ARIAS SOCIETY

Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society

(An Autonomous Body of the Govt.ofAssam)

Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Asian Development Bank financed

Assam Sustainable Wetland and Integrated Fisheries Transformation (SWIFT) Project

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Draft Indicative Terms of Reference(ToR)
Financial Management Specialist (FMS)

A) BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT AND CONTEXT OF ENGAGEMENT:

1. The Sustainable Wetlands and Integrated Fisheries Transformation (SWIFT) project seeks to promote the sustainable management of Assam's wetland (beel) ecosystems and fisheries development by actively engaging local communities in the management process and enhancing their economic and livelihood conditions. SWIFT's integrated approach combines institutional strengthening for ecosystem conservation with the development of the beel fisheries value chain. This dual focus benefits both the environment and the local community, ensuring long-term sustainability and economic growth.

2. Specifically, the project is aligned with the following impact: income of small-scale food producers of Assam enhanced (Assam Vision 2030, Fisheries Sector); and the project will have the following outcome: beel fishery productivity and community-based sustainable wetland management enhanced in the state of Assam. Three outputs are envisaged.

3. **Output 1: Institutional capacity and regulatory framework for sustainable beel ecosystem and fisheries management strengthened**. The output aims to reform the current government system on beel management, particularly the leasing system. It will support the following activities: (i) updating relevant beel management and fishery acts, regulations, and rules for community-based management, and preparing public awareness-raising materials; (ii) preparing rules or guidelines for community-based beel management system, considering various hydrology of wetlands, channels, agro ecological situations, and providing necessary training on the subject; (iii) preparing a sustainable operational model as a project exit plan; (iv) capacity building and training of the Department of Fisheries (DoF) staff and other allied public institutions, including the state's wetland authority, in latest fisheries stocking and conservation techniques, community-based beel management best practices, and use of digital technologies; (v) supporting research and development in beel management and fisheries, including carbon sequestration benefits from beel management, climate change impacts and adaptation measures, seed production and breeding, and ex-situ conservation of endangered species; (vi) strengthening beel community-based institutions – specifically Beel Development Committees (BDCs); and (vii) operating beel management monitoring system through the development of project information system and beel fisheries knowledge platform, complementing the state wetland authority's wetland notification process.

4. **Output 2: Community-based fisheries business developed and beel community income diversified**. The project will ensure the sustainability of beel community-based institutions by enhancing their financial viability and strengthening women's and marginalized groups' participation in economic activities. The project will: (i) support the development or strengthening of the Beel Development Committees (BDCs), some of whom are or will operate as fisheries cooperatives; (ii) conduct capacity building for these BDCs through training in organizational and financial management, as well as branding, marketing and processing along the value chain; (ii) provide public sector support for the development of community-based fisheries value chain infrastructure, including fish landing sites and local aggregation points/centers; (iii) promote private sector led fisheries commercialization by creating matching grant facilities for hatchery, feed mill, primary processing and other value addition initiatives; and (iv) support other income generation activities for self-help

groups through strengthening or revitalizing self-help groups based on their needs assessment.

5. **Output 3:** Beel conservation and restoration planned and managed. The project addresses habitat loss caused by the loss of connectivity with the adjacent river and decreasing water depth, and macrophyte growth that hinders fisheries productivity in beel's. The beel restoration approaches will focus on: (i) beel demarcation; (ii) beel rejuvenation, such as de-weeding and desilting; and (iii) beel's water inflow and outflow control improvement, including desilting, constructing embankments, installing silt traps, building water retaining structures and peripheral bunds, and installing bio-filters.

6. **Implementation arrangements:** A dedicated SWIFT Project Management Unit (PMU) has been be established within ARIAS Society, headed by the State Project Director (SPD), ARIASS, and is responsible for overall project execution and ensuring the achievement of project objectives. Further, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) (currently housed in the ARIAS Society) is also established under the leadership of the Director of Fisheries (DoF), Guwahati. Moreover there are, five (5) Cluster Project Implementation Unit (CPIUs) spread across the five Zonal Offices of the Fisheries Department, each headed by the Deputy Director of Fisheries (DDF). The CPIU managed by DDF shall be reporting to the PIU headed by the Director of Fisheries.

