

ARIAS SOCIETY

Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society

(An Autonomous Body under Govt. of Assam)

Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of the World Bank Financed

Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART)

Agriculture complex, Khanapara, G.S. Road, Guwahati-781022 (Assam, India)

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Draft Indicative Terms of Reference (ToR):

Horticulture Specialist for the Operational Project Implementation Unit (OPIU)

Directorate of Horticulture, Government of Assam (GoA)

(A) BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

1. The Government of Assam (GoA) through Government of India (GoI) has applied for a loan from the World Bank for the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART). Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society is the apex coordinating and monitoring agency for APART while Department of Agriculture is one of the major implementing Departments in the project. The activities assigned to Department of Agriculture would be implemented through Directorate of Agriculture, Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB) and Assam Agricultural University (AAU) at the State level and Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) & District Agriculture Offices at District level. At the State level, Operational Project Implementation Units (OPIUs) have been set up in the Directorates/Agencies and at District level, District Level Coordination Committees (DLCCs) have been notified for smooth functioning of the project. ARIAS Society in conjunction with Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing now wishes to hire a Horticulture Specialist to be positioned at OPIU-Horticulture and Food Processing, under APART, on contractual basis.
2. The development objective of APART is “add value and improve resilience of selected agri value chains focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in targeted districts of Assam”.
3. The project will achieve the proposed 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 a cluster approach both in terms of production (production clusters) and processing (enterprise clusters).
4. There are four components to the project: **The first component is Enabling Agri enterprise Development**, with sub components being (i) enhancing state capacity to attract private investments, (ii) setting up of an Enterprise Development and Promotion Facility (EDPF) (iii) setting up of an Agribusiness Investment Fund (AIF) (iv) establishing stewardship councils. **The second component is Facilitating Agro Cluster Development** with sub-components 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 and Learning.**

(B) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT AND SCOPE

5. The **Horticulture Specialist** will be placed in the Directorate of **Horticulture & Food Processing** and will support the Directorate in project sub-components C-1 (Promoting Climate Resilient Technologies and their Adoption) and C-2 (Facilitating Market Linkages through Product Aggregation and Market Intelligence). **Horticulture Specialist** will have to liaise with Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) & District Agriculture Offices in the project districts in planning and implementation of the project activities w.r.t. to sub-components C-1 and C-

2. **Horticulture Specialist** will be an important link between the Department of Agriculture (at Secretariat, Dispur), and Project Coordination Unit (PCU) at ARIAS Society in effectively carrying out the project activities planned under sub-components C-1 and C-2.

6. *The key roles of the OPIU (Hort.) include the following:*

- a. Implementation of the concerned project component and overseeing & monitoring the implementation of the Directorate specific activities through their district/field level offices and identifying corrective actions;
- b. Preparation of the Annual Work Plan, consistent with the Project Development Objective and Project Appraisal Document (PAD);
- c. Management, co-ordination and technical support for implementation of sub-project activities
- d. Preparation of progress reports, including QPRs and Utilization Certificates for the funds released
- e. Managing the service providers and external experts relating to the OPIU for implementation of project activities
- f. Planning and design of innovative sub-projects
- g. Documenting and disseminating the success stories and lessons learnt from the successful projects interventions
- h. Arranging for trainings, workshops on effective implementation of the Project activities
- i. Developing close linkages and network among the different project stakeholder agencies
- j. Submitting Sanction and Fund Release proposals to the PCU
- k. Overall procurement planning, implementation, procurement oversight and supervision and responsible for meeting project's compliance with procurement methods / procedures as agreed with W. Bank;
- l. Providing monthly reports to the PCU as per the format to be made available by the ARIAS Society;
- m. Collecting updated data on the input/output indicators and consolidating and analyzing the data provided by District officers;
- n. Responsible for preparing, implementing and monitoring the OPIU annual action plans;
- o. Responsible for monitoring of the implementation of the individual activities of the sub-component within the purview of the respective departments; recommending personnel from Directorate for training and capacity building programs under APART

7. **Towards this (Para 6 above), Horticulture Specialist will-**

- a. Work closely with the Department of Agriculture at Secretariat, Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB), Assam Agricultural University (AAU) and ARIAS Society at State level and Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) & District Agriculture offices at District level. **Horticulture Specialist** will also keep close coordination with District Level Coordination Committees (DLCCs) in APART Districts. **Horticulture Specialist** would be instrumental in planning and implementation of project activities demonstrations, farmers trainings, farmer exposure visits, nursery entrepreneurship scheme under APART, contributing to the production aspects in value chain development, organizing buyer seller meets, innovative pilots etc.
- b. Support the Directorate in preparation of Annual Work Plan consistent with the Project Development Objective (PDO) and Project Appraisal Document (PAD). The Consultant would prepare regular progress reports (monthly, quarterly, half yearly, annual) and ensure timely submission to project authorities.
- c. Work closely with FPO Service Providers (particularly Horticultural crops dominant FPOs) and would be instrumental in organizing farmers in the APART Horticulture production clusters into Common Interest Groups (CIGs) which would later be formed and registered as FPOs.
- d. Work closely with Post Harvest Management Specialist for APART Common Service Centres (CSCs) program. It is planned that FPOs would come up with their own CSCs with part funding from project and part funding from FPOs themselves. CSCs would act as aggregation/pooling and primary processing hubs as well as bulk input sourcing and distribution points. These CSCs would also act as markets by registering as markets under the relevant Act. Work closely with other project agencies like Market Intelligence Cell – providing need based inputs and sourcing outputs from MIC and disseminating to farmers through FPOs and CSCs. These would include weather forecast, package of practices and precautionary measures to be adopted by farmers to cope up with sudden climate change events etc. Similarly, the Consultant would also work closely with Enterprise

Development and Promotion Facility (EDPF) Head Office and Sub-offices, being set up under the project on how Horticulture based farmer entrepreneurs can benefit from EDPF.

