

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Assignment Title:	IT Consultant – Digitization of SACEP Operations
Duty station:	SACEP HQ, Colombo (on-site)
Duration:	4 months, full-time (extendable based on performance and need)
Remuneration:	USD 5,000 per month (consolidated; inclusive of all taxes /benefits/allowances)
Reporting to:	Programme Officer, SACEP
Start date:	To be agreed
Separate budgets:	Software licenses, hardware, and third-party services will be funded from SACEP's separate project/operations budgets (outside this consultancy fee).

1) Introduction to SACEP

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia to promote and support the protection, management, and enhancement of the environment in the region. With its headquarters in Colombo, Sri Lanka, SACEP serves as a platform for regional cooperation, policy dialogue, and the development of programmes and projects that address key environmental challenges. It works closely with member states, development partners, and other stakeholders to strengthen institutional capacity, facilitate knowledge exchange, and promote environmentally sustainable development across South Asia.

2) Background & Rationale

SACEP intends to transition from predominantly manual processes to digitalized, user-friendly, secure systems across core functions: Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, and Stakeholder Management. The Consultant will lead this transition end-to-end—from assessments and solution design to pilot build-out, vendor coordination, staff training, and initial go-live.

3) Objectives

1. Produce a practical, prioritized Digitalization Roadmap for SACEP's core operations, with measurable KPIs such as reduction in processing time, faster approvals, improved data accuracy, and increased user adoption rates.
2. Design and initiate implementation of fit-for-purpose systems (MVP level) for HR, Finance, Procurement, and Stakeholder Management, ensuring early demonstration of efficiency gains and integration with existing workflows.
3. Establish governance, data, and security practices appropriate for an intergovernmental organization, with clear accountability for data ownership, compliance, and reporting standards.

4. Build staff capability to operate and maintain the new systems, supported by structured training, user engagement activities, change-management plans, and post-implementation support to ensure smooth adoption and sustainability.

4) Scope of Work

4.1 Discovery & Planning (Weeks 1–3)

- Conduct a rapid needs assessment with all relevant departments; map current workflows (manual and digital), pain points, data flows, and compliance requirements.
- Scope opportunities: identify quick wins vs. medium-term builds; define measurable outcomes aligned with organizational goals.
- Perform an architecture options analysis (cloud / on-prem / hybrid), including cost, data residency, security, and scalability; recommend the preferred option.
- Platform/vendor scan with shortlist (ERP suite vs. best-of-breed; open-source vs. commercial), including costed scenarios.
- Draft Digitalization Roadmap with timelines, responsibilities, budget envelopes, and risk register.

4.2 Solution Design & Configuration (Weeks 2–8, overlapping)

For each domain (HR, Finance, Procurement, Stakeholder Management):

- Define minimum viable processes (MVP) and critical data fields; simplify where beneficial.
- Prepare configuration specs (forms, workflows, approvals, role-based access, audit trails, document management).
- Establish a clear data model and assign ownership/responsibility for master data lists; plan and document the approach for data cleansing and migration.
- Draft policies/SOPs for data entry, approvals, document retention, and change control.
- Define exit criteria for pilot phases, including measurable User Acceptance Testing (UAT) pass rates, staff adoption metrics, and structured user feedback to validate readiness for full rollout.

4.3 Build / Implement / Pilot (Weeks 5–14)

- Configure selected platform(s) and/or coordinate with external vendors for development/integration.
- Conduct data cleansing & initial migration for pilot modules.
- Integrate basic reporting & dashboards (operational and management views).
- Execute UAT (User Acceptance Testing), fix issues, and progress to MVP go-live for at least two functional areas (target: HR + Procurement) and partial/alpha

4.4 Security, Governance, and Business Continuity (Weeks 3–14)

The Consultant shall establish a baseline security and governance framework to safeguard SACEP's digital systems, aligned with local regulations and international best practices. Key activities will include:

- **Cybersecurity Controls** – Implement secure user provisioning/de-provisioning, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) where feasible, regular patching and backups, vulnerability management, and a basic incident response protocol.
- **Governance & Compliance** – Define roles, permissions, and audit logging; ensure compliance with the Sri Lankan Personal Data Protection Act, No. 9 of 2022 and relevant international frameworks (e.g., GDPR, ISO/IEC 27001).
- **Administrative Procedures** – Develop lightweight playbooks for system administration and simplified change management processes.
- **Disaster Recovery & Continuity** – Produce a short DRP outlining Recovery Time Objectives (RTOs), Recovery Point Objectives (RPOs), tested backup/restoration procedures, and escalation protocols for critical incidents.

4.5 Capacity Building & Handover (Weeks 6–16)

- Deliver training (admin + end-user) and quick-reference user guides.
- Deliver technical documentation (configuration, integrations, data model, backup/restore).
- Prepare a post-engagement action plan with a 3–6 month backlog and support options (in-house, vendor, or extended consultancy).
- Formal handover to SACEP’s designated focal points (no permanent-staff handover is required).

5) Governance & Reporting

- **Supervisor:** Programme Officer (primary).
- **Steering/Working Group:** Representatives from HR, Finance, Procurement, and relevant programme units; convenes bi-weekly to resolve issues and validate key decisions.
- **Progress Reporting:** Consultant to provide (i) brief weekly status notes, and (ii) bi-weekly summary reports highlighting risks, decisions, and next steps.
- **Reporting Format:** Standardized templates (to be agreed at project initiation) covering progress against workplan, key deliverables, issues/risks, mitigation actions, and decisions pending. Reports shall be concise (maximum 2–3 pages or equivalent dashboard) and submitted electronically.
- **Change Control:** All scope changes to be logged, documented, and formally approved by the Supervisor and Steering Group prior to implementation.

6) Roles & Dependencies

SACEP will provide:

- Timely access to stakeholders, existing records, and IT assets.
- Budget for software, hardware, and vendor services (procured under SACEP rules).
- Workspace and on-site facilities in Colombo.

Consultant will:

- Lead technical design/implementation; coordinate with vendors; advise on procurement specs (TORs/SoWs) for third parties.
- Ensure alignment with SACEP procedures and any applicable host-country regulations.

7) Required Qualifications & Experience

- Bachelor's degree in IT/Computer Science/Information Systems (Master's preferred).
- 8+ years experience leading Digitalization /ERP or line-of-business system rollouts in public/IGO/NGO contexts.
- Hands-on experience with at least one major platform (e.g., Odoo/Dynamics/Oracle/SAP or best-of-breed stacks) and integrations.
- Proven delivery of MVP within short timelines; strong business process design and change management skills.
- Knowledge of information security fundamentals and data governance.
- Excellent facilitation, documentation, and training capability; strong stakeholder management.

8) Contract, Payment & Logistics

- Contract type: Individual consultancy.
- Payment: Monthly upon acceptance of milestone-linked progress reports.
- Working hours: Full-time, on-site at SACEP HQ, Colombo.
- Travel: If any field/site visits are required, they must be pre-approved and funded separately by SACEP.
- Taxes/insurance: Consultant is responsible for all statutory obligations; the fee is inclusive of all costs.

9) Ethics, Confidentiality & IP

- The Consultant shall sign SACEP's confidentiality and data protection undertakings.
- All source code, configurations, documentation, and datasets produced under the assignment become the intellectual property of SACEP.
- Compliance with SACEP's procurement and information security guidance is mandatory.

10) Application & Evaluation

Application package: CV and cover letter.