

ARIAS SOCIETY

Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society

(An Autonomous Body under Govt. of Assam)

Project Coordination Unit of the World Bank financed

Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART)

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

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Draft Indicative Terms of Reference (ToR) **Public Information cum Communication Specialist (PICS)**

(A) BACKGROUND & 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). The Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society is the apex coordinating and monitoring agency at state level for the Project. The ARIAS Society now intends to apply a portion of this loan for engagement of a **Public Information cum Communication Specialist (PICS)** on contractual basis to be positioned at Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of ARIAS Society.
2. The development objective of APART is “add value and improve resilience in selected agricultural value chains, focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in targeted districts of Assam”.
3. There are four components to the 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 sector 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 and Learning.
4. The project 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 better able to respond to market opportunities and climate variability.
5. Given the enhanced complexities, new initiatives and innovative nature of the project interventions, it is felt that a very strong communication and public information system needs to be developed in the project. In addition, the project would be hiring an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign agency on a competitive basis for wide dissemination of project messages among the stakeholders. In light of above, it has been decided to hire a **PICS**.

(B) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT AND SCOPE

6. The **PICS** will *inter alia* assist the project in planning, designing and implementing the IEC activities and will monitor & liaison with the consultancy service provider hired by the project for IEC Campaign. Moreover, the **PICS** will be responsible for preparing the content for updating the ARIAS Society website, Social Media pages and blogs. He/She will also be responsible for designing the external communication for press notes, media releases and would assist the State Project Director (SPD), ARIAS Society during press conferences and other such forums. **PICS** may also be involved in training and capacity building of the project staff.
7. *The key responsibilities include the following:*
 - a. In consultation with other Specialists of PMU, the **PICS** will provide overall support in communications needs assessments and outreach strategy, planning, designing and implementing the IEC activities. Towards this H/She will undertake a detailed information requirement analysis and develop a realistic

state-wide and grassroots Information, Education & Communication (IEC) plan and roll out the same with approval of the SPD through the IEC Consultancy firm engaged by the project.

- b. Manage and monitor the performance of the IEC Consultancy firm engaged by the project and report to the SPD from time to time, and suggest corrective measures.
- c. Organize workshops among different stakeholders to assess the need and demand of different IEC materials in coordination with the IEC agency hired for IEC campaign.
- d. To co-ordinate with the Project Implementation Units (PIUs), District Level Coordination Committees (DLCCs), Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) for the development and implementation of communication strategy for the project at state and district level.
- e. Production of effective communication documents which will speak the outcome, achievement and impact of the project activities, including newsletters, press releases, advertorials, feature articles, marketing collaterals, web pages, social media, internal communication, and video/multimedia scripts, etc
- f. Identify (a) primary, secondary, and tertiary audiences to be targeted under the project; (b) identify and craft priority communication messages and delivery channels to reach priority audiences
- g. Proof reading, editing project reports, handouts etc intended for external audience, W. Bank, GoA & Gol
- h. Facilitate selection of suitable cost-effective media channels for dissemination of IEC messages.
- i. Assess the effectiveness of IEC programs through periodic reviews, evaluations and impact assessments and to make necessary changes in strategy and materials and ensuring maintenance of quality throughout.
- j. Providing information to the project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Agency.
- k. Document the success stories, best practices, innovative models and lessons learnt and disseminating these at various forums as needed. Take lead in making documentary films on the project achievements.
- l. Prepare monthly and quarterly progress reports on the agreed action plan of IEC campaign.
- m. Support the Deputy Project Director in resolving the grievances received from the stakeholders by preparing suitable replies in consultation with the other specialists as required and ensuring that queries are responded in a timely manner.
- n. Take lead in the communication with government and other partners in sharing project progress, and seeking feedback to improve design and implementation of IEC related issues
- o. Organize orientation and communication skill training workshop for the stakeholders as required.
- p. Any other tasks as may be assigned by the SPD, ARIAS Society
- q. **Travel Requirements:** The PICS will be required to undertake field-visits and tours to the project sites with the approval of SPD. Occasional out of state visits may also be required as directed by the SPD.

