



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – INDIVIDUAL SELECTION)

PLASTIC FREE RIVERS AND SEAS FOR SOUTH ASIA PROJECT

Assignment Title: Financial Management Specialist

Reference No : LK-SACEP-228271-CS-INDV

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) has received Financing under the Agreement signed on 8 June 2020 from the World Bank toward the cost of the Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) - Grant# IDA-D6480, and intends to recruit staff for the Project Implementation Unit.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include assist existing Financial Management (FM) team of SACEP to maintain the FM arrangements in compliance with The World Bank’s Financial Management rules/regulations as primary task. Furthermore, compliance with applicable SACEP rules/regulations also be required whenever it’s warranted.

This includes maintain financial records, to provide timely financial information to the Project Director and to ensure compliance with World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers’ (Procurement in Investment Project Financing- Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, July 2016 Revised November 2017 and August 2018), as referred to in the Financing Agreement of the Project.

Initial period for the assignment - 36 months

Implementation period of Project - 5 years

Expected date of assignment – **1st June 2021**

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) [is also attached hereto](#).

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should submit a CV including information demonstrating the fulfillment of the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

- a) A Bachelor Degree in Commerce/Accounting/Finance from a recognized University; A post graduate qualification from a recognized University, in any of the fields mentioned would be an added advantage;
- b) A member of a recognized professional accountancy body such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants and Chartered Institute of Managements Accountants (CIMA- UK);
- c) A total of 7 - 10 years’ experience in financial management, audit or accounting. Out of this, a minimum of 5 years experience should be after acquiring stipulated qualification.
- d) Prior experience of donor funded and/or public sector projects is preferred;
- e) Knowledge and experience in financial management in World Bank- financed project will be an added advantage;
- f) Must be able to analyze and solve complex problems;

- g) Strong communication skills in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues. Ability to work efficiently and effectively in a multidisciplinary team;
- h) High level of proficiency in written and spoken English and report writing;
- i) Must be able to work independently as well as part of a team;
- j) Computer literacy (MS Word, MS Excel, Power Point, etc) and knowledge on computerized accounting systems.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraph, 3.17 of the World Bank's 'Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers', setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment:

3.17 Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of being unable to carry out the assignment in the best interests of the Borrower. Without limitation on the generality of the foregoing, Consultants shall not be hired under the circumstances set forth below:

d. Consultants (including their experts and other personnel, and sub-consultants), that have a close business or family relationship with a professional staff of the Borrower, or of the project implementing agency, or of a recipient of a part of the Bank's financing, or any other party representing or acting on behalf of the Borrower, that is directly or indirectly involved in any part of:

i. the preparation of the TOR for the assignment;

ii. the selection process for the contract; or

iii. the supervision of the contract, may not be awarded a contract, unless the conflict stemming from this relationship has been resolved in a manner acceptable to the Bank throughout the selection process and the execution of the contract.

The individual will be selected based on the qualifications and experience, in accordance with the procedures set out in 'The World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers and the Rules and Regulations of SACEP.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 08:30 – 16:30 Sri Lanka time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by no later than 16:30hrs Sri Lanka time on **10th May 2021**.

Head of Chancery
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
#146/24A, Havelock Road, Colombo 05
00500, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94-11-2504708 / +94-11-2500546
Fax: +94-11-2589369
E-mail: secretariat@sacep.org; jacintha.tissera@sacep.org

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST (Project Implementation Unit)

Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia 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 project will help coordinate action 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 into 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 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 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 construction of SACEP's 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.

(b) Supporting development of a fund for sustainability of existing activities and accelerating circular plastic economy solutions ("Sustainability Fund").

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.

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 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 insertional 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) will be 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. In addition, PIU has technical capabilities to advise the SACEP member states on national and regional planning and will hire (through the project) and second through partnership arrangements with member states and project partners [UNEP, UNDP, and PARLEY] the necessary skills required.

The PIU will be led by a Project Director and will include a team of specialized staff responsible for project management, financial management, procurement, environmental safeguards, social safeguards, monitoring and evaluation, communications as well as support staff. The PIU will recruit specialized consultants necessary for above areas & also for any other specific technical assistance for overall implementation of activities. The PIU will liaise closely and also ensure overall coordination of all project entities to ensure necessary data and information are shared and collated for reporting to the Project Steering Committee and the World Bank.

