

***Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)***  
**For Seed Sales and Marketing Expert (SSME) to be positioned in Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. Khanapara, (a Govt. of Assam Undertaking) under the World Bank financed Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART)**

**(A) BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

1. The Government of Assam (GoA) through Government of India (GoI) has received a loan from the World Bank (IBRD: International Bank for Re-construction and Development) for the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART). The Project Development Objective (PDO) of APART is to *“add value and improve resilience of selected agri value chains focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs and to advance Assam’s COVID-19 response”*. The Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society, an autonomous body of the Govt. of Assam, is the apex coordinating and monitoring agency for the Project. ARIAS Society now intends to hire a **Seed Sales and Marketing Expert (SSME)** under APART (hereinafter referred as **SSME**) as Individual Consultant out of the loan proceeds, to be positioned in Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. Khanapara, under the World Bank financed APART, as per the terms given hereunder.
2. The APART will achieve the PDO by: **(i)** promoting investments in agri-enterprises, reducing the business and transaction costs, facilitating access to finance for agribusiness entrepreneurs, and, where appropriate, push for process, regulatory and/or policy change; **(ii)** supporting the development of a modern agri supply chain; improved information communication technologies (ICT) based farm information and intelligence services, and alternative marketing channels; and **(iii)** improving producers’ access to knowledge, technologies and infrastructure so that they are able to respond to market opportunities and climate variability **(iv)** supporting the State Health Society (SHS) in addressing the COVID-19 challenge. To achieve the PDO, the project is adopting clusters (production and enterprise) and value chain approach.
3. There are four components of APART: **The first component-A is Enabling Agri Enterprise Development**, with sub components being **(i)** enhancing state capacity to attract private investments, **(ii)** Setting up an Agribusiness Enterprise Development and Promotion Facility (EDPF) **(iii)** Agribusiness Investment Fund (AIF) support **(iv)** establishing stewardship councils. **The second component B is Facilitating Agro Cluster Development** with subcomponents being- **(i)** support establishment of cluster level Industry Associations (IAs), **(ii)** supply chain support. **The third component C is Fostering Market Led Production and Resilience Enhancement** with sub components being **(i)** promoting climate resilient technologies and their adoption **(ii)** facilitating market linkages through market intelligence and product aggregation **(iii)** facilitating access to and responsible use of financial services. **The fourth component D is project Management, Monitoring & Learning.**
4. Component-C of APART aims at enabling producers of the priority value chains, in the targeted clusters, to take advantage of the rapidly changing market demand, and enhance resilience of agriculture production systems for increasing production and managing risks associated with climate change. This would be achieved by: **(i)** improvements in production technologies and management practices through climate resilient solutions; **(ii)** facilitation of collective-action by producers by supporting the establishment of farmer producer organizations (FPOs); **(iii)** improving value realization at the farm level through improved cleaning, grading and packing of produce through Common Service Centers (CSCs) managed by FPOs; **(iv)** facilitation of market linkages through market information and intelligence; and **(v)** facilitating access to a broad set of financial services and their responsible use by producers. The component adopts a cluster based value-chain approach for providing support to producers for sustainably increasing their production and productivity; linking the producers with emerging supply chains, modernized wholesale agriculture markets and warehouses, under component B; and facilitating partnership opportunities with strategic and potential anchor and leading firms, supported under Component A.
5. Among the various agricultural inputs, seed is one of the very important and critical areas under APART. The Project has also engaged three international agencies i.e. International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), International Potato Centre (CIP) and World Vegetable Centre which are working closely with the Directorate of Agriculture, Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, Assam Agricultural University, District

- Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and Research Stations, among others to address the seed value chain issues.
6. As a first step, to make the State self sufficient in seed production, particularly for the key commodities like paddy, the Project has started paddy seed production with three Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) from the Sali season of 2021 with the technical support of IRRI and AAU, which is planned to be scaled up substantially in the coming years including in other crops. Further, initiative has been taken to enhance the production of foundation seeds in the farms under Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. Certified seed production would be mainly taken up with Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) supported by APART. One of the key roles of the **SSME** would be to market the certified seeds produced by the Assam Seed Corporation through the FPCs. The marketing channels among others would include the seed dealer/ distributor network across Assam, direct marketing to the FPCs and also through the schemes being implemented by the Directorate of Agriculture, Assam.

