

Integrated Rural Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP)

Project Officer (Rural Finance Management) - Category F

Terms of Reference (TOR)

01. Introduction to the Project

The Integrated Rural Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) is implemented under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands & Irrigation and jointly funded by the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the World Bank (WB). The IRDCRP is a five-year development project (2025–2030) with a total investment of US\$ 103 million. The project has been designed to uplift small- and medium-scale holdings in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and plantation for addressing critical gaps along the value chain from farm to folk. Its primary objective is to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and climate resilience in agri-food production within project areas, thereby empowering rural communities, strengthening food security, and ensuring sustainable growth for the nation.

The project objective is to improve climate resilience of farmer families and productivity of irrigated agriculture in selected climatically vulnerable Hot-Spot Areas in Sri Lanka. This will be achieved through increased adaptation of climate-resilient agricultural practices and technologies, and increased access to markets in targeted smallholder farming communities. Project beneficiaries will include smallholder farmers, producer organizations, and agribusiness entrepreneurs who will benefit from improved and modernized irrigation, drainage and flood protection systems; adoption and dissemination of advanced CSA technologies on high efficiency irrigated agriculture techniques and practices; agriculture diversification; and improved market access.

02. Scope of work:

Assist to development of IRDCRP's rural financial service strategy to the Rural Finance management Specialist (RFMS). Working closely with the agribusiness specialist and other relevant staff at PMU and Implementation Support Firm (ISF). The incumbent will familiarize themselves with IRDCRP's investments in agribusiness, production and other elements of the value chain, including any water management approaches, which are expected to be market driven (water user groups) etc. He/She will understand the cash flows of these businesses, and the financial service needs of the population (clients) who will be operating these businesses. IT will pay special attention to elements which restrict project client's access to traditional financial products, inclusive of the status of financial literacy.

Closely work with the RFMS, on the assessment of the demand for financial services, will assess the supply of financial services which will include the agrarian banks, but not exclusively. From this information and in conjunction with senior PMU staff and an external consultant resource, will develop a rural finance strategy for the project. The strategy should include: Initial scoping and diagnostic of potential financial service partners including agrarian banks but not exclusively. This diagnostic will review outreach, liquidity, availability and structure and requirements of finance products (particularly credit) and lead to potentially working partnerships with the financial institutions.

Provide support to generate of a series of recommended activities towards achieving the objectives, including partnerships, technical assistance requirements, capacity building (for clients and financial institutions) product development, IRDCRP project processes and guidelines, among other elements to ensure achievement of project interventions and integration with the annual workplan and budget.

The strategy will also include an assessment and recommendations on how matching grants may be administered and by whom, in order to catalyze lending and financial inclusions by the financial institution partners.

Assist to prepare rural finance strategy and will be developed and approved by the PMU and reviewed by an WB Supervision mission for integration into future workplans and budgets.

The rural finance strategy will be expected to identify capacity building needs of the project's clients, as well as that of the partner financial institutions vis a vis the project's rural finance objective. The incumbent, will identify the support required to deliver this capacity building and technical assistance and may therefore include but not be limited to (subject to the rural strategy finding/activities):

Work with financial institutions in accordance to their needs and diagnostic to develop appropriate financial products (primarily credit) that may or may not utilize the matching grants as a tool. This may include technical assistance, development of product pilots and establishment of links with other project activities etc. These products should attempt to address the needs of the market, and the barriers which potential borrowers have encountered to date.

- Assist to train project staff on re financing model of IRDCRP, stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Assist to prepare set criteria to assess the performance of partner financial institutions, including quarterly reporting formats and coordinate the performance assessment in order to assess the capacity of the bank and their staff;

- Work with the partner financial institutions to develop, design and layout of all financial institution staff/product training materials related to designed products, and any related policies and procedures.
- If assessed, work with financial institutions to develop financial literacy activities inclusive of training materials. In the event of several partners FIs who are agrarian banks, this literacy may take advantage of standardization of materials and approaches. • Participate in organizing workshop(s) related to the business symposia, agro-enterprise development forums etc
- Facilitate linkages between financial institutions and project clients, including partner financial institutions in farmer field school days, market days etc.
- Where there is an opportunity, consider the development of value chain financial products between financial institutions, and any lead or anchor firms involved in the project.
- Closely work with the Implementation Support Firm (ISF) under PMU, PUCs, Producer Organizations, Producer Groups established/formed by various agencies/institutions
- Any other duties assigned by the Project Director

03. Skills

- Excellent oral and written skills; excellent drafting, formulation, reporting skills. Solid overall computer literacy, including proficiency in various MS Office (Excel, Word, etc.) and email/internet;
- Excellent interpersonal skills; culturally and socially sensitive; ability to work inclusively and collaboratively with a range of partners, including grassroots community members, and youth organizations, and authorities at different levels; familiarity with tools and approaches of communications for development;
 - * Fluency in Sinhala and English. Ability to communicate with Tamil will be distinct advantage
 - * Excellent oral and written skills; excellent drafting, formulation, reporting skills;
 - * Ability to work and adapt professionally and effectively in a challenging environment;
 - * Self-motivated, ability to work with minimum supervision; ability to work with tight deadlines

04. Category F- Basic Qualifications and Experience Required

(1) or (2) or (3) below.

01. A Bachelor's Degree/ A qualification recognized by the University Grants Commission as an equivalent qualification to a degree in the relevant field.

or

A certificate of proficiency not below than the National Vocational Qualification Level 7 issued by a Technical/ Vocational Training Institute accepted by Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, relevant to the technical field of the post.

and

At least 02 years of experience in the required area of specialization.

02. A certificate of proficiency not below than the National Vocational Qualification Level 6 issued by a Technical/ Vocational Training Institute accepted by Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, relevant to the technical field of the post.

and

At least 05 years of experience in the required area of specialization.

03. A certificate of proficiency not below than the National Vocational Qualification Level 5 issued by a Technical/ Vocational Training Institute accepted by Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, relevant to the technical field of the post.

and

At least 08 years of experience in the required area of specialization.

05. Travels to Project Areas

Require to travel project implementation areas when required

06. Working Location/Duty station

PMU at Colombo/Battaramulla