Accordingly, SACEP wishes to contract a Financial Management Specialist to the PIU, to manage financial management activities pertaining to the project

Objectives

To carry out all financial management activities pertaining to the project including budgeting, accounting, funds flow, internal controls, financial reporting & auditing as per the arrangements agreed between World Bank & SACEP, thereby to provide reasonable assurance that the project funds are being used for the purposes intended.

Key Tasks

The Financial Management Specialist will report to the Project Director (PIU), under the Director General of SACEP and will be responsible to assist existing Financial Management (FM) team of SCAEP to maintain the FM arrangements in compliance with SACEP's financial management rules/regulations as well as requirements agreed with World Bank with acceptable procedures/processes of the World Bank. This includes maintain financial records, to provide timely financial information to Project Director and to ensure compliance with World Bank's Financial/ Procurement and Consultants Guidelines as referred to in the Financing Agreement of the Project. He/she will also liaise closely with the Project Director in the performance of his/her duties.

The Financial Management Specialist shall be responsible for

- Provide direction and oversight for the operation of the project financial management system;
- Establish sound accounting practices and systems to manage resources available to the project;
- Develop internal controls as might be necessary, including policies and procedures, for efficient and effective coordination of project activities, taking into consideration the existing rules and regulations of SACEP and the World Bank.
- Guide in preparation of annual budget estimates and disbursement plans for Component 1, 2 and 3 of the Project;
- Provide guidance in production of financial forecasts and disbursement requests for the project;
- Ensure accountability and promote the efficient use of financial resources allocated for the Project based on SACEP and World Bank procedures;
- Ensure that all payments are done in accordance with sound accounting practices, with supporting documentation required and in line with the eligible expenditures & project objectives as stipulated in the financing agreement & other project documents;
- Maintain relevant books, records for the Project that reflects the components, sub component & activity wise expenditure;
- Ensure that procedures are in place to provide accurate, complete and timely financial information for managing and monitoring project activities & install & maintain a suitable accounting system for the same;
- Prepare periodic reports, (i.e. monthly/quarterly/annually) in the formats approved by the World Bank and in line with the project documents and financing agreement;
- Oversight and assistance in managing the External Audit Process, facilitate submission of financial statements and audit schedules to auditors on time, and submit the consolidated annual external audit reports to the World Bank as per the financial covenants. Liaise with the SACEP Finance Management Team to obtain information on audit observations and corrective measures and prepare a consolidated response to the World Bank on project audit qualifications/exceptions;
- Analyse audit observations (both internal audit and external audit) and identify observations of repetitive nature. Address the root causes in consultation with SACEP FM team and auditors;
- Resolving financing and budgeting problems encountered in project implementation;
- Monitoring of financial aspect of procurement implementation as required;
- Manage and provide guidance in the overall disbursement process and the preparation of required reports (Interim Unspecified Financial Report - IUFRs) on the basis of the Finance Management System to be submitted to the World Bank;

- Ensure the enhancing the capacity of existing FM staffing at SACEP through capacity-building interventions including providing training to FM staff on managing the FM requirements of the project, and so on;
- Any other duties related to financial management assigned by the Project Director.

Required Qualifications, Expertise and Competencies

Eligible candidates should have the following minimum qualifications, experience, and competencies:

- A Bachelor Degree in Commerce/Accounting/Finance from a recognized University; A post graduate qualification from a recognized University, in any of the fields mentioned would be an added advantage;
- A member of a recognised professional accountancy body such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants and Chartered Institute of Managements Accountants (CIMA- UK);
- A total of 7 - 10 years' experience in financial management, audit or accounting. Out of this, a minimum of 5 years experience should be after acquiring stipulated qualification.
- Prior experience of donor funded and/or public sector projects is preferred;
- Knowledge and experience in financial management in World Bank- financed project will be an added advantage;
- Must be able to analyze and solve complex problems;
- Strong communication skills in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues. Ability to work efficiently and effectively in a multidisciplinary team;
- High level of proficiency in written and spoken English and report writing;
- Must be able to work independently as well as part of a team;
- Computer literacy (MS Word, MS Excel, Power Point, etc) and knowledge on computerized accounting systems.

Schedule

This is a full-time position. The service is initially for a period of three (03) years. 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 and Director General of SACEP and the management after six months. Thereafter, there will be an annual performance evaluation.

Salary

Appropriate compensation package commensurate with qualifications & experience will be offered to the right candidate