REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING DEPARTMENT

Irrigated and Sustainable Agriculture for Transformation Project - ISAT

Terms of Reference

Position; Extension Specialist

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1. Background

The Government of the Republic of Zambia, through the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), has received a grant from the World Bank to implement the Irrigated and Sustainable Agriculture for Transformation (ISAT) Project. The Project Objective is to promote irrigated and sustainable agriculture practices in targeted sites in Zambia. The proposed project aims to strengthen agricultural productivity, climate resilience and market access through improved irrigation, sustainable land management and inclusive value chains.

The Ministry requires an Extension Specialist to help design practical, inclusive and demand-driven agricultural advisory and extension arrangements for the ISAT project. The Specialist will support farmers and their organizations to access and apply knowledge, technologies and services that improve productivity, resilience and market orientation in targeted areas.

2. Objective of the Assignment

Under the supervision of the Project Coordinator, the Extension Specialist will lead implementation and coordination of ISAT extension and farmer capacity-building activities in collaboration with the Department of Crop Production and Extension Services, ZARI, field structures and approved providers. The Specialist will support activities such as translation of research and site-specific evidence into practical advice on irrigated and climate-resilient agriculture, strengthen research–extension–farmer feedback, and coordinate face-to-face and digital advisory delivery. Work plans shall identify target farmers, seasonal activities, provider responsibilities, costs, evidence of service quality and adoption, and links to irrigation and market-access investments.

3. Scope of Work

The Specialist will work closely with relevant MoA departments, extension providers, research institutions, local authorities, farmer organizations, communities and project consultants. The specialist will Work with the Ministry experts to:

1. Review the existing agricultural extension policies, strategies, services and projects in Zambia and identify lessons, capacity gaps and opportunities relevant to ISAT project design.
2. Assess farmer needs and the institutional capacity of public, private and community-based extension providers in the proposed project areas, including their coverage, skills, resources and coordination arrangements.
3. Design an inclusive and demand-driven extension approach that combines appropriate face-to-face advisory methods with farmer-to-farmer learning, demonstrations and digital or other communication channels where feasible.
4. Prepare extension plans and advisory content on irrigated agriculture, crop and soil management, water-use efficiency, climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices, post-harvest handling and other topics agreed with the PIU.

5. Develop or adapt training curricula, practical guides, demonstration protocols and farmer learning materials in accessible formats and, where appropriate, relevant local languages.
6. Plan and support farmer training, demonstration plots, field days, farmer field schools or other participatory learning activities in coordination with extension services and technical specialists.
7. Promote safe, efficient and sustainable use of irrigation water, agricultural inputs and natural resources, and ensure that advice is consistent with applicable environmental and social commitments and good practice.
8. Ensure that extension activities are accessible and responsive to women, youth, smallholder farmers and other groups that may face barriers to information, services or participation.
9. Strengthen linkages among farmers, extension staff, research and training institutions, irrigation service providers, producer organizations, value chain actors, input suppliers and financial service providers.
10. Provide technical guidance to extension agents, lead farmers and service providers and identify capacity-building requirements, coaching arrangements and options for sustaining extension services.
11. Coordinate extension planning with project specialists, including geospatial and monitoring and evaluation, irrigation, safeguards and value chain staff, to target activities and align advisory messages with project investments and outcomes.
12. Contribute to the project results framework and monitoring arrangements for extension, including practical measures of service delivery, reach, participation, knowledge or practice adoption and farmer feedback.
13. Collect and synthesize feedback from farmers and service providers, identify implementation challenges and recommend adjustments to improve the relevance and effectiveness of extension support.
14. Review consultant outputs and contribute extension inputs to project preparation documents, implementation manuals, terms of reference, work plans, budgets and progress reports.
15. Prepare technical briefs and presentations and support stakeholder consultations, workshops, field visits and learning events as requested by the Project Coordinator.

4. Qualifications and Experience

4.1 Academic Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Extension, Agriculture, Agronomy, Crop Science, Agricultural Education, Rural Development or a related discipline.
2. A master's degree in agricultural extension, agriculture, rural development, agricultural education or a related field is an advantage.
3. Additional training in adult learning, participatory extension, climate-smart agriculture, irrigation agronomy or digital advisory services is an advantage.

