

BANGLADESH REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY PROJECT -1 (P154580)

Terms of Reference for Consulting Services

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT (BLPA-S5)

1. Introduction and Background

The Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received an SDR 150 million Credit from the International Development Association (IDA) – a member of the World Bank Group – for financing the cost of the *Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project 1* (BRCP-1), being jointly implemented by the Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BLPA), National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Ministry of Commerce. Now the BLPA intends to apply part of the IDA Credit for procuring the services of a Financial Management Consultant (Local) for its Project Implementation Unit (PIU).

The Project Development Objective is to improve conditions for trade through improving connectivity, reducing logistics bottlenecks and supporting the adoption of modern approaches to border management and trade facilitation.

The Project consists of three (3) major components of which the below component will be implemented by BLPA:

Component 1: Invest in infrastructure, systems and procedures to modernize key selected land ports essential for trade with India, Bhutan and Nepal. The key activities under this component are:

- (i) Development and improvement works at four land ports along the Southwest to Northeast Corridor that are key to facilitating regional and transit trade. These include: Bhomra on the southwest border of Bangladesh, Sheola which would be a greenfield land port (it is currently a Land Customs Station with almost no infrastructure), and third land port at Ramgarh on the border with Tripura State, Northeast India,
- (ii) The Project will also finance measures to improve physical security and manage access risks at the Benapole land port, Bangladesh's largest and busiest land port, which experiences significant security and leakage problems. Activities to be financed include a high-capacity perimeter fence, a CCTV system, and a gate pass system.

BLPA, an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Shipping, is responsible for the component's overall implementation, management and monitoring. BLPA was set up for development, maintenance and operation of land-ports with the neighboring countries of Bangladesh.

BLPA will set up a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) to oversee the development and execution of the project. The PIU will be led by a Project Director and will be located in Dhaka. The PIU will be assisted by a group of individual experts of diverse disciplines. The **Financial Management Consultant** will be a member of the team of experts.

2. Objective

The main role of the Financial Management Consultant (FMC) is to strengthen the financial management aspects of the project.

The activities of the FMC will be guided by, and be in conformity with, the relevant guidelines of the World Bank for the procurement of goods, works, and services. These guidelines comprise of, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers; Procurement in IPF, Goods, Works, Non-Consulting Services, July 2016.
- b) Standard Bid Evaluation Form, Procurement of Goods or Works, April 1996;
- c) Sample Form of Evaluation Report, Selection of Consultants, October 1999.

The IPE will also refer to the provisions of the Public Procurement Act 2006 and the Public Procurement Rules 2008 – which together constitute the body of statutes governing public procurement in Bangladesh – where such referral has received explicit prior agreement of the World Bank.

3. Scope of Services

The FMC will carry out the following main activities, in conjunction with other PIU members as needed:

1. Fund Flow Process:

- Smooth flow of funds from World Bank and GoB to project bank accounts;
 - Adequate internal control arrangement for proper utilization, management and accounting of funds.
2. Budgeting System:
- Prepare financial forecasts from the work programs in coordination with technical and procurement wing of the project. Forecasts should include both short-term forecasts (say 2 quarters) and longer-term forecasts over the life of the project;
 - Link the budgeting system with accounting system to enable comparison of actual performance with budgets (Annual and cumulative for the project);
3. Accounting System:
- Identify, procure, and install user friendly computerized accounting system;
 - Develop chart of accounts to capture all financial transactions by project components, sub-components and expenditure categories;
 - Chart of Accounts should conform closely to the project cost tables to enable comparison of actual project costs during implementation with those estimated during project preparation;
 - Establish linkage of Chart of Accounts to budget and expenditure heads of GoB, as applicable.
 - Record accounting entries/transactions in the accounting system for all sources and utilization of funds (e.g.: GOB and World Bank);
 - Maintain accounts on the principles of double entry bookkeeping;
 - Train all relevant PIU staff to effectively use computerized accounting system.
4. Financial Rules, Accounting Policies and Procedures:
- Compliance to applicable laws, rules, and regulation of GoB. If necessary, update the existing accounting manual of the entity;
 - Proper application of Accounting policies;
 - Adequate system of internal controls on financial transactions;
 - Delegation of financial power, separation of duties and policy for authorization of transactions;
 - Physical Safeguard of Assets - proper recording, periodic reconciliation of physical assets with underlying books created under the project;
5. Contract Management and Administration:
- Record expenditure under contracts and system to generate periodic physical and financial reports.
 - Process all vendors' bills for timely payment after necessary approvals.
6. Bank Account Operation and Reconciliation:
- Provide advice on sound operation of project bank accounts in an efficient manner;
 - Periodic reconciliation of cash book with bank statement.
7. Financial Reporting:
- Generate financial reports from computerized accounting system;
 - Provide quality and timely financial information to Project authorities and various stakeholders on project performance;
 - Prepare and submit withdrawal Application and interim financial reports to World Bank for timely disbursement;
8. External Audit:
- Draft Annual Project Financial Statements from books of accounts;
 - Attend meetings/communication with external auditors to facilitate timely completion of audits;
 - Submit project annual financial statement in appropriate format to GoB and World Bank;
 - Disclose project audit report in the entity website;
 - Follow up and coordination on the audit remarks/objections for successful closure.
9. Internal Audit:
- Finalize audit ToR with support of World Bank and assist in the appointment of the internal auditor;
 - Liaison with internal auditors to facilitate timely completion of internal audit;
 - Follow up and coordination on the audit remarks/objections for successful closure;
 - Provide recommendations to project management on corrective actions suggested in the Internal Audit Report.

10. Audit Committee:

- Provide cooperation required by the Audit Committee in conjunction with its review of the audit reports.
- Assist the Audit Committee in carrying out its proceedings.
- Recommend actions to the PD to comply with directives of the Audit Committee.

11. Special Assignment:

- Participate in Bid / Proposal Evaluation Committee meetings and activities.
- Assist/advise the PD in financial matters as and when required.
- Advise relevant PIU members regarding compliance with operative rules for deduction and certification of Advance Income Tax (AIT), and Value Added Tax (VAT).
- Perform other tasks assigned by Project Director related to financial matters.

12. Disclosure

- Assist project in ensuring that financial information is available in the website of implementing agency.

4. Duration

Duration of the consultancy services would be for an initial 48 (forty-eight) months on a full-time basis, to be subsequently renewed annually based on the Consultant's performance.

5. Institutional Arrangement:

The Consultant will work under direct control of the Project Director. The Consultant will report directly to the Project Director with close collaboration with other officials of the Project. The Consultant shall be accountable to the Project Director for his/her day to day activities. BLPA will provide working space and office consumables for the expert at PIU premises in Dhaka.

6. Reporting Requirement

The FMC will be responsible to the Project Director (PD) for discharging all functions related to financial management and reporting of the project. He/she will assist the PD to ensure compliance with rules, regulations and policies of GOB and the World Bank for project implementation, and oversee the utilization of financial resources in project activities. He/she will submit a monthly progress report on significant financial management activities and issues, with recommended follow-on actions. Each monthly report will be submitted within the first seven days of the following calendar month.

7. Educational and Experience:

- Minimum Master's degree in Accounting/Finance/Commerce/Business Administration along with a professional accounting qualification such as CA/CMA/ACCA/CFA/CPA etc
- At least ten (10) years' experience in financial management out of which preferably three (3) years in a management position in any government / semi government/ multinational organizations/ donor funded development project, being actively involved and fully conversant with large contract payments, GOB budget and planning procedures, Development Project Proposals, rules and regulations of the Government for budgeting, fund release, accounting, financial reporting and auditing and authorization for use of donors' funds. Experience/exposure on World Bank's fund operating conditions & reporting requirements would be an advantage.
- Fully conversant and hands on experience in Computerized Accounting System with ability to assist in implementation and customization;
- Proven track record of ability to develop a Chart of Accounts with relevance to DPP, Disbursement Categories and Project Components;
- Self-guided, strong organizational and planning skills with the ability to work independently as a team player and under pressure;
- Strong interpersonal communicative skills, experience in team leadership and participatory management.

8. Selection Method

Selection of the FMC will follow the procedures for selecting Individual Consultants described in the World Bank's Procurement Regulation for IPF Borrowers, July 2016.