7. **Context of the Engagement:** The SWIFT Project is financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) involves significant financial transactions relating to procurement of goods, works, consulting and non-consulting services, community grants, operating costs, and other project expenditures, which require sound financial planning, accounting, budgeting, fund flow management, disbursement, financial reporting, and internal control systems. The PIU is responsible for coordinating financial management functions across the CPIUs, ensuring compliance with the Project Administration Manual (PAM), Loan Agreement, ADB Loan Disbursement Handbook, Financial Management Manual, Government of Assam financial rules, and other applicable financial management requirements. The PIU is also responsible for consolidation of financial information received from the CPIUs, preparation of withdrawal applications, monitoring project disbursements, reconciliation of financial records, preparation of financial reports and project financial statements, facilitation of project audits, and strengthening internal financial controls and financial management systems. To provide dedicated professional support for these critical financial management functions, **the Project intends to engage one Financial Management Specialist (FMS) at the PIU on contractual basis**. The Financial Management Specialist will provide technical leadership and operational support in budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, disbursement management, financial analysis, audit coordination, internal control, financial systems improvement, and compliance with the financial management requirements of the Government of Assam and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). This Terms of Reference (ToR) has been developed accordingly

B) OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT:

6. The overall objective of the assignment is to strengthen the financial management systems of the Assam SWIFT Project at the PIU level by ensuring efficient planning, budgeting, accounting, fund flow management, disbursement, financial reporting, audit coordination, and compliance with the financial management requirements of the Government of Assam and the ADB. The **Financial Management Specialist** (**FMS)-PIU** shall provide technical and operational support to the PIU, PMU, and CPIUs in maintaining sound financial management practices; ensure timely preparation of budgets, withdrawal applications, project financial statements, and periodic financial reports; monitor project expenditures and disbursements against approved budgets and procurement plans; strengthen accounting systems, Chart of Accounts, financial reporting automation, and internal controls; coordinate financial information from the CPIUs for consolidation at the PIU and project levels; facilitate internal and external audits and implementation of audit recommendations; and ensure that all financial transactions are properly authorized, accurately recorded, adequately documented, and fully compliant with the Project Administration Manual (PAM), Financial Management Manual, ADB Loan Disbursement Handbook, Loan Agreement, and the applicable financial rules, regulations, and accounting

standards of the Government of Assam. The **FMS-PIU** shall also support financial analysis, monitoring of disbursement performance, reconciliation of project accounts, and timely reporting to enable effective financial oversight and informed project management.

C) TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

7. Ensure that separate accounts for the project are duly maintained and that receipts and expenditures are duly segregated by financing source (e.g., ADB and counterpart funding).

8. Support SWIFT PIU in preparing budget estimates for the project. Follow up with CPIUs, in preparing and providing annual and quarterly budget estimates / revised budget estimates on time.

9. Monitor and ensure timely preparation/submission of withdrawal applications (WA) and in collection and filing of all supporting documentation in accordance with the relevant procedures outlined in the ADB loan disbursement handbook. Follow up with CPIU for submission of invoices and other documents / claims. Ensure that Withdrawal Applications are submitted regularly and on time in CPD.

10. Assist in conducting quarterly reconciliation of the project disbursement records and ADB's disbursement data available in the LFIS to ensure the completeness and correctness of the project records and financial reports/statements. Follow-up on any discrepancies to ensure these are resolved in a prompt manner.

11. Assist in improving the FM systems including setting up and integrating the accounting software and automating the financial reporting required for ADB to the extent feasible.

12. Provide necessary assistance to the SWIFT PMU and PIUs in all FM activities including budget preparation, monitoring, Invoice reviews and payment, accounting, and record maintenance. Review of monthly financial statements and assist in preparation of quarterly reports for consolidation in PMU.

13. Support the PMU and PIU to improve and maintain robust internal controls.

14. Assist in planning and implementing appropriate Chart of Accounts (CoA) in line with cost components documented in PAM.

