

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)
For Seed Production Expert- Cereals (Rice & Maize) to be positioned in Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. Khanapara, (a Govt. of Assam Undertaking) under the World Bank financed Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART)

(A) BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

1. The Government of Assam (GoA) through Government of India (GoI) has received a loan from the World Bank (IBRD: International Bank for Re-construction and Development) for the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART). The Project Development Objective (PDO) of APART is to “*add value and improve resilience of selected agri value chains focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs and to advance Assam’s COVID-19 response*”. The Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society, an autonomous body of the Govt. of Assam, is the apex coordinating and monitoring agency for the Project. ARIAS Society now intends to hire a **Seed Production Expert (SPE) for Cereals i.e. mainly rice and maize** (hereinafter referred as **SPE- Cereals**) as Individual Consultant out of the loan proceeds, to be positioned in Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. Khanapara, Guwahati under the World Bank financed APART, as per the terms given hereunder.
2. The APART 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 able to respond to market opportunities and climate variability **(iv)** supporting the State Health Society (SHS) in addressing the COVID-19 challenge. To achieve the PDO, the project is adopting clusters (production and enterprise) and value chain approach.
3. There are four components of APART: **The first component-A 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 stewardship councils. **The second component B is Facilitating Agro Cluster Development** with subcomponents being- **(i)** support establishment of cluster level Industry Associations (IAs), **(ii)** supply chain support. **The third component C 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 D is project Management, Monitoring & Learning.**
4. Component-C of APART aims at enabling producers of the priority value chains, in the targeted clusters, to take advantage of the rapidly changing market demand, and enhance resilience of agriculture production systems for increasing production and managing risks associated with climate change. This would be achieved by: **(i)** improvements in production technologies and management practices through climate resilient solutions; **(ii)** facilitation of collective-action by producers by supporting the establishment and strengthening of Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs); **(iii)** improving value realization at the farm level through improved cleaning, grading and packing of produce through Common Service Centers (CSCs) managed by FPCs; **(iv)** facilitation of market linkages through market information and intelligence; and **(v)** facilitating access to a broad set of financial services and their responsible use by producers. The component adopts a cluster based value-chain approach for providing support to producers for sustainably increasing their production and productivity; linking the producers with emerging supply chains, modernized wholesale agriculture markets and warehouses, under component B; and facilitating partnership opportunities with strategic and potential anchor and leading firms, supported under Component A.
5. Among the various agricultural inputs, seed is one of the very important and critical areas under APART. The Project has also engaged three international agencies i.e. International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), International Potato Centre (CIP) and World Vegetable Centre which are working closely with the Directorate

of Agriculture, Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, Assam Agricultural University, District Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and Research Stations, among others to address the seed value chain issues.

6. As a first step, to make the State self sufficient in seed production, particularly for the key commodities like paddy, the Project has started paddy seed production with three Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) from the Sali season of 2021 with the technical support of IRRI and AAU, which is planned to be scaled up substantially in the coming years including in other crops. Further, initiative has been taken to enhance the production of foundation seeds in the farms under Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. Certified seed production would be mainly taken up with Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) supported by APART.

(B) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT & SCOPE OF WORK

7. One of the key roles of the **SPE-Cereals** would be to support the Project in production of foundation seeds from the breeder seeds received by the ASCL from AAU & other institutes as per indents placed to GoI. **SPE-Cereals** would also support the certified seed production with the APART supported FPCs including processing, testing, packing and labeling etc for marketing the seeds. In particular the responsibilities of the **SPE-Cereals** include the following:
 - a) Introduction and scaling up of promising varieties notified and released for Assam.
 - b) Introducing new varieties from other States with potential suitability for Assam which can be quickly scaled up with minimal testing and trials.
 - c) Direct sourcing of certified seeds from other State Seed Corps of varieties having farmer acceptance for sales and distribution in Assam
 - d) Contribute to Preparation of Seed Rolling Plan (SRP) to be submitted by Directorate of Agriculture to Govt of India every year.
 - e) To ensure that the indents for breeder seeds are placed timely and lifting of breeder seeds as per intimation from GoI is done timely and in required quantities.
 - f) Oversee the foundation seed production on ASCL farms with the support of Seed Farm Executives.
 - g) Lead the certified seed production program with APART FPCs including enrolment of FPCs into the Program, agreement signing, supply of foundation seeds, production monitoring and supervision, close liaison with Assam Seed and Organic Certification Agency (ASOCA) for certification, processing, testing, packaging, labeling, tagging, storage as well as payments to FPCs and account settlements.
 - h) Recommending FPCs for training and capacity building programs in/ out of the State and ensuring that the services of master trainers so developed are utilized by the FPCs adequately.
 - i) Training and capacity building of Project field & HQ staff on seed production, processing etc.
 - j) Reaching out to related stakeholders like ASOCA, AAU, ASWC (for storage of seeds), Indian Institute of Seed Science (IISS), National Seed Research and Training Centre (NSTRTC), GoI etc.
 - k) Contribute to the seed tracking and tracing system particularly on the production side.
 - l) Be instrumental in suggesting ways and means for strengthening of the Seed Testing Laboratories of Assam Seed and Organic Certification Agency (ASOCA). Recommending specifications for seed processing units to be established with ASCL/ FPCs etc.
 - m) Seed Demand Estimation through physical surveys and also through digital means like SeedCast app of IRRI. Be in liaison with IRRI for introduction of similar system in Assam.
 - n) Be in touch with other State Seed Corps, leading private seed companies for learning on best/ innovative practices in seed production, processing and replicating the promising ones in Assam through need based customization as applicable
 - o) Providing inputs towards organizing seed stakeholder meetings
 - p) Document success stories, innovative business models in seed production and disseminating at various forums as authorized
 - q) Contribute to APART newsletters like *Krishi Rupantar*, Rice Weekly, ATMA Newsletter, Farm Business Quarterly etc.
 - r) Any other relating task given by Reporting Officer
- s) **Travel Requirements:** The **SPE-Cereals** may be required to undertake field-visits and tours to project sites, FPCs, concerned Central and State ministries, Departments, Agencies, Institutes in Delhi and other states, with the approval of the reporting officer.

