

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)
For Fertilizers and Soil Health Specialist (FSHS) (Individual Consultant) to be positioned in the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of ARIAS Society

(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 in targeted districts of Assam”. 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 **Fertilizer and Soil Health Specialist (FSHS)** under APART (hereinafter referred as **FSHS**) as Individual Consultant out of the loan proceeds, to be positioned in the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of ARIAS Society, 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. To achieve the PDO, the project will adopt clusters (production and enterprise) and value chain approach. The project is being implemented in 23 districts¹ of Assam.
3. There are four components of APART: **The first component 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 is Facilitating Agro Cluster Development** with subcomponents being- (i) support establishment of cluster level Industry Associations (IAs), (ii) supply chain support. **The third component 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 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 will adopt 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.

(B) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT & SCOPE

5. The **FSHS** will report to the **State Project Director (SPD), ARIAS Society** and will support the Project in achieving the Project Development Objective as per Project Appraisal Document (PAD), Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and Annual Work Plans (AWPs). In particular the responsibilities of the **FSHS** include the following:

¹ Nagaon, Sonitpur, Barpeta, Karbi Anglong, Kamrup, Dhubri, Golaghat, Kokrajhar, Lakhimpur, Darrang, Cachar, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Goalpara, Morigaon, Nalbari, Hojai, Biswanath, West Karbi Anglong, Kamrup Metro, Mankachar, Charaideo and Majuli

- a) Work closely with the **Directorate of Agriculture and Directorate of Horticulture & Food Processing** with regards to climate resilient market led production, on the demonstration programs under APART and with the Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) supported by APART.
- b) **Training and capacity building** of FPCs supported by APART on proper fertilizers and nutrient usage, importance of soil health and soil testing, also imparting needed knowledge of micro nutrients, nutrient supplements etc.
- c) Contribute to the **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** and **Integrated Nutrient Management (INM)** program under APART and capacitate the FPCs supported by APART on usage of **bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides and other bio-control measures etc.** Also, providing training to FPC member farmers on climate resilient/ eco friendly fertilizer application techniques like **Fertilizer Deep Placement (FDP) & super-granules** etc. Contributing to GHG emission measurement processes, working closely with the Assam Agricultural University and its network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), Research Stations etc.
- d) Work with the fertilizer cell in the Directorate of Agriculture and contribute towards **timely and adequate availability of fertilizers** in the districts, well before sowing/ planting season.
- e) Accompanying the State team for random inspection visits to fertilizers wholesalers and retailers.
- f) Work closely with the **Assam Agricultural University** (including its network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras/ Regional Agricultural Research Stations/ Horticulture Research Station) for training and capacity building of the FPCs.
- g) **Liaising and Coordination with international agencies/ CG Centres:** The project has engaged the services of International agencies/ Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centres for technical assistance in various value chains eg. International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), International Potato Centre (CIP) and World Vegetable Centre (WVC). The **FSHS** shall liaise and coordinate with these agencies for smooth conduct of project field activities, particularly crop demonstration and farmer trainings etc.
- h) **FSHS** will also work closely with the mustard value chain knowledge partners under APART i.e. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)- **Directorate of Rapeseed & Mustard Research (DRMR)**
- i) Guiding and handholding the district teams for successful conduct of agri input dealers cum farmers interactive meet particularly with respect to fertilizers.
- j) Ensuring that **soil testing** is carried out in the APART demo plots before taking up the demonstrations i.e. before sowing/ planting. This will be done in consultation with Directorate of Agriculture & Horticulture teams, District ATMAs and Environment Management Specialist at PCU, ARIAS Society
- k) Supporting the APART FPCs in obtaining fertilizer license as required.
- l) To liaise with Department of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Government of India for resolving any issues relating to fertilizers in State as well as APART in consultation with the Fertilizer Cell at Directorate of Agriculture.
- m) Documenting success stories, case studies, innovative business models, contributing to APART Newsletters and disseminating at various forums as directed.
- n) Perform any other related task assigned by the SPD.
- o) **Travel Requirements:** The **FSHS** may be required to undertake field-visits and tours to project sites, concerned central and state ministries, departments and agencies with the approval of the reporting officer.

(C) QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, SKILLSET, AND AGE ETC.

6. **Educational Qualifications:** The **FSHS** should hold a **Masters degree in Agriculture preferably in Soil Science/ Agronomy/ Agricultural Chemistry** from any recognized university/ Institution.
7. **Working Experience:** **FSHS** must possess at least **11 years** of professional experience working in the fertilizers sector in any public/ private sector organization.
8. **Computer Skills & Language:** The **FSHS** 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. Knowledge of local language would be an added advantage.
10. **Age:** Age of the candidate should not be more than **50 years as on 1st July, 2021.**

(D) DURATION OF CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC.

11. The tenure of **FSHS** is intended for the entire duration of APART and co-terminus with the project period of APART. However, continuity of the **FSHS** beyond one (1) year from the date of signing the agreement will depend upon his/her performance. The decision of the SPD shall be final and binding in this regard. The contract management shall be done as per the project rules.
12. The contract with **FSHS** 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. The 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 shall not undertake any responsibility for subsequent deployment of the incumbent.
13. The **FSHS** 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 **FSHS** will have to serve the assigned office on full time basis under overall command of SPD and provide services from PCU, ARIAS Society. However, during the assignment period **FSHS** may be transferred to any other office of the Project either at HQ (Guwahati) or in the Districts.

(E) REMUNERATION, PAYMENT TERMS AND LEAVE ETC.

14. Depending on the qualifications, experience, competencies, recent remuneration, etc. of the candidate, the consolidated annual remuneration for the **FSHS** will be in the range between **Rs. 18.00 lakh to Rs. 25.80 lakh** per year. However, in case the selected candidate's current remuneration with 30% enhancement comes below Rs. 18.00 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 on an Annual Basis, as per provisions in the HR policy of ARIAS Society.

Note: In case suitable candidates with experience as mentioned in para C(7) are not found then candidates with seven years of relevant experience may be considered at a lower remuneration as decided by the SPD.

15. The remuneration will be given in equal monthly installments and the Performance-Linked-Incentive (PLI) will be given quarterly based on the performance and achievement against the mutually agreed deliverables by the **FSHS**. Taxes shall be dealt with as per applicable laws.
16. Travelling, Boarding, Lodging and Food expenses for approved official tours outside Guwahati will be reimbursed as per HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
17. The provisions of leave would be as per provisions of HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
18. 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 **FSHS** by the Project.

(E) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

19. The **FSHS** will report to the State Project Director (SPD), ARIAS Society on a day-to-day basis. Quarterly/Half yearly/Annual performance review will be done by the Reporting officer.

(F) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED TO FSHS

20. The **FSHS** will be given access to all documents, reports, correspondence, contacts available with ARIAS Society, OPIU-Agri, CPIU-Agri and any other information available, as deemed necessary for smooth accomplishments of tasks assigned. The **FSHS** will be provided with one office cubicle/workstation in the PCU along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access. *The **FSHS** 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.*