15. Ensure that (a) all payments are duly prepared, reviewed, authorized, and recorded in the accounting system correctly and in a timely manner; all expenditure items meet the eligibility criteria as defined in the ADB financing agreement, and are supported by adequate documentation (invoice, contracts, evidence of payments etc.) as outlined in the ADB loan disbursement handbook.

16. Conduct periodic analysis of the execution of the procurement and disbursement projections and provide analysis of the any significant variances between planned vs actual expenditures.

17. Assist the SWIFT Project team in preparing financial information and analysis to be included in the quarterly progress reports in an agreed format to be submitted to ADB.

18. Assist the PMU in preparing the consolidated project financial statements in an agreed format to be submitted to ADB.

19. Support PMU in getting the consolidated project financial statements audited and to ensure that the audit report, the audited project financial statements and the management letter(s) are submitted to ADB in a timely manner.

20. Review both internal and external audit reports and support the PIU in addressing issues or recommendations identified during the audit.

21. Implement internal and external auditors' recommendations to improve PIU's financial processes and controls and regularly monitor the progress of corrective actions.

22. Support the project team to ensure that all financial records are orderly filed and stored in a physically safe location and electronic backups are taken regularly.

23. Assist the project in other tasks as assigned by the DoF cum APD.

24. Support PIU in preparing budget estimates for the project.

25. Assist in preparing withdrawal applications (WA) and in collection and filing of all supporting documentation in accordance with the relevant procedures outlined in the ADB loan disbursement handbook. Ensure that WAs are submitted regularly and on time.

26. Assist PMU in improving the FM systems including setting up and integrating the accounting software and automating the financial reporting required for ADB to the extent feasible.

27. Support the PIU & CPIUs to improve and maintain robust internal controls.

28. Ensure that (a) all payments are duly prepared, reviewed, authorized, and recorded in the accounting system correctly and in a timely manner; all expenditure items meet the eligibility criteria as defined in the ADB financing agreement, and are supported by adequate documentation (invoice, contracts, evidence of payments etc.) as outlined in the ADB loan disbursement handbook.

29. Conduct periodic analysis of the execution of the procurement and disbursement projections and provide analysis of the any significant variances between planned vs actual expenditures.

30. Assist the team in preparing financial information and analysis to be included in the quarterly progress reports in an agreed format to be submitted to ADB.

31. Coordinate with the Cluster PIU Accountants and collecting all financial information of the clusters as per the prescribed format shared with them.

32. Lead PIU in preparing consolidated PIU and cluster PIU's project financial statements in an agreed format to be submitted to PMU for further consolidation at a project level.

33. Undertake any other tasks as assigned by the DDF/DPD/DoF/SFMS-PMU/SPD.

D) ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION, EXPERIENCE & DESIRED SKILL:

34. **ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION:** Masters in Commerce/ MBA Finance or related field from any Govt. recognized institute/ University**.**

35. **ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE:** At least **7 (seven)** years' relevant experience in financial management, accounting, auditing with professional firms, government agencies.

36. Experience in externally funded projects/programs financed by ADB or World Bank and a sound knowledge of relevant ADB procedures/policies.

E) DURATION OF CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC

37. The initial contract period of the **Financial Management Specialist (FMS)-PIU** will be for eleven (11) months and the contract shall become effective from the date of signing of the agreement by the **RFS-PIU** and the SPD, followed by the date of joining by the **FMS-PIU** and shall automatically terminate after eleven (11) months, if not terminated or cancelled or closed earlier by SPD based on the provisions of the contract agreement. The continuity of the **FMS-PIU** beyond eleven (11) months will depend upon **FMS-PIU** performance, requirement of the position, and availability of project funds, and as decided by the SPD, ARIAS Society based on the feedback from the Director of Fisheries, Head of PIU and the decision shall be final and binding in this regard.

    Note: Further, as per the Executive Order No. FEC (II).670250/5 Dated 26-02-2026 of the Finance Department, Govt. of Assam, any renewal or extension of contract for contractual personnel shall be effected only after a clear break of at least two (2) working days between the expiry of the existing contract and commencement of the renewed/extended contract and availing prior concurrence of Finance dept as per DFPR, 2022.

