HARVESTPLUS VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
# FO12-005
LOCALLY RECRUITED POSITION

CONSULTANCY: SME MARKET & FINANCE SPECIALIST
LOCATION: DHAKA, BANGLADESH
SUPERVISED BY: MULTILATERAL & POLICY ADVISOR
POSTING DATE: MARCH 10, 2021
CLOSING DATE: MARCH 28, 2021

JOB SUMMARY

HarvestPlus seeks a highly motivated SME Market and Finance Specialist to join our Bangladesh team. Applications are being invited in anticipation of an upcoming project focusing on COVID related stimulus financing for agribusinesses. This 18-month role is expected to enable growth-oriented small and medium enterprises to access both technical assistance and financing in Bangladesh; promote HarvestPlus’ private sector development agenda; and develop and manage new financing partnerships.

The position will be based in Dhaka.

The Specialist will report to HarvestPlus’ innovative finance workstream lead, based in Washington, DC. Interested applicants must have work authorization to work in Bangladesh and will be expected to travel to other countries in South Asia 10-15% of their time.

BACKGROUND

HarvestPlus improves nutrition and public health by developing and promoting biofortified food crops that are rich in vitamins and minerals and providing global leadership on biofortification evidence and technology. HarvestPlus is part of the CGIAR. CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by its 15 research centers in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. HarvestPlus is based at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and collaborates with multiple CGIAR centers and partner organizations. Mainstreaming and scaling up biofortification depends in part on its adoption by private sector actors like farmers, SMEs and larger businesses in nutritious seed, grain and food value chains and on enablement through capacity development and market linkage of SMEs. HarvestPlus already works with SMEs - we have long term relationships at the local level and have been providing technical assistance to hundreds of SMEs in the target countries. There are additionally many SMEs in the nutrition sector more broadly that can adopt biofortification products with the appropriate access to capital.

COVID-19 has deeply and adversely affected the business performance and continuity of SMEs across the world. A survey among SMEs in 132 countries shows that the business operations of micro, small and medium firms are strongly affected by the crisis, with one-fifth indicating potentially shutting down permanently within three months. This is particularly true for women and youth owned enterprises.

HarvestPlus is now rolling out a new agribusiness financing project to address some of these needs. In Bangladesh there are local stimulus financing facilities already provided through government support
however have been underspend for a range of reasons. We will partner with banks that are already implementing these finance facilities through our local SME market and finance specialist to better understand constraints to accessing this capital and match SMEs to banks to ease the flow of capital. The facilitator will also be expected to engage with key government and industry stakeholders, train SMEs on bank products and other technical areas and support related research and learning activities.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

The Specialist will build a network of banking (and other SME finance provider) and government relationships to accelerate access to finance in biofortification and other nutritious food value chains. Overall objectives will be to: map constraints in access to finance; identify and develop relationships with key stakeholders; manage and run business planning competitions and coordinate the application and monitoring process of finance activities.

Specific duties include but are not limited to:

- Testing a new approach to facilitating stimulus finance for agribusinesses.
- Building partnerships with financial institutions.
- Delivering training on basic financial education for SMEs.
- Designing, managing and delivering a business planning competition.
- Coordinating applications for stimulus finance.
- Facilitating due diligence on selected agribusinesses.
- Collating portfolio reports on a regular basis.
- Documenting cases studies of entrepreneurs and their experiences.
- Expanding the stimulus finance program through partnerships with national donors, government and financing institutions.
- Providing support for learning activities as also a separate project track focused on savings groups.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor’s degree in business management, commerce, economics or agribusiness management plus 7 years of professional experience in SME Banking with a commercial bank, non-bank financing company or digital finance provider in Bangladesh or
- Master’s degree in the above disciplines or equivalent certification plus 5 years of relevant experience as mentioned above.
- Professional diplomas and undergraduates may apply if they have higher experience.
- Candidate should have a track record both in SME relationship management and credit management specifically in the rural segment.
- Strong credit and business planning skills. Experience in conducting trainings.
- The candidate should be very familiar with the landscape of financial service providers, innovative products in the Southern African region.
- Demonstrated experience interacting with stakeholders at various levels of government, including Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Education, etc. as well as with non-government organizations, including donors, private sector, and research organizations.
- Self-motivated, ability to work independently and comfortable working in different kinds of situations, rural, online, within a global team, including working well with team members located in multiple time zones and countries.
- Excellent English written and oral communication skills.
Able to travel as needed. Full time availability.

**TO APPLY**

Please submit a cover letter and CV via Taleo by **March 28, 2021**. We are unable to respond to every applicant individually, therefore we will only contact applicants that are selected for an interview.

Taleo Link: [https://phf.tbe.taleo.net/phf04/ats/careers/v2/viewRequisition?org=IFPRI&cws=43&rid=2344](https://phf.tbe.taleo.net/phf04/ats/careers/v2/viewRequisition?org=IFPRI&cws=43&rid=2344)