GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY (MAFS)

Sustainable Agricultural Value-chains Intensification for Growth (SAVIG)

(P513429)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

AGRIBUSINESS SPECIALIST

June 2026

Project: Sustainable Agricultural Value-chain Intensification for Growth (SAVIG) Project
Duty Station: Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Freetown, Sierra Leone, with periodic field visits
Duration: One-year contract, renewable annually based on satisfactory performance and project needs, with an initial probation period of six months.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Sierra Leone has received a financing envelope of US$40 million from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group to implement the Sustainable Agriculture Value-Chains Intensification for Growth Project (SAVIG) Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds to recruit an **Agribusiness Specialist.** The project will be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) through the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under the National Development Partners Program Coordination Office (NDPPCO).The SAVIG Project is designed to address key structural constraints affecting the agricultural sector, including weak policy and regulatory frameworks, limited access to finance, inadequate input systems, weak market linkages, and low adoption of modern technologies. The project will complement ongoing initiatives such as the Feed Salone Program**,** SCADeP**,** and FSRP**,** ensuring synergy and maximizing development impact.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE (PDO)

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to enhance productivity, private investment and job creation in select agriculture value chains in Sierra Leone.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The project comprises four mutually reinforcing components, each addressing a specific set of constraints along the agricultural value chain:

Component 1 – Strengthening Climate-Smart Productivity: This component focuses on strengthening the seed system, enhancing regulatory enforcement, promoting the adoption of climate-smart technologies, and expanding the production of Early Generation Seed. By improving the availability and quality of input, this component aims to directly increase productivity and resilience among smallholders while creating a favorable environment for private sector investment.

Component 2 – Support for Value Addition and Market Access: Recognizing that productivity gains must translate into marketable outputs, this component focuses on improving the aggregation and processing of agricultural commodities, enhancing market access, and mobilizing private sector investment. Performance-based matching grants will incentivize private actors, while cooperatives will be strengthened to serve as reliable partners in structured supply chains. Policy support will also be provided to ensure compliance with domestic and international market standards, including food safety and organic certification.

Component 3 – Support for Digitization and Access to Finance: Digital tools will serve as the backbone of the project's monitoring and service delivery systems. Investments under this component will establish a national digital farm and farmer registry, modernize soil and climate information systems, and enable secure data sharing across the sector. Complementary interventions will strengthen access to finance through technical assistance, risk-sharing facilities, and innovative lending models, ensuring that both farmers and agribusinesses can invest in production, processing, and value addition.

Component 4 – Project Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation: Effective implementation requires robust institutional arrangements. This component supports the PIU, ensuring coordination among implementing partners, technical institutions, and private sector actors. It also finances monitoring and evaluation systems, environmental and social safeguards, procurement, financial management, communications, and knowledge dissemination.

OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to provide technical leadership, coordination, and oversight for agribusiness and value chain development under the SAVIG Project. The agribusiness specialist will take the lead in implementing interventions envisaged under component 2 of the SAVIG project.

The Agribusiness Specialist will ensure:

- Effective implementation of agribusiness investment interventions
- Strengthened performance of priority value chains
- Alignment of grants, finance, and business development services
- Strong coordination between PIU, district teams, and Independent Firms
- Enabling partnerships between farmers, farmer collectives and agribusiness firms /private sector
- Compliance with World Bank operational, fiduciary, and safeguard requirements

REPORTING AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Agribusiness Specialist will report directly to the Project Coordinator (PC).

The Specialist will:

- Serve as Head of Agribusiness and Value Chain Development within the PIU
- Provide technical supervision to DL-VCP/AFOs
- Take the lead in the implementation of the interventions under component 2
- Act as the primary technical interface between the PIU and Independent Firms
- Coordinate closely with:
    - Ministry of Agriculture
    - Financial institutions
    - Private sector actors
    - Implementing partners

- Independent Firms
- Financial Services Specialist
- Business Development Specialist

SCOPE OF WORK AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership in Agribusiness and Value Chain Development

- Lead design and implementation of value chain strategies aligned with SAVIG components especially component 2.
- Guide prioritization and upgrading of value chains (rice, cocoa, maize, horticulture)
- Promote market-oriented production and agribusiness transformation
- Provide technical direction for investments in:
  - Agro-processing
  - Aggregation systems
  - Storage and logistics
  - Contract farming models

