GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY (MAFS)

Sustainable Agricultural Value-chains Intensification for Growth (SAVIG)

(P513429)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Financial Services and Business Development 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. 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 a **Financial Service and Business Development 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. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE (PDO)

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.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The primary objective of this assignment is to support the PIU in the effective delivery of Subcomponent 3.2, with a focus on:

- Expanding access to financial services for agribusiness actors
- Strengthening linkages between agribusinesses and financial institutions
- Enhancing the capacity of financial institutions to serve the agriculture sector
- Supporting MSMEs and FPOs to become creditworthy and investment-ready

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Specialist will undertake the following key functions:

Implementation and Coordination

- Lead the planning, coordination, and execution of Subcomponent 3.2 activities
- Liaise closely with the IFC Financial Institutions Group (FIG) and key stakeholders
- Ensure alignment with the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and annual work plans

Facilitating Access to Finance

- Support agribusiness actors—including farmer collectives, processors, aggregators, seed producers, and agro-dealers—to access financing
- Facilitate strong linkages between agribusinesses and partner financial institutions
- Develop and maintain a robust pipeline of bankable investment opportunities

Capacity Building for Financial Institutions

- Design and deliver capacity-building programs for partner financial institutions
- Strengthen their ability to assess and manage agricultural lending risks

- Support the development of tailored financial products, including:
    - Value chain financing solutions
    - Input financing schemes
    - Seasonal and working capital loan products

Technical Assistance to Agribusinesses

- Provide advisory and training support to MSMEs and FPOs on:
    - Financial literacy
    - Business planning and financial management
    - Loan application preparation
- Improve financial record-keeping and overall creditworthiness

Financial Innovation and Product Development

- Collaborate with IFC and partners to design and pilot innovative financing mechanisms, such as:
    - Risk-sharing facilities

Gender and Inclusion

- Promote equitable access to finance for women farmers and women-led agribusinesses
- Support the design of gender-responsive financial products

Monitoring and Reporting

- Develop and track key performance indicators on access to finance
- Prepare high-quality quarterly and annual progress reports
- Capture and document lessons learned and best practices

5. DELIVERABLES

The Specialist will be responsible for delivering:

- A detailed implementation plan for Subcomponent 3.2
- Partnership frameworks with financial institutions
- Capacity-building programs and training materials
- A pipeline of investment-ready agribusinesses

- Reports on financial products developed and deployed
- Monitoring and evaluation reports on access-to-finance outcomes

9. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Education

- Master's degree in finance, Economics, Agribusiness, Business Administration, or a related field

Experience

- Minimum of 7–10 years of relevant professional experience in:
    - Agricultural or SME finance
    - Financial sector development
    - Business development services
- Proven experience working with financial institutions and development projects
- Familiarity with World Bank–funded operations and IFC engagement is an advantage

Core Competencies

- Strong analytical and financial modeling skills
- Expertise in financial product development
- Excellent stakeholder engagement and partnership-building abilities
- Demonstrated experience in training and capacity building
- Knowledge of gender-inclusive finance approaches
- Strong communication and report-writing skills

8. REPORTING LINE

The Financial Services & Business Development Specialist will report to the Project Coordinator and work closely with:

- Agribusiness Specialist
- M&E Specialist
- Environmental Safeguard Specialist
- Social Development Specialist
- Field staff, agribusiness partners including 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 Financial Services & Business Development.