



ARIAS SOCIETY

Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society

(An Autonomous Body under Govt. of Assam)

Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Asian Development Bank financed Sustainable Wetland and Integrated Fisheries Transformation (SWIFT) Project

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

Tel: +91361-2332004; website: www.arias.in;

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

A) BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT:

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.

B) Objective of the Assignment:

6. The services to be provided by the team of national consultants serving in the capacity of contractual staff, will assist the PMU and PIU in implementing project activities to achieve the expected objectives. This multidisciplinary team composed of national experts, will collaborate with DoF and partner agencies on project management, implementation, and capacity building. They will also ensure that safeguard measures are upheld, contributing to the successful delivery of the project's outputs and overall outcomes.
7. A dedicated SWIFT PMU has been established within ARIAS Society, headed by the SPD, ARIAS Society, and is responsible for overall project execution and ensuring the achievement of project objectives.
8. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU), under the leadership of the Director of Fisheries is placed at Directorate of Fisheries, Guwahati and is also spread across the five Zonal Offices (i.e. Cluster Project Implementation Unit) of the Department of Fisheries, each headed by the Deputy Director of the Zonal Office.
9. ARIAS Society now intends to engage a **Financial Management Specialist (FMS)** on contractual basis to be positioned at Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the SWIFT Project.

C) TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

10. 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).
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.

16. Support the PMU and PIU to improve and maintain robust internal controls.
17. Assist in planning and implementing appropriate Chart of Accounts (CoA) in line with cost components documented in PAM.
18. 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.
19. 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.
20. 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.
21. Assist the PMU in preparing the consolidated project financial statements in an agreed format to be submitted to ADB.
22. 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.
23. Review both internal and external audit reports and support the PIU in addressing issues or recommendations identified during the audit.
24. Implement internal and external auditors' recommendations to improve PIU's financial processes and controls and regularly monitor the progress of corrective actions.
25. 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.
26. Assist the project in other tasks as assigned by the DoF cum APD.
27. Support PIU in preparing budget estimates for the project.
28. 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.
29. 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.
30. Support the PIU & CPIUs to improve and maintain robust internal controls.
31. 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.
32. 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.
33. 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.
34. Coordinate with the Cluster PIU Accountants and collecting all financial information of the clusters as per the prescribed format shared with them.
35. 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.

D) ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE & DESIRED SKILL:

36. Masters in Commerce/ MBA Finance or related field.
37. At least 7 years' relevant experience in financial management, accounting, auditing with professional firms, government agencies.
38. 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

39. The initial contract period of FMS will be for eleven (11) months and the continuity of the FMS beyond eleven (11) months from the date of signing the agreement will depend upon his/her performance and the requirement of the position etc as mentioned below. The decision of the SPD ARIAS Society shall be final and binding in this regard.
40. The contract with FMS 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/ ARIAS Society. The assignment is purely contractual in nature and shall not, under any circumstance, be extended beyond the SWIFT's closing date. The Govt. of Assam/ ARIAS Society shall not undertake any responsibility for subsequent deployment of the incumbent.
41. The FMS 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 will have to serve the assigned office on full time basis under overall command of Director of Fisheries cum APD.
42. 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 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 or for convenience as determined by the SPD ARIAS Society, without thereby causing any liability to the GoA or the Government of India or the ADB. Whatever be the reason for termination, the FMS shall comply with the termination order forthwith without any reservation.

F) REMUNERATION AND PAYMENT TERMS:

43. Depending on the qualifications, experience, competency, and also the remuneration/ CTC of the last assignment, the consolidated fixed annual Cost to project (CTP) of the FMS will be determined and mutually agreed with the successful candidate, which would be in the range between **Rs.11.40 lakh to Rs.19.20 lakh per year**. The agreed annual CTP shall be inclusive of remuneration, performance-linked- incentive, communication allowance, health/service related allowance, all taxes, cost of accommodation and food at Guwahati, conveyance to attend the PIU, etc.
44. The remuneration will be given in equal monthly installments and the performance-linked-incentive will be given on quarterly basis based on the performance and achievement against the mutually agreed deliverables by the FMS. Taxes as applicable shall be dealt with as per applicable laws. The remuneration may be enhanced on an Annual Basis, based on the HR Policy of the ARIAS Society.
45. Travelling, Boarding, Lodging and Food expenses for approved official tours outside Guwahati will be reimbursed as per the HR Policy of ARIAS Society and as provided in the contract agreement. For travel outside the State, the Travelling and Boarding & Lodging expenses will be reimbursed as per the HR Policy of the ARIAS Society and as provided in the contract agreement.

G) TRAVEL REQUIREMENT:

46. The FMS will be required to undertake field-visits and tours to the project sites with the approval of Director of Fisheries cum APD. Occasional out of state visits may also be required as directed by the DoF cum APD.

H) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

47. The FMS will report to the Director of Fisheries/DPD. The quality of service and performance of the FMS will be reviewed by the Director of Fisheries/DPD on a quarterly basis and the annual performance review will be done as per the HR Policy of the ARIAS Society.

I) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE DIRECTORATE OF FISHERIES

48. 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. Will be provided with one office cubicle in the PIU along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access.
50. Will 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 FMS and the DoF cum APD, 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.