



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY (MAF)

**Sustainable Agricultural Value-chains Intensification for Growth
(SAVIG)
(P513429)**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST**

June 2026

Project: Sustainable Agricultural Value-chain Intensification for Growth (SAVIG) Project
Location: 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.

1.0 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 and intends to recruit a **COMMUNICATIONS 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.

2.0 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.

3.0 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 PCU, 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.

4.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Communications Specialist (CS) will take overall charge of the project's Information, Education and Communications (IEC) and Public/Media relations activities, under the direct supervision of the Project Coordinator. The Specialist shall implement both the internal and external communications programs for SAVIG by applying technical practices and methods through the collection and use of available and necessary data from the field and partner institutions for relevant communications approaches and methods. The Communications Specialist will work in close collaboration with the Communication Officers at the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade, Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency (NAFRA) and the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA).

The CS will engage and utilize all available MEDIA channels including newspaper, radio stations-Tube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Television stations, project website and other IEC materials to enhance the visibility of the SAVIG; while also disseminating key messages to collectives and agribusinesses and SAVIG partners. The Communications Specialist will discuss issues that will affect the efficient functioning of the Communications Unit with the Project Coordinator and agree on ways to resolve them. Included in the assignment are the following scope of services:

- i. Setting up a Communications strategy for SAVIG and establishment of a system to support its implementation.
- ii. Offering technical advice to the Project Coordinator and Implementing agencies during implementation.

The primary responsibility of the Communications Specialist (CS) is to set up a functioning Communications System. This system should include Information Education Communication (IEC) and Public/Media Relations activities, adequate to ensure that they can provide the Government and the World Bank with accurate and timely information regarding the Project and its subprojects. The CS will ensure that all procedures that all procedures in the PIM are consistently and correctly adhered to

The Specialist shall inter alia, undertake the following:

- Maintain the calendar and provide accurate and updated information on SAVIG website, to include all stories submitted by the PIU and SAVIG Implementing Partners, web ads, sponsorships, etc;
- Plan, write, prepare and/or review press releases and articles to be used in SAVIG publications about the PIU, SAVIG Implementing Partners, and
- Research, interview, write, edit, proofread and distribute content for electronic and print communication. Develop story logs and editorial calendars, conduct research and interviews, write articles, and procure art or photos;
- Develop relevant training and IEC materials and appropriate programs for the mass media;
- Maintain repository of press releases and articles;
- Support offline SAVIG initiatives by assisting in the design and preparation of all SAVIG promotional and marketing literature within allotted SAVIG budget;
- Participate in the set-up and preparation of all SAVIG sponsored events;
- Prepare and maintain SAVIG Implementing Partners Directory, both online and print versions;
- Conduct periodic member surveys utilizing web-based tool;
- Assist other members of SAVIG staff as required;
- Monitor information flow to beneficiaries and evaluate the impact of information delivery;
- Other duties as assigned by the Project Coordinator

5.0 QUALIFICATION, EXPERIENCE & COMPETENCES:

- At least a master's degree in mass communications, Journalism or other related disciplines;
- At least 10 years post qualification experience,
- Excellent communications and Participatory skills
- Good interpersonal relationship and skills;
- Oral Communication - Speaks clearly and persuasively in positive or negative situations; Listens and gets clarification; Responds well to questions; Demonstrates group presentation skills;
- Written Communication - Writes clearly and informatively; Edits work for spelling and grammar; Varies writing style to meet needs; Presents numerical data effectively; Able to read and interpret written information;
- Computer Skills -Must possess a demonstrated use of intermediate software packages (word processing, spreadsheets, graphics, desktop publishing programs and photo manipulation programs;

- Cost Consciousness - Works within approved budget; Develops and implements cost saving measures; Conserves Project's resources;
- Completes administrative tasks correctly and on time; Support Project's goals and values.

8. REPORTING LINE

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

- Financial Management Spécialiste, Procurèrent Specialist.
- Agribusiness Specialist, 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.