate resilient production and infrastructure

The objective of this subcomponent is to enhance climate resilience and promote better production conditions through investments in the construction of water and land development infrastructure and adaptive farm technologies. Different types of investments will be supported including: a) water resources development including small scale irrigation (Cascade Water Resource Infrastructure Development, b) sustainable land management (Household Water Harvesting, Irrigation and Soil Conservation) and c) climate resilient farming practices.

Household / Livelihood Resilience and Nutrition: Supporting activities at household level will include the development of multi-purpose home gardens, nurseries, aquaculture and small-scale livestock development (goats and dairy cows) and other income generating activities as part of a livelihood's diversification strategy. Income generating activities will be adapted to the needs of each of the target beneficiary categories. Matching grants (a ceiling of \$550 per person) in the form of small livestock will be offered to the more vulnerable households

Sub-Component 2.2: Investment for inclusive value chain development

The objective of this sub-component is to increase profitability and income through investments in markets, feeder roads and service support centers for smallholder farmers, women and youth. Building capabilities of producers and groups through technical assistance, business skills training, social mentoring and producer group coaching will equip individuals and households to become resilient, reliable and successful actors in selected value chains. As such, participants will be able to make successful investments in their farm or non-farm enterprises informed by market and climate adaptation considerations.

Value chain development business plan initiatives under component 2.2 of the project will be implemented in three sub-categories: 4P sub-projects, Livelihood Development projects and youth business initiatives. The target given for the sub-activities are as follows.

i. 4P Agribusiness value chain development projects – 5,200 HHs

ii. Entrepreneurship Development (YED) Programme – 1,200 youths

iii. Livelihood development resilient projects – 16,900 HHs

Combinations of matching grants and loans will be offered to eligible entrepreneurial youth and smallholder farmers to provide innovative climate smart technologies, particularly with respect to resilience by individuals. The matching grants will be put in place to address the financial constraints of the target groups to enable them to procure the necessary inputs, equipment and infrastructure. The credit facility will be arranged to fill the gaps in investment plan mainly for working capital needs of the smallholder farmers. Matching grant support up-to 2,000 and 3,000 US\$ for 4P and youth beneficiaries can be considered respectively depending on the project investment plan and the project viability.

Scope of work of the consultant

Provide assistance to the Business development Specialists (4P, Youth, Livelihood) and Head Value Chain Development to expedite SARP project activities effectively and efficiently utilizing project funds in timely manner.

The Programme Officer is directly reporting to the Head- Value Chain Development.

Overall objective

Expedite and complete 4P, youth and Livelihood Resilience projects related activities as per the approved AWPB and procurement plan.

Tasks and responsibilities

The Programme Officer will be responsible for undertaking following tasks:

SARP related activities

Study the SARP concept and the project scope

Establish good relationship with SAPP PMU and field staff and gather necessary information.

Study and understand the different 4P, youth and livelihood Resilience building project concept, modalities and other business development related activities of SARP.

Study the matching credit facility arrangement and organizational strengthening support providing to the beneficiaries and FPOs.

Roles and responsibilities

- Arrange IMC meetings, BPEC meetings, Rapid Feasibility Study Field Visits of the EOIs/project proposals submitted
- Issue letters inviting BPEC members and line agency representatives for the BPEC meetings in consultation with relevant BDD Specialists.
- Study and understand the agribusiness development projects approved and, project implementation arrangements, farmer registration and progress monitoring of projects undertaken.
- Assist HUB Coordinators to arrange project orientation and farmer mobilization meetings at different locations as of the case may be in consultation with the respective Specialist.
- Assist respective BDD Specialists to set-up a business development project related tracking system for monitoring of the progress.
- Obtain approvals from the relevant authorities on matters related to projects approved.
- Inform line agencies regarding the projects approved and the assistance expected from them.
- Prepare farmer grant claim formats for each project approved and assist preparation of legal agreements and MOUs as of the case may be.
- Liaise with BDD project partners and attend 4P project implementation and progress monitoring activities undertaken by PMU.
- Arrange quarterly progress review meetings in consultation with the BDD Specialists and M&E Specialists at different project locations with the support of field staff.
- Establish and maintain a central filing system (both electronically and manually), and ensure all related documents are included in the respective files, to ensure ease of retrieval of information and the ease of follow up actions
- Arrange field visits to project locations for field verifications and monitoring visits arranged by M&E Specialist
- Submit monthly activity plan and work done reports at the end of each month.

Qualifications/Experience Required

Basic degree in Agriculture or related field with experience in Agribusiness Project Development and implementation with minimum of one year field experience. Work experience in foreign funded projects would be an added advantage.

Experience and Competencies

- Good knowledge of the institutional, technical, and commercial aspects of the projects
- worked experience in agriculture development related field activities
- Ability to travel extensively to project locations.
- Ability to write reports and documents
- Demonstrated computer skills, knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite especially, Word, Excel and PowerPoint;

- Ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously, set priorities, and work independently, or under minimum supervision;
- A commitment to achieve the outcomes and objectives of the organization;
- Proven experience as an IFAD funded projects or other international Agencies would be distinct advantage
- Experience and knowledge of the rules and procedures in force at the IFAD and the Government of Sri Lanka;

Appointment:

- Appointment is made on contract basis renewable annually until end of the project based on the performance and will be subjected to 06 months probationary period.

General Conditions

Age Limit - Below 60 years by the closing date of applications.

Monthly Payment:

Equivalent to PS 06 Category A level according to the Management Services Circular 01/2019

Location and period of execution

The Programme Officer (Agri Business Development) will be based in Project Management Unit at Colombo with extensive traveling to project locations is involved.