Oversight of Agribusiness Investment Interventions

- Provide technical oversight of investment grant implementation under Component 2
- Ensure alignment of investments with value chain priorities and climate-smart principles
- Coordinate technical appraisal processes with Independent Firms
- Monitor performance and results of supported agribusiness investments

Leadership of Decentralized Implementation Structure

- Supervise and guide DL-VCP/AFOs across all districts
- Ensure standardized implementation approaches
- Oversee beneficiary identification and validation processes
- Review and validate district reports and outputs

Coordination with Independent Firms (IFs)

Ensure effective coordination with:

Verification Firms

- Validate beneficiary eligibility
- Confirm milestone achievement

M&E Firms

- Align data with results framework
- Validate outputs and outcomes

Fiduciary Firms

- Ensure compliance with financial procedures
- Support audits

Technical Audit Firms

- Verify quality of investments and infrastructure

Ensure strict separation between implementation and verification roles.

Coordination with Financial Services and Business Development Specialists

The Agribusiness Specialist will provide overall technical direction and ensure coherence across:

Financial Services Specialist

- Align financial instruments with value chain needs
- Integrate grant financing with credit mechanisms
- Support development of viable agribusiness financing models

Business Development Specialist

- Ensure quality of business development services
- Align SME support with market opportunities
- Strengthen viability of agribusiness enterprises

Private Sector Engagement and Market Linkages

- Promote partnerships with aggregators, processors, exporters, and input suppliers
- Facilitate contract farming and structured market arrangements
- Support investment promotion within priority value chains

Monitoring, Reporting, and Knowledge Management

- Consolidate district data into national performance reports
- Ensure timely reporting to PIU and World Bank
- Document best practices and lessons learned
- Support evaluations

Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening

- Provide technical guidance for capacity-building programs
- Ensure alignment of training with value chain priorities
- Support strengthening institutional systems at district level

KEY DELIVERABLES

- Annual Agribusiness Work Plan and Budget
- Quarterly and Annual Performance Reports
- Agribusiness Investment Performance Reports
- District Supervision Reports
- Value Chain Performance Reports
- Compliance and Verification Reports
- Knowledge Products (case studies, lessons learned)
- Mid-term and Final Impact Reports

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Master's degree in Agribusiness, Agricultural Economics, Rural Development, Finance, or related field
- Minimum 8–10 years relevant experience
- Experience in World Bank or donor-funded projects
- Strong expertise in value chain development
- Experience in private sector engagement and rural finance
- Experience managing decentralized implementation systems
- Familiarity with M&E and verification systems is an asset

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Based on:

- Timely delivery of outputs
- Quality of technical leadership
- Effectiveness of district coordination
- Alignment of interventions with PDO
- Compliance with World Bank procedures
- Coordination effectiveness with IFs and specialists

SPECIAL PROVISIONS – INDEPENDENT FIRMS INTERFACE

The Agribusiness Specialist shall ensure:

- Clear separation between implementation and verification functions
- Full responsiveness to Independent Firm findings
- Data consistency across systems
- Immediate escalation of irregularities
- Adherence to World Bank fiduciary and governance standards

8. REPORTING LINE

The Agribusiness Specialist will report to the Project Coordinator and work closely with:

- M&E Specialist
- Financial Services & Business Development Specialist
- Digital Agriculture Specialist
- Social Development Specialist
- Field staff, agribusiness partners, the World Bank & IFC, and government technical agencies

9. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EMPLOYER

The PIU shall provide office space and equipment; internet and communication facilities; access to project documents and relevant information; logistical support for field missions; administrative support and operational resources necessary for the execution of the assignment.

10. SUBMISSION OF REPORTS

The following reports shall be submitted to the Project Coordinator;

- Monthly/Timesheet
- Quarterly
- Bi – annually
- Annually

11. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Interested candidates shall submit:

- Cover letter;
- Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV);
- Copies of academic and professional certificates;
- Three professional references;
- Evidence of relevant experience in Agribusiness and Value chain Development.