

State Institution Agriculture Entrepreneurship Development
Strengthening Resilience of The Agriculture Sector Project (SRASP)

Terms of Reference
For Consultant

Position title: National consultant for technical support of laboratories of project beneficiaries. (Beneficiary – State Institute «Plant protection and agrochemistry»)

Place of work: Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan, including trips to project territories

Duration: 25 Working days During May 2023

Contract Type: Individual Contract

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The Strengthening Resilience of the Agriculture Sector Project (SRASP) was approved by the Board on June 18, 2021, and the Finance Agreement was signed between the Ministry of Finance on behalf of the GoT and the International Development Association (The World Bank Group) on June 22, 2021. Ratification of the financial agreement of the SRASP was provided by Parliament on June 30, 2021. The Project became effective on November 18, 2021, and the project's Closing Date is June 30, 2027. The Strengthening Resilience of the Agriculture Sector Project (SRASP) is an IDA grant in the amount of US\$58 million prepared to support Tajikistan to develop the foundations for a more resilient agriculture sector, including enhancing public agricultural support services, increasing the availability of improved seeds, seedlings, and planting materials; enhancing agri-logistical services; agrometeorological information, soil testing, locust control, crop protection .

The SRASP consists of four components and nine sub-components:

Component 1: Strengthening seed, seedling, and planting material systems.

This component will support the development of viable seed, seedling, and planting material systems to ensure the availability of improved, locally adapted, market oriented, farmer-preferred, and climate resilient seeds, seedlings, and planting materials for priority crops, and in sufficient quantity and acceptable quality. The component has four sub-components: (1.1) Enabling environment; (1.2) Research and Development; (1.3) Multiplication of seeds, seedlings, and planting materials; and (1.4) Quality assurance.

Component 2: Support investments in Agri-Logistical Centers (ALCs) for horticulture value chains.

This component will support investments in ALCs to improve the competitiveness of horticulture value chains and improve the access to markets (e.g., domestic retail chains and export). The component has two sub-components: (2.1) Support the establishment and operation of ALCs; and (2.2) Capacity building for operation and management of ALCs and awareness raising.

Component 3: Strengthen public capacity for crises prevention and management

This component will support strengthening relevant public institutions' capacity for effective and efficient agricultural crises prevention and management, focusing on selected programs, which can significantly enhance the resiliency of the agricultural sector and the country's preparedness to respond to future shocks. The component has three sub-components: (3.1) Real-time monitoring of agricultural production, land use, and agrometeorology; (3.2) Soil fertility management; and (3.3) Crop protection and locust control.

Component 4: Project management and coordination

This component will support all aspects of project management including: (i) management, coordination and implementation; (ii) monitoring and evaluation (M&E); (iii) fiduciary and safeguard compliance, (iv) technical assistance (TA); and (v) a grievance redress mechanism (GRM).

The SRASP's primary target beneficiaries are: farmers, both smallholders (dehkans) and large-scale commercial farmers, agri-businesses, exporters, and other value chain actors, as well as staff of public agricultural institutions, from agricultural researchers and extension field officers to staff working in various departments of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and public agencies in the local government as well as public and private seed farms and nurseries.

The SRASP is open to beneficiaries across the country: (Components 1 and 3), while the ALCs supported under Component 2 will be located one each in Khatlon, Sughd, and Dushanbe regions selected for their agro-ecological potential, horticultural production patterns, export opportunities (the case for Khatlon and Sughd), and proximity to major urban market (in the case of Dushanbe). The sub-sectoral focus of the ALCs is horticulture.

MOA is the lead implementing agency (IA) of the SRASP: with the overall responsibility for coordinating all aspects of the SRASP, including contributions by the different relevant ministries and agencies participating in the project's implementation. The MOA is supported by a project implementation unit (AED PMU) fully staffed with relevant specialists, including fiduciary and safeguards, which follow the day-to-day implementation, management, and coordination of the project. The MOA is also supported by a Project Steering Committee (PSC), a Project Technical Committee (PTC) that has already been established, and functional and international technical assistance (TA) that has already been recruited.