**(B) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT & SCOPE OF WORK**

7. The **SSME** will report to the **Managing Director, Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd.** and will support Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. in achieving the objective of sale and marketing of all the certified seeds produced by it with FPCs and so also in its own farms, if any. In particular the responsibilities of the **SSME** include the following:
- a) Seed Marketing Expert will be responsible for overall and smooth marketing of the certified seeds produced by the Assam Seed Corporation (ASCL) mainly through the trade channel i.e. the network of seed dealers and distributors across Assam
  - b) To carry out a survey of the seed market of Assam and document the total market size, market share of key players classified by public and private sector players, opportunities for ASCL's entry and strategies for market penetration and gradual increase in market share.
  - c) To ensure that the supply orders are received from the distributors well ahead of seed placement season and the seed is supplied and placed timely. Ensuring zero lag in seed placement.
  - d) Devising a system of appointment of new dealers and distributors based on market standing, years in business, turnover, farmer outreach, sale potential and capacity etc.
  - e) In order to ensure maximum lifting of the produced certified seeds, working out various schemes like Advance Booking Scheme (ABS), Cash Discount Scheme (CDS), Limited Credit Period (LCP) etc. Also preparing a system of incentives to well performing dealers/ distributors.
  - f) Working out a pricing strategy for ASCL seeds taking into consideration, the price to paid to seed producing FPCs, ASCL's margin, distributor/s price, dealer's price, farmers' price etc.
  - g) To prepare a rolling sales plan on three month/ quarterly basis and updating the same as per availability, market signals and competition activity
  - h) Timely collection from the market, ensuring that there are no pending receivables. Ensuring a system of deboarding underperforming dealers/ distributors and appointment of new ones. Also devising a system of Rolling Collection Plan (RCP) which will be updated regularly.
  - i) Ensuring timely but minimal sales return at the end of sales season. Also working out a sustainable plan for reducing sales return.
  - j) The **SSME** would explore seed business opportunities, outside the State i.e. in other North Eastern States. The **SSME** will reach out to concerned officials in the relevant Departments/ Agencies in these States to discuss and take forward the feasible options of establishing business relations and off-take of Assam's seeds by these States.
  - k) Be instrumental in the Information Education and Communication (IEC), outreach and branding activities for upscaling sale of ASCL seeds through involvement of farmers, FPCs, dealers, distributors etc. Strategizing developing a brand for ASCL Seeds and promoting the same among farmers, FPCs and seed trade channels.
  - l) Carrying out seed Demand Estimation Surveys (DES) for coming seasons and passing on the information to the production side. Ensuring minimal differences between the demand and actual supply of seeds.
  - m) Contribute to addressing any field issues with respect to ASCL seeds. Getting samples and information in case of questionable/ doubtful seeds and sending for testing & analysis as per prescribed norms with

- the help of local ADOs etc
- n) To work in close liaison with Directorate of Agriculture, Directorate of Horticulture, Assam Seed and Organic Certification Agency (ASOCA), Assam Agricultural University (AAU) and other stakeholders
  - o) Taking up field visits to Project locations, key dealers, distributors, seed farms etc with the permission of Reporting Officer. Occasional out of State visits may also be required, as directed.
  - p) Be in touch with other State Seed Corps, leading private seed companies for learning on best/innovative practices in seed marketing and replicating the promising ones in Assam through need based customization as applicable
  - q) Document success stories, innovative business models in seed marketing and disseminating at various forums as authorized
  - r) Contribute to APART newsletters like Krishi Rupantar, Rice Weekly, ATMA Newsletter, Farm Business Quarterly etc.
  - s) Any other related task given by Reporting Officer
- t) **Travel Requirements:** The SSME may be required to undertake field-visits and tours to project sites, FPCs, concerned Central and State ministries, Departments, Agencies, Institutes in Delhi and other states, with the approval of the reporting officer.

