



ARIAS SOCIETY

Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society

(An Autonomous Body under the 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) Gender Specialist (GS)

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 (DoF) cum-Additional Project Director (APD) 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 **Gender Specialist (GS)** on contractual basis to be positioned at Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the SWIFT Project.

C) TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Gender Specialist (GS) will support the PMU and PIU in all aspects of implementing gender action plans, and establishing effective systems for training, monitoring, and reporting on indigenous people and ethnic minority issues. Specifically, the GS will:

10. Provide technical guidance and advice to the PMU, PIU, EA and IA on implementation of gender action plans, mainstreaming, gender budgeting, and gender monitoring.
11. Conduct gender assessment, due diligence, and continuous meaningful consultations and information disclosure with all Project stakeholders including women, STs and their communities, affected persons, ensuring proper documentation of these activities.
12. Identify risks to women's participation and benefits from the project and design mitigation strategies.
13. Provide technical inputs to strengthen local institutions' gender capacity and contribute to gender policy dialogue at the local/state level.
14. Monitor consulting partners/ service providers/ contractors who deliver training programs and/ or implement sub-projects with gender dimensions.
15. Prepare a detailed work plan for the implementation of the GAAP to ensure effective and timely implementation.
16. Ensure gender and GAAP activities and targets are integrated into the overall annual project work plan and budget plan.
17. Provide technical support to staff in the PMU and PIU on GAAP implementation.

18. Support the integration of sex, ethnicity, and disabilities disaggregation into the project performance and monitoring system (PPMS), following the performance indicators/targets in the Design and Monitoring Framework (DMF) and GAAP and develop tools to collect data disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, and disabilities.
19. Monitor GAAP requirements in related procurement documents and ensure compliance by contractors.
20. Strengthen the capacity of the Executing agency (EA) and Implementing Agency (IA) to take ownership of GAAP implementation and monitoring.
21. Facilitate gender-balanced participation in consultations, decision-making forums, project committees, and community-based activities.
22. Ensure women's voices are represented in needs assessments, design validation workshops, and beneficiary feedback mechanisms.
23. Promote the leadership of women in project-supported community groups or cooperatives.
24. Collaborate with the Communication Specialist to ensure inclusive, culturally sensitive, and gender-responsive outreach materials and awareness campaigns.
25. Contribute to knowledge products and technical briefs on gender for internal and external stakeholders.
26. Monitor the implementation of GAAP and collect data for gender and GAAP Quarterly Progress Reports.
27. Undertake any other gender and GAAP related tasks as required by the Chief Project Coordinator and ADB
28. Support the design and operationalization of a gender-sensitive Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) by ensuring that grievance processes are accessible, confidential, and responsive to the specific needs and concerns of women and vulnerable groups.
29. Monitor and analyse gender-related complaints and contribute to periodic reviews of GRM effectiveness, recommending improvements to enhance trust, participation, and equitable redress.
30. Coordinate closely with the Social Safeguards Specialist to ensure joint integration of gender and social inclusion approaches in community mobilization, communication, and safeguards.
31. Prepare sections of Quarterly Progress Reports and Semi-Annual Reports related to gender and GAAP implementation.
32. Undertake any other related tasks as required by the PMU and PIU.

D) ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE & DESIRED SKILL:

33. Masters/Post-graduate degree in development studies, social sciences, or a related field.
34. **Minimum 5 (five)** years of substantive professional experience in mainstreaming gender at mid or senior level, for ADB, World Bank, JICA or other donor financed projects in rural and remote areas.
35. Fluency in English and demonstrated ability to communicate in the local language.
36. Excellent cross-cultural and people skills and ability to interact with locals, Indigenous People, government officials, Community Based Organizations and NGO staff

E) DURATION OF CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC

37. The initial contract period of GS will be for eleven (11) months and her/his continuity 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.

38. The contract with GS may be terminated by either side at any point of time during the contractual period by serving 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.
39. The GS 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 GS will have to serve the assigned office on full time basis under overall command of DoF cum APD.
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 GS 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 GS 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 GS shall comply with the termination order forthwith without any reservation.

F) REMUNERATION AND PAYMENT TERMS:

41. 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 GS will be determined and mutually agreed with the successful candidate, which would be in the range between **Rs.6.60 lakh to Rs.10.80 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.
42. 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 GS. 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.
43. 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:

44. The GS will be required to undertake field-visits and tours to the project sites with the approval of Director of Fisheries/Deputy Project Director (DPD), ADB-SWIFT Project. Occasional out of state visits may also be required as directed by the DoF cum APD.

H) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

45. The GS will report to the Director of Fisheries/DPD. The quality of service and performance of the GS 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

46. Will be given access to all documents, reports, correspondence, contacts available and any other information as deemed necessary for smooth accomplishments of tasks assigned.

47. Will be provided with one office cubicle in the PIU along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access.
48. 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 GS and by the DoF cum APD.
49. 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.