4.2 Professional Experience

1. At least ten (10) years of progressively responsible professional experience in agricultural extension, farmer advisory services, agricultural training or a closely related field.
2. Demonstrated experience designing and delivering farmer training, extension programs, demonstration activities or other participatory learning approaches.
3. Experience working with smallholder farmers, farmer organizations and extension agents, and coordinating with government, research, private sector or community-based service providers.
4. Knowledge of sustainable agricultural production, climate resilience, irrigation or water-use practices and their application through farmer advisory services.
5. Experience incorporating gender, youth inclusion and social inclusion into extension or rural development programming.
6. Experience developing training materials, curricula, advisory content or capacity-building plans and assessing learning or adoption outcomes.
7. Experience on World Bank or other development partner funded projects, including project preparation, implementation and results reporting, is an advantage.
8. Strong facilitation, communication, training, report writing and stakeholder coordination skills; ability to communicate technical information in accessible terms.

9. Fluency in written and spoken English; knowledge of relevant Zambian local languages is an advantage.

5. Duration and Location

i. The assignment shall be on a full-time basis, based in Lusaka, Zambia, with regular travel across the Country. The contract will be for an initial three (3) years renewable for an additional two (2) years based on satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

ii. Please note that the stated five-year term is a proposed assignment period, not confirmation of an approved contract or financing eligibility. Before contracting, MoA and NAO shall reconcile the term and renewal provisions with the approved procurement plan and contract form and identify the funding source, eligible expenditure category and applicable closing date. No commitment or extension shall rely on an assumed common closing date for IDA and FS2030 financing.

iii. The Irrigation Engineer shall be based at the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within the Ministry of Agriculture in Lusaka. The position will require frequent travel to irrigation sites and project implementation areas throughout Zambia.

6. Institutional Arrangements

1. The Specialist will be part of the ISAT Project Implementation Unit and will report to the Project Coordinator.
2. The Specialist will work closely with relevant Ministry departments, including units responsible for agricultural extension, irrigation, crops, research, planning and farmer services.
3. The Specialist will coordinate with extension providers, research institutions, farmer organizations, local authorities, communities, consultants and other project stakeholders.
4. The Specialist will support technical missions, site visits, farmer consultations, implementation reviews and meetings with Government and development partners.

7. Reporting Obligations and Deliverables

The Specialist will submit practical, evidence-based outputs in accordance with the PIU work plan and deadlines agreed with the Project Coordinator. Seasonal delivery plans shall assign responsibilities to ZARI, the Department of Crop Production and Extension Services, district and camp structures and approved providers. Outputs shall include approved advisory content, training-of-trainers and farmer-learning records, demonstration results and documented research–farmer feedback. With M&E, the Specialist shall measure unique farmer reach, service quality and verified adoption, distinguishing attendance from use and adoption. Contributions to FISP targeting, graduation or evaluation shall remain within the approved Part 2.2(b) activities and designated policy and M&E responsibilities; the Specialist has no authority to amend national subsidy rules. Expected outputs include:

1. An assessment of existing extension services and capacity needs in the project areas, with recommendations for provider roles, coordination and delivery arrangements.
2. A project extension strategy and implementation plan, including target groups, advisory themes, delivery channels, staffing or provider requirements and indicative costs.
3. Extension curricula, training materials, demonstration protocols and farmer advisory content for agreed project topics.
4. Plans and records for agreed extension training, demonstrations, field days or other farmer learning activities, including participation information disaggregated where feasible.
5. Inputs to the project results framework and monitoring arrangements for measuring extension reach, quality, farmer feedback and adoption of promoted practices.
6. Monthly progress updates and periodic technical inputs to quarterly, semi-annual and annual project progress reports.
7. Analytical briefs and recommendations based on implementation experience, farmer feedback and lessons from extension activities.

8. The Specialist will maintain organized records of training materials, activity data, consultations and supporting evidence and submit them to the PIU in accessible formats. Deliverable schedules and acceptance arrangements will be agreed with the Project Coordinator at inception.