REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING DEPARTMENT

Irrigated and Sustainable Agriculture for Transformation Project - ISAT

Terms of Reference

Position; Value Chain Specialist

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1. Background

The Government of the Republic of Zambia, through the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), has received a grant facility 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 a Value Chain Specialist to inform the design of practical, inclusive and commercially viable approaches that connect producers to markets and translate improved production into higher and more reliable incomes. The Specialist will assess opportunities and constraints across selected agricultural value chains and recommend interventions suited to the project's targeted locations and preparation stage.

2. Objective of the Assignment

Under the supervision of the Project Coordinator, the Value Chain Specialist will lead technical coordination of Component 3, Market Access and Value Chain Development, with MoA's Department of Agribusiness and Marketing.

3. Scope of Work

The Specialist will be part of the PIU, and will work closely with relevant MoA departments, consultants, producer organizations, agribusinesses, financial institutions, local authorities and other stakeholders.

The Specialist shall maintain an evidence-linked matching-grant pipeline and implementation register covering eligibility checks, technical appraisal, authorized award decisions, signed grant agreements, beneficiary co-financing, milestones, site verification and commercial and inclusion results. Applicant support shall be separated from independent assessment, award approval and payment authorization. Eligibility, rates, ceilings, funds flow and environmental and social conditions shall follow the approved Matching Grants Manual; this ToR creates no additional grant entitlements or approval powers. Monitoring shall cover production planning, quality, delivery, traceability and contractual market relationships, in coordination with the Department of Agribusiness and Marketing, environmental and social specialists, M&E and NAO. Duties will include, but will not be limited to:

1. Review relevant policies, strategies, studies, market information and data on agriculture, agribusiness, trade and rural development, and identify implications for ISAT value chain and market access interventions
2. Identify and assess priority commodities and value chains in ISAT intervention areas based on production and irrigation potential, market demand, commercial viability, price and seasonal trends, value-addition opportunities, logistics, climate risks and potential for sustainable intensification, and recommend priorities for project support.

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3. Map key value-chain actors and commercial relationships across input supply, production, aggregation, storage, processing, transport, financial and business services and end markets, identifying critical bottlenecks, market failures and opportunities for improved coordination.
4. Assess constraints to market participation and commercialization, including post-harvest losses, aggregation, storage, quality and food-safety requirements, standards, market information, infrastructure, access to finance and the reliability of commercial relationships with buyers and processors, and recommend practical measures to address these constraints.
5. Assess differentiated barriers and opportunities for smallholder farmers, women, youth, producer organizations and vulnerable groups, and recommend targeted measures to enable their effective and inclusive participation in project-supported value chains.

4. Qualifications and Experience

4.1 Academic Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness, Agricultural Marketing, Business Management, Economics, Agriculture, Development Studies or a related discipline.
2. A master's degree in a relevant discipline, such as agribusiness, agricultural economics, value chain development, marketing or business administration, is an advantage.
3. Additional training in market systems development, inclusive business, trade, agricultural finance or private sector engagement is an advantage.

4.2 Professional Experience

1. At least ten (10) years of progressively responsible professional experience in agricultural value chain development, agribusiness, market systems, agricultural marketing or a closely related field.
2. Demonstrated experience conducting value chain, market and feasibility assessments and translating findings into implementable interventions and investment recommendations.
3. Experience working with smallholder farmers, producer organizations, agribusinesses and buyers to strengthen market linkages, aggregation, value addition or business capacity.
4. Experience integrating gender, youth inclusion and social inclusion into agricultural or rural enterprise programming.
5. Knowledge of Zambia's agricultural sector and familiarity with relevant market actors, institutions and operating conditions is highly desirable.
6. Experience with irrigation, climate-smart agriculture, sustainable land management, rural infrastructure or agricultural finance is an advantage.
7. Experience on World Bank or other development partner funded projects, including preparation, implementation and results reporting, is an advantage.
8. Strong analytical, report writing, facilitation, negotiation and stakeholder coordination skills, including the ability to communicate commercial and technical analysis to varied audiences.
9. Fluency in written and spoken English; knowledge of relevant Zambian local languages is an advantage.

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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 value chain specialist 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 agriculture, irrigation, agribusiness, planning, marketing and cooperative development.
3. The Specialist will coordinate with consultants, producer organizations, farmers, agribusinesses, buyers, financial institutions, local authorities and other project stakeholders.
4. The Specialist will support technical missions, site visits, stakeholder consultations, implementation reviews and meetings with Government and development partners.

7. Reporting Obligations and Deliverables

The Specialist will submit evidence-based and decision-oriented outputs in accordance with the PIU work plan and deadlines agreed with the Project Coordinator. Expected outputs include:

1. A value chain and market assessment for agreed commodities and target areas, including actor mapping, market opportunities, constraints, risks and recommendations.
2. A review of priority value chain interventions and implementation models, including indicative costs, institutional roles, partnership opportunities and key assumptions.
3. Recommendations for inclusive producer-market linkages and support to producer organizations and agribusinesses, with attention to women, youth and smallholder participation.
4. Value chain inputs to the project implementation and relevant contribution to data required in the results framework.
5. Monthly progress updates and periodic technical inputs to quarterly, semi-annual and annual project progress reports.
6. Analytical briefs, presentations and consultation records to support project decisions and engagement with Government, private sector and development partners.

The Specialist will maintain organized records of data, consultations, analyses 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.

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