

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Communications Specialist Consultant in Project Implementation Unit of Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) Project

Background

Plastic waste that pollutes the land flows into rivers and ends up in oceans, threatens development, and has far-reaching economic, ecological, and health impacts. South Asia is the third-largest contributor to global plastic waste, and unless action is taken, the region's waste is estimated to double by 2050.

The Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) project, financed by the World Bank, helps coordinate activities and facilitate the region's transition to a circular plastic economy by encouraging investments and greater collaboration between the public and private sectors and across countries. Since many of South Asia's rivers and seas span across national boundaries, a regional approach is necessary to address plastic pollution that leaches into waterways and ends up in the ocean.

The objective of the Project is to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas.

The Project consists of the following components:

Component 1. Supporting Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste

1.1 Supporting circular plastic economy solutions to reduce plastic waste by implementing a program of regional competitive block grant investments, providing Regional Competitive Block Grants ("RBGs") to eligible organizations in South Asia ("Eligible RBG Beneficiaries").

1.2 Facilitating the exchange of circular plastic economy knowledge between Eligible RBG Beneficiaries and selected South Asian countries and promoting awareness-raising activities.

Component 2. Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions

2.1 Supporting the development of strategies, action plans, policies, and standards to harmonize plastic pollution mitigation measures through (a) developing and implementing a multi-year plastic policy support program, working with leading universities and organizations; (b) developing a database for lifecycle analysis, data collection, and modeling related to plastic across selected industry value chains; and (c) supporting communication activities.

2.2 Supporting circular use of plastic in the economy through regional public-private collaboration and engagement in South Asia, including designing and organizing annual or more frequent meetings of representatives from public and private sectors.

Component 3. Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions

3.1 (a) Carrying out works to support the construction of the SACEP new headquarters and providing technical assistance to, and building capacity of, SACEP to discharge its functions, including coordination with relevant regional organizations and uniform collection, analysis,

and interpretation of pollution data. The implementation of construction and supervision of the new headquarters building for SACEP is supported by UNOPS.

3.2 Supporting SACEP in the implementation and overall management of the Project, regarding the aspects related to social and environmental safeguards, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, complaints handling mechanisms, as well as financial audits.

Implementing Agency

SACEP is the responsible implementing agency for this project. SACEP is an inter-governmental organization established by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in 1982 to promote and support the protection, management, and enhancement of the environment in the region. In addition, SACEP serves as the secretariat of the South Asian Seas Programme (SASP), one of 18 such Regional Seas Programmes of the United Nations Environment Program. The regional project would strengthen SACEP to administer relevant project activities via the following sectional structure, which includes a Ministerial Level Governing Council (GC), Consultative Committee (CC), National Focal Points (NFPs), Subject Area Focal Points (SAFP), and a Colombo-based Secretariat.

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is established by the SACEP Secretariat to assist the project implementation and be administratively housed within the Secretariat as a subsidiary organ, which it is able to establish according to its existing mandate. The PIU is responsible for all aspects of the day-to-day management of the project, including planning, budgeting, technical coordination, implementation supervision, M&E, and ensuring compliance with the World Bank environmental and social (E&S) standards.

Key Tasks:

The Communications Specialist consultant will report to the PIU Project Director and work alongside the UNOPS Communications team. S/he will lead, plan, develop, implement and monitor the PLEASE project communication strategy, and align communications and promotional activities to enhance visibility of PLEASE project and SACEP as the implementing Agency.

Under the overall supervision of the Director General and the Project Director, and in coordination with the UNOPS communications team, the Communications Specialist will propose mechanisms and protocols for communications to ensure information sharing and coordinated communications approach among all project implementation entities, project beneficiaries, and external stakeholders (One Strategy – One Voice).

Specific tasks.

1. Plan, develop, implement effective communications and outreach strategies in order to improve visibility of the PLEASE project results and outcomes, and monitor and report the impact of the communication strategy.
2. Assess the existing communication dynamics on how the project stakeholders

receive and process information, and ensure strategic and timely flow of project information and key messages about the project to both internal and external audiences.

3. Enhance regular and effective communications with National Focal Points (NFPs), Subject Area Focal Points (SAFP), and Colombo-based SACEP Secretariat, donor, and PLEASE Grantees.
4. Oversee, write the content, produce and disseminate PLEASE project outreach products (e.g., newsletters, op-eds/articles, PowerPoint presentations, brochures, Q&As, videos, websites, social media, including Facebook; speeches, briefing notes, feature / case stories)
5. Plan, coordinate, schedule, and work on logistics on major events as well as draft agenda, concept note, speeches, event reports, and publicize these events through higher digital presence
6. Coordinate events and public appearances of SACEP and PLEASE PIU executives and staffs, and visiting missions by donor, National focal persons, and external stakeholders
7. Liaise with the Monitoring and Evaluation team in PIU in tracking the project results and documenting those results into reports targeted to different audiences
8. Any other task necessary for effective and timely implementation of the project as assigned by the Project Director.

Required Qualifications, Expertise, and Competencies

The successful candidate will be a senior communication professional with a post-graduate degree in communication-related fields with a minimum of 10-12 years of experience in the field of communication and development projects/programs. S/he will have the ability to interact effectively across socio-political, economic, and cultural affiliations. In addition, the candidate is expected to have the following qualifications:

- Proven experience in designing and managing strategic public communication programs;
- Solid understanding of and ability to apply communication tools and techniques, including the ability to analyze and use research data;
- Strong management skills in planning and financial management of communication work;
- Educational background in communication, journalism, international relations, social sciences, public affairs, political science, psychology, and marketing;
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English language;
- Demonstrated interpersonal and diplomatic skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders and to present ideas clearly and effectively; proven ability to work in a collaborative and multi-stakeholder team environment;
- Excellent knowledge, experience, and understanding of development issues, socio-political, economic, and cultural context of the South Asian countries;
- Knowledge and/or experience in the field of environmental management is an asset;
- Competency in computer literacy skills (MS Word, Excel, Power Point and other software).

Working Schedule

This is an on-site full-time position at PLEASE PIU, Colombo, Sri Lanka. The service is for a period of 6 months. The contract is renewable, subject to satisfactory performance, for the duration of the project. There will be an initial performance review by the Project Director after 2 months.

Salary

Appropriate compensation will be offered to the right candidate.