38. Pursuant to the provision in the contract agreement, the contract agreement with the **FMS-PIU** may be terminated by either side at any point of time during the contractual period by serving a 30 (thirty) days' notice without assigning any reason and without thereby incurring any liability to the Director of Fisheries/ Govt. of Assam/ ARIAS Society. The assignment is purely contractual in nature and shall not, under any circumstance, be extended beyond the closing

date of SWIFT project. The Govt. of Assam/ ARIAS Society shall not undertake any responsibility for subsequent deployment of the incumbent.

39. The **FMS-PIU** 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 **FMS -PIU** will have to serve the PIU on full time basis and report to the Deputy Project Director (DPF) under the overall command of the Director of Fisheries, Assam.

40. The assignment is purely contractual in nature and the SPD-ARIAS Society reserves the right to terminate or cancel the assignment and/or shorten its duration or extend the duration, irrespective of whether the assigned tasks of **FMS -PIU** as per the ToR has been completed or not, based on the requirements or availability of the project funds or performance and/or conduct of the **FMS -PIU** or for convenience as determined by the SPD ARIAS Society, without thereby causing any liability to the **FMS -PIU** or to the Government of Assam or the Government of India or the ADB. Whatever be the reason for termination, the **FMS -PIU** shall comply with the termination order forthwith without any reservation.

F) REMUNERATION AND PAYMENT TERMS:

41. Depending on the qualifications, experience, competency, and remuneration of the last assignment of the candidate, the consolidated fixed remuneration of the successful candidates selected for the position of **Financial Management Specialist (FMS)-PIU** will be determined and mutually agreed with the selected candidate, which shall be within the range of **Rs.90,000/= to Rs.1,30,000/= per month**. Taxes as applicable shall be dealt with as per applicable laws.

42. In cases the successful/selected candidate's last drawn monthly remuneration is lesser than the advertised range of the consolidated fixed monthly remuneration, the offered remuneration shall be minimum of the range of remuneration mentioned above, unless otherwise approved by the competent authority based on exceptional merit and project requirements.

43. In cases the successful/selected candidate's last drawn monthly remuneration is higher than the advertised range of the consolidated fixed monthly remuneration, the offered remuneration shall be maximum of the range of remuneration mentioned above, unless otherwise approved by the competent authority based on exceptional merit and project requirements.

44. In case the successful/selected candidate happens to be a retired Government Servant, relevant rules of the Government shall be applicable and the monthly fixed remuneration of the incumbent shall be fixed based on the principle of "Last Pay – Minus – Pension" of the Government of Assam.

45. Travelling, Boarding, Lodging and Food expenses for approved official tours outside the Guwahati/PIU/HQ will be reimbursed as per the HR Policy of ARIAS Society and as provided in the contract agreement.

G) TRAVEL REQUIREMENT:

46. The **Financial Management Specialist (FMS)-PIU** will be required to undertake field-visits and tours to the project sites with the approval of Director of Fisheries. The **FMS** may also be required to visit out of state for training/exposure as approved by the SPD.

H) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

47. The **FMS -PIU** will report to the Director of Fisheries, Assam and the Deputy Project Director (DPD), Directorate of Fisheries, Assam. The **FMS -PIU** will also be required to coordinate and report to the Sr. Financial Management Specialist-PMU take instructions from him. The quality of service and performance of the **FMS-PIU** will be reviewed by the DPD and the Director of Fisheries on a quarterly basis and the annual performance review will be undertaken by the SPD based on the feedback provided by the PIU.

I) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE DIRECTORATE OF FISHERIES

48. The **FMS -PIU** will be given access to all documents, reports, correspondence, contacts available and any other information as deemed necessary for smooth accomplishments of tasks assigned.

49. The **FMS -PIU** will be provided with one office cubicle in the PIU along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access.

50. The PIU pay the fixed monthly remuneration as per the contract agreement. No house rent allowance or any other allowance shall be paid by the PIU. No other payment whatsoever (except reimbursement of travelling expenses and project allowance) shall be paid, except as agreed between the RFS and the DoF, Directorate of Fishery.

51. 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.