- e. Work closely with the International Agencies, planned to be involved in the project like World Vegetable Centre, International Potato Centre & Wageningen University etc.
- f. Conduct training for the project team and also need based short term induction trainings to service providers' teams as necessary.
- g. Provide state level data/information to Project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Agency and Project Management Information System (MIS).
- h. Carry out overall planning, implementation oversight and supervision and be responsible for meeting project's compliance with defined procedures as agreed with World Bank
- i. Ensure the project activities under sub-component C-1 and C-2, related to Horticulture crops are carried out in compliance with Environment Management Framework (EMF) and Social Management Framework (SMF).
- j. Any other related task as assigned by Director- Horticulture and Food Processing or Nodal Officer-APART (Horticulture and Food Processing)

k. Knowledge Creation and Dissemination

- i. Preparation of knowledge materials and products for farmers, FPOs & project staff etc
 - ii. Documentation and dissemination of case studies, success stories and innovative Horticultural models emerging from the project
 - iii. Dissemination of best practices and promoting cross learning across clusters, districts and states
 - iv. Participate in workshops and learning/exchange forums and representing the Directorate on these platforms
- l. Travel Requirements: Horticulture Specialist** will take up field-visits and tours to the project sites with the approval of Director-Horticulture and Food Processing. Occasional out of state visits may also be required as directed.

(C) QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, AGE ETC.

- 8. **Educational Qualification:** Master degree/ Post Graduate Diploma (min two years duration) in Horticulture or Agriculture with Specialization in Horticulture from any Govt. recognized University/Institutions.
- 9. **Working Experience:** At least seven (7) years of professional experience in farm management/ managing large scale agricultural production operations preferably with Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) or Climate Resilient Practices. **Horticulture Specialist** should have a thorough knowledge of package of practices, preferably for major Horticultural crops grown in Assam. Knowledge of Horticultural commodity value chains with focus on production aspects would be an added advantage. **Horticulture Specialist** should also be conversant with Government schemes in Horticulture sector.
- 10. **Computer Skills: Horticulture Specialist** must have experience of using Internet based applications, using and working with advanced word processing/spreadsheet including MS Word, MS Excel and MS Power Point and other related applications.
- 11. **Language:** Fluency in English. Candidates with knowledge of local language will be preferred.
- 12. **Age:** Age of the candidate should not be more than **45 years as on 1st January, 2020.**

(D) DURATION OF THE CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC

- 13. The tenure of **Horticulture Specialist** is intended for entire duration of the project and co-terminus with the project period of APART. However, continuity of the **Horticulture Specialist beyond eleven (11) months** from the date of signing the agreement will depend upon his/her performance.
- 14. The contract with **Horticulture Specialist** 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 ARIAS Society or the Government of Assam shall not undertake any responsibility for subsequent deployment of the consultant.

15. The **Horticulture Specialist** shall not assign or sub-contract, *in whole or in part*, his/her obligations except with the Reporting Officer's prior written consent. The **Horticulture Specialist** will have to serve the project on full time basis. He/she will provide services from the Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, Khanapara, Guwahati.

(E) REMUNERATION, PAYMENT TERMS AND LEAVE

16. Depending on the qualifications, experience, competency, and also the remuneration/pay package of the last assignment, the consolidated fixed monthly remuneration of the Horticulture Specialist will be determined and mutually agreed, which could be in the range of Rs. 6.60 lakh to Rs. 19.20 lakh per year. This annual rate shall be inclusive of all taxes, health/service related insurance, all allowances, cost of accommodation and food at Guwahati, conveyance to attend the office etc. Taxes as applicable will be dealt with as per applicable laws. The remuneration may be enhanced on an annual basis as per the prevailing rules.

If suitable candidates with above mentioned experience are not available, then candidates with minimum 05 years of experience in the fields indicated at para 9 above, may be considered for interviews/ tests at a lower remuneration package to be decided through mutual agreement with the candidate.

17. Travelling, Boarding & Lodging expenses for approved official tours outside Guwahati will be reimbursed as per prevailing project rules.

18. The remuneration will be given in equal monthly installments and the performance-linked-incentive will be given quarterly based on the performance and achievement against the mutually agreed deliverables by the **Horticulture Specialist**. Taxes as applicable shall be dealt with as per applicable laws.

19. The provisions of leave would be as per prevailing project rules.

(F) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

20. The **Horticulture Specialist** will report to the **Director- Horticulture and Food Processing**. The performance of **Horticulture Specialist** will be reviewed by **Director- Horticulture and Food Processing** and a consolidated quarterly report shall be submitted to the ARIAS Society for placing before the Chairman, GB, ARIAS Society & Agriculture Production Commissioner.

(G) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED TO THE HORTICULTURE SPECIALIST

21. Access to all the required documents, correspondence, and any other information associated with the project and as deemed necessary. The **Horticulture Specialist** will be provided with one office cubicle/workstation along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access. *The Horticulture Specialist however will not be provided with any clerical assistance.*

Note: 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.