Purpose:

- The main task of the consultant is to provide technical support to the laboratories of the beneficiaries of the project, focusing on the following results:
- Assessment and analysis of the current state of the laboratories of the beneficiaries of the project.
- Together with the beneficiary's staff, the creation of a list of necessary equipment for laboratories in order to increase the capacity of laboratories.
- Creation of a complete list of specifications for equipment to be purchased for laboratories.
- Logistics support of the entire document flow before the start of the tender process.

Scope of work:

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of Coordinator Component -3 and Deputy Director. AED PMU. Development and description of methodology, and evaluation.

- Survey tools (draft questionnaires).
- Organizing consultations with key project partners to discuss planned actions.
- Report on express examination (assessment) of the initial state of laboratories.

- Detailed schedule of the assessment.
- Revision and adjustment and or creation of a list of necessary equipment.
- Elaboration (clarification) of technical indicators (specifications) of equipment with beneficiaries.
- Preparation of all necessary documentation for the tender process.

Expected results.

1. Modified survey tool;
2. Preliminary analysis and initial conclusions in the form of a report and presentation in the MSC and SRASP;
3. Proposed changes in the structure of the laboratories of the beneficiaries of the project, if any;
4. A fully formed and adapted list of necessary laboratory equipment for the beneficiaries of the project.
5. All the necessary sets of specifications of equipment purchased for the laboratory.
6. Based on the results of the consultant's activity, the tender process has begun.

Reporting:

- The initial report, which includes a preliminary work plan and approximate deadlines for the evaluation.
- Interim Report on the express examination of the initial condition of the beneficiary's laboratories.
- The final report is based on the survey and analysis of the beneficiary laboratories and other work done on the project.
- All reports must be submitted in Tajik or Russian, both in printed and electronic form.

Deliverables:

1. Inception report shall be submitted within 5 business days after contract signing date.
2. Interim report including preliminary analysis and initial conclusions, proposed changes in the structure of the laboratories results shall be submitted within 15 business days after the contract signing date.
3. Final report including a fully formed and adapted list of necessary laboratory equipment and all the necessary sets of specifications of equipment purchased for the laboratory shall be submitted within 25 business days after the contract signing date.

Indispensable conditions:

- The consultant must fully accept and agree to the requirements of the TOR and the General Terms of the individual contract, including all requirements of the World Bank;
- The consultant must ensure the safe and legal production of the required results (for example, reports), excluding the use of false information.
- The Consultant undertakes to comply with the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan in the field of copyright and related rights;
- All rights to the manufactured products, including original documents and copies thereof, can be transferred to any third party only by the decision of the customer (MCC RPSH), and such transfer can be carried out directly to a third party and immediately after completion and acceptance of all work, in accordance with this Terms of Reference.

- Reports must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines specified in the Expected Results section of this Terms of Reference.
- The project reserves the right to make changes to the Terms of Reference (no more than 25%) that do not affect the overall nature of the work.
- Responsibility and accountability: The Consultant is fully responsible for the accuracy and legality of the information provided.
- In case of poor quality of the Consultant's work, MCC RPSH reserves the right to terminate the contract unilaterally.
- In the course of his work, the Consultant involved coordinates the actions for the implementation of the project, with the relevant project staff and the management of the AED PMU.
- The consultant cooperates with the experts of an international service provider if such a need arises.

Necessary skills, and experience of a specialist:

- Higher education in one of the following fields: Chemistry, Physics, Biology or related sciences.
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting research and or laboratory analysis.
- Experience working with local authorities and government agencies.
- Excellent reporting and presentation skills.
- Excellent computer skills, in particular, proficiency in all MS Office applications and searching for information on the Internet.
- Fluency in Tajik and working knowledge of Russian. Knowledge of English is an advantage.