**(C) MINIMUM ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, SKILLSET, AND AGE ETC.**

6. **Educational Qualifications:** The SSME should hold a **Bachelors degree in Agriculture followed by MBA in Agribusiness Management/ Masters in Agricultural Economics/ Masters in Agricultural Marketing or a closely related field** from any recognized University/ Institution.
7. **Working Experience:** The SSME must possess at least **7 (seven) years** of professional experience in sales/ marketing of seeds in any public/ private sector organization.
8. **Computer Skills & Language:** The SSME must have proficiency in the use of Internet based applications, Graphics, MS Word, MS Excel and MS Power Point and other related applications.
9. **Language:** Fluency in English & Hindi.
10. **Age:** Age of the **candidate** should not be more than **45 years as on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2022**.
11. **Others:** The ideal candidate for the position of **SSME** should be a dynamic individual exhibiting leadership qualities, multi tasking, with ability to work under pressure and strict timelines. Specifically the incumbent should possess the following traits:
  - a) Punctual, reliable and strong communication skills (written and oral)
  - b) A highly self motivated team player & should be able to motivate the team
  - c) Paying attention to detail, prioritization & excellent time management
  - d) Quick learner with a positive attitude
  - e) Extrovert and fast learner

**(D) DURATION OF CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC.**

12. The tenure of **SSME** is intended for the entire duration of APART and co-terminus with the project period of APART. However, continuity of the **SSME** beyond one (1) year from the date of signing the agreement will depend upon his/her performance. The decision of the MD, ASCL shall be final and binding in this regard. The contract management shall be done as per the Project rules. Depending upon the sustainability of the initiative, Assam Seed Corporation may engage the services of **SSME** beyond the Project period through its own funding and resources.
13. The contract with **SSME** may be terminated by either side at any point of time during the contractual period by serving a 30 days' notice without assigning any reason and without thereby incurring any liability to the Govt. of Assam/ PCU/ ARIAS Society/ Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. This assignment is purely contractual in nature and shall not, under any circumstance, be extended beyond the APART's closing date. The Govt. of Assam/ PCU/ ARIAS Society/ Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. shall not undertake any responsibility for subsequent deployment of the incumbent.
14. The **SSME** shall not assign or sub-contract, *in whole or in part*, his/her obligations to perform under this

ToR, except with the reporting officer's prior written consent. The SSME will have to serve the assigned office on full time basis under overall command of Managing Director and provide services normally from the Office of the Assam Seed Corporation.

**(E) REMUNERATION, PAYMENT TERMS AND LEAVE ETC.**

15. Depending on *the qualifications*, experience, competencies, recent remuneration, etc. of the candidate, the consolidated annual remuneration of SSME will be in the range between **Rs. 11.40 lakh to Rs. 19.20 lakh** per year. *A higher start may be considered in case of exceptionally talented candidates, as decided by the SPD, ARIAS Society. However, in case the selected candidate's current remuneration with 30% enhancement comes below Rs. 11.40 lakh/year, the lower remuneration will be offered.* The annual remuneration will be inclusive of performance-linked-incentive, communication allowance, health/service related allowance, all taxes, cost of accommodation and food at Guwahati, conveyance to attend the office etc. The remuneration may be enhanced by the MD, Assam Seed Corporation, on an Annual Basis, as per provisions in the HR policy of ARIAS Society.
16. The remuneration will be given in equal monthly instalments and the Performance-Linked-Incentive (PLI) will be given quarterly by the MD, Assam Seed Corporation based on the performance and achievement against the mutually agreed deliverables by the SSME. Taxes shall be dealt with as per applicable laws.
17. Travelling, Boarding, Lodging and Food expenses for approved official tours outside Guwahati will be reimbursed as per HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
18. The provisions of leave would be as per provisions of HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
19. No house rent allowance or any other allowance shall be paid by the Project. No other payment whatsoever (except reimbursement of official travelling expenses) shall be made, except as agreed with the SSME by the Project.

**(E) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

20. The SSME will report to the Managing Director, Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. on a day-to-day basis. Quarterly/Half yearly/Annual performance review will be done by the MD, ASCL and a report will be submitted to SPD, ARIAS Society.

**(F) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED**

21. The SSME will be given access to all documents, reports, correspondence, contacts available with Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd, ARIAS Society, OPIU-Agriculture, OPIU-Horticulture and Food Processing and any other information available, as deemed necessary for smooth accomplishments of tasks assigned. The SSME will be provided with one office cubicle/workstation in the ASCL or as decided by the SPD, along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access. *The SSME however will not be provided with any clerical assistance.*

**Notes:**

1. *This is a draft ToR and SPD, ARIAS Society reserves the right to change, update or modify this ToR at any stage till recruitment process is completed.*
2. *ARIAS Society is an equal opportunity employer and women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.*

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