(C) QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, AGE ETC.

8. **Educational Qualification:** Post Graduate Degree/Diploma of minimum two years duration in Mass Communication/ Corporate Communication/Media Studies/ Journalism/Social Science/ English or a closely related field from a recognized institute/University.
9. **Experience:** Minimum 11 years experience in designing IEC campaigns, marketing collaterals, press notes, media releases, content drafting/ writing, blog writing, arranging press conference, developing corporate communication strategies, media liaison, publicity management, etc. Experience in working with local media will be preferred.
10. **Computer Skills:** Must have proficiency in the use of Internet based applications, Graphics, MS Word, MS Excel and MS Power Point and other related applications.
11. **Others Skills:** The candidate should have excellent written and verbal communication skills including making effective presentations.

12. **Age:** Should not be more than **50** years as on 1st October, 2017.
13. **Language:** Should be highly fluent in English and local language (with a good vocabulary & writing skills).
14. **Desirable Experience/Skills:**
 - a. Related experience on project(s) assisted by any international/national agencies like UN/ The World Bank/ DFID/ international NGOs/ Reputed companies/ Public sector agencies, etc.
 - b. Knowledge of Assamese/ Bengali / Hindi and other local languages
 - c. Ability to network with multiple stakeholders, multi-tasking, working under pressure and strict deadlines;
 - d. Good analytical and planning skills; self-motivated & possessing ability to work independently & in teams.
 - e. Experience of developing and designing IEC materials, taken part in the media program with a good conceptualizing, designing and presentation skills.
 - f. Have experience in preparing IEC plans for different categories of target population, media, thematic area considering the objective of the project;
 - g. Experience of designing, developing and monitoring the content of the IEC material in local language.

(D) DURATION OF CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC.

15. The tenure of **PICS** is intended for entire duration of the project and co-terminus with the project period of APART. However, continuity of the **PICS** beyond one (1) year from the date of signing the agreement will depend upon his/her performance. The decision of the SPD will be final and binding in this regard. The contract management shall be as per HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
16. The contract with **PICS** 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.
17. The **PICS** shall not assign or sub-contract, *in whole or in part*, his obligations to perform under this Contract, except with the SPD's prior written consent. The **PICS** will have to serve the ARIAS Society on full time basis under overall command of State Project Director, ARIAS Society and provide services from the PCU at Khanapara, Guwahati. The resignation/termination shall be as per HR Policy of the ARIAS Society.

(E) REMUNERATION, PAYMENT TERMS & LEAVE

18. Depending on the qualifications, experience, competency, and also the remuneration/pay package of the last assignment, the consolidated fixed remuneration of **PICS** will be determined and mutually agreed, which could be in the range of **Rs. 18.00 lakh to Rs. 25.80 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 will be enhanced on an annual basis, based on the HR Policy of the ARIAS Society

*If suitable candidates with above mentioned experience are not available, then candidates with minimum **07** years of experience in designing IEC campaigns, marketing collaterals, press notes, media releases, content drafting/ writing, blog writing, arranging press conferences, developing corporate communication strategies, media liaison, publicity management may be considered for interviews/ tests **at a lower remuneration package** to be decided through mutual agreement between the ARIAS Society and the candidate.*

19. Travelling, Boarding & Lodging expenses for approved official tours outside Guwahati will be reimbursed as per HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
20. 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 **PICS**. Taxes as applicable shall be dealt with as per applicable laws.
21. The provisions of leave would be as per HR Policy of ARIAS Society.

22. No house rent allowance or any other allowance shall be paid by the PCU. No other payment whatsoever (except reimbursement of official travelling expenses) shall be paid, except as agreed with the **PICS** by the SPD, ARIAS Society.

(F) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

23. The **PICS** will report to the SPD through the Deputy Project Director-cum-Social Development Specialist, ARIAS Society. Annual performance review will be done as per the HR Policy of the ARIAS Society.

(G) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY PCU

24. Access to all the required documents, correspondence, and any other information associated with the project and as deemed necessary. The **PICS** will be provided with one office cubicle/workstation in the PCU along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access. *The PICS 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.