(C) MINIMUM ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, SKILLSET, AND AGE ETC.

6. **Educational Qualifications:** The SPE-Cereals should hold a **Masters degree in Agriculture with specialization in Genetics & Plant Breeding or Seed Science & Technology or a closely related field** from any recognized University/ Institution. *A Doctorate/ Ph.D. degree in the relevant field will be an added advantage.*
7. **Working Experience:** The SPE-Cereals must possess at least **7 (seven) years** of professional experience in seed production, breeding, testing, trials, regulatory aspects of seeds, **preferably in cereal crops**, in any public/ private sector organization.
8. **Computer Skills & Language:** The SPE-Cereals must have proficiency in the use of Internet based applications, Graphics, MS Word, MS Excel and MS Power Point and other related applications.
9. **Language:** Fluency in English & Hindi.
10. **Age:** Age of the candidate should not be more than **45 years as on 1st April, 2022.**
11. **Others:** The ideal candidate for the position of **SPE-Cereals** should be a dynamic individual exhibiting leadership qualities, multi tasking, with ability to work under pressure and strict timelines. Specifically the incumbent should possess the following traits:
 - a) Punctual, reliable and strong communication skills (written and oral)
 - b) A highly self motivated team player & should be able to motivate the team
 - c) Paying attention to detail, prioritization & excellent time management
 - d) Quick learner with a positive attitude
 - e) Extrovert and fast learner

(D) DURATION OF CONTRACT, NOTICE PERIOD ETC.

12. The tenure of **SPE-Cereals** is intended for the entire duration of APART and co-terminus with the project period of APART. However, continuity of the **SPE-Cereals** beyond one (1) year from the date of signing the agreement will depend upon his/her performance. The decision of the MD, ASCL shall be final and binding in this regard. The contract management shall be done as per the Project rules. Depending upon the sustainability of the initiative, Assam Seed Corporation may consider engaging the services of **SPE-Cereals** beyond the Project period through its own funding and resources.
13. The contract with **SPE-Cereals** 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/ Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. This assignment is purely contractual in nature and shall not, under any circumstance, be extended beyond the APART's closing date. The Govt. of Assam/ PCU/ ARIAS Society/ Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. shall not undertake any responsibility for subsequent deployment of the incumbent.
14. The **SPE-Cereals** 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 **SPE-Cereals** will have to serve the assigned office on full time basis under overall command of Managing Director and provide services normally from the Office of the Assam Seed Corporation.

(E) REMUNERATION, PAYMENT TERMS AND LEAVE ETC.

15. Depending on *the qualifications*, experience, competencies, recent remuneration, etc. of the candidate, the consolidated annual remuneration of **SPE-Cereals** will be in the range between **Rs. 11.40 lakh to Rs. 19.20 lakh** per year. *A higher start may be considered in case of exceptionally talented candidates, as decided by the SPD, ARIAS Society. However, in case the selected candidate's current remuneration with 30% enhancement comes below Rs. 11.40 lakh/year, the lower remuneration will be offered.* The annual remuneration will be inclusive of performance-linked-incentive, communication allowance, health/service related allowance, all taxes, cost of accommodation and food at Guwahati, conveyance to attend the office etc. The remuneration may be enhanced by the MD, Assam Seed Corporation, on an Annual Basis, as per provisions in the HR policy of ARIAS Society.

16. The remuneration will be given in equal monthly instalments and the Performance-Linked-Incentive (PLI) will be given quarterly by the MD, Assam Seed Corporation based on the performance and achievement against the mutually agreed deliverables by the **SPE-Cereals**. Taxes shall be dealt with as per applicable laws.
17. Travelling, Boarding, Lodging and Food expenses for approved official tours outside Guwahati will be reimbursed as per HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
18. The provisions of leave would be as per provisions of HR Policy of ARIAS Society.
19. No house rent allowance or any other allowance shall be paid by the Project. No other payment whatsoever (except reimbursement of official travelling expenses) shall be made, except as agreed with the **SPE-Cereals**, by the Project.

(E) REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

20. The **SPE-Cereals** will report to the Managing Director, Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd. on a day-to-day basis. Quarterly/Half yearly/Annual performance review will be done by the MD, ASCL and a report will be submitted to SPD, ARIAS Society.

(F) FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED

21. The **SPE-Cereals** will be given access to all documents, reports, correspondence, contacts available with Assam Seeds Corporation Ltd, ARIAS Society, OPIU-Agriculture, OPIU-Horticulture and Food Processing and any other information available, as deemed necessary for smooth accomplishments of tasks assigned. The **SPE-Cereals** will be provided with one office cubicle/workstation in the ASCL or as decided by the SPD, along with computer, printer, computer/office consumables, and internet access. *The **SPE-Cereals** however will not be provided with any clerical assistance.*

Notes:

1. *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.*
2. *ARIAS Society is an equal opportunity employer and women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.*
