Independent Evaluation Committee Members (IEC)
Evaluation of Business Plans under the Productive Partnerships Component

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Food Technology Expert

1. Background and Context

The Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB), with support from the World Bank, is implementing the *Renewable Natural Resources (RNR) Value chains Project*, which includes Component 2: Productive Partnerships (PP). The Productive Partnerships component aims to promote commercially viable, inclusive, and sustainable partnerships among farmers, Producer Organizations (POs), cooperatives, agribusinesses, and private sector actors across priority agriculture, livestock, and forestry value chains.

Under this component, eligible partnerships submit Business Plans (BPs) for competitive selection and grant support. To ensure transparency, technical rigor, economic soundness, and independence in the selection process, an Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC) is constituted.

This Terms of Reference (ToR) defines the mandate, responsibilities, composition, and evaluation framework applicable to all four expert members of the IEC.

2. Objective of the IEC

The objective of the Food Technology Expert IEC member is to independently evaluate, and rank Business Plans submitted under the Productive Partnerships component and to recommend proposals for approval, conditional approval, revision, or rejection based on an agreed and transparent evaluation framework.

The IEC shall ensure that selected Business Plans are:

- Aligned with project development objectives
- Economically and financially viable
- Technically feasible and market-oriented
- Inclusive and development-oriented
- Sustainable beyond the project support period

3. Scope of Work

Food Technologist expert IEC member shall:

- Review assigned Business Plans in detail prior to evaluation meetings.
- Assess proposals objectively using the approved common scoring framework.
- Participate in IEC meetings, presentations, and technical deliberations.
- Score proposals independently and contribute to consolidated scoring and ranking.
- Provide clear, evidence-based justifications for scores and recommendations.
- Support consensus-based decision-making while maintaining independent professional judgment.
- Uphold the highest standards of professional ethics, confidentiality, and integrity.

The location of work would be Thimphu (Office based) and no travel outside Thimphu is required.

4. Composition of the Independent Evaluation Committee

The IEC shall comprise four (4) independent experts, collectively providing economic and financial, technical and value-chain, and private-sector perspectives:

- Agriculture Expert
- Livestock Expert
- Food Technology Expert
- Finance Expert

5. Common Evaluation and Scoring Framework

All Business Plans shall be evaluated using the following standardized scoring matrix:

Table 1: Scoring Matrix

Criterion	Description / Key Indicators	Weight (%)
1. Alignment to the project	# Aligns with project development objectives (PDOs) # Contributes to productivity and is proposed for production clusters.	10
2. Partnership Strength and Interdependence	# Clarity of roles between Lead Partner and Producer Organization (PO); rationalized for both parties in the plan; fairness of benefit sharing; co-financing commitment; governance mechanisms, strong interdependence.	15
3. Economic & Financial Viability	# Clear business model; realistic costs and revenues; proven or potential market demand; profitability and sustainability after project support.	30
4. Inclusiveness and Beneficiary Impact	# Number and type of beneficiaries (farmers, women, youth); equity in benefit distribution; Women / youth led PO; empowerment of farmer groups; employment potential.	10
5. Technical Feasibility and Innovation	# Soundness of production, processing, or marketing technology; appropriateness for local conditions; degree of innovation or value addition; climate-smart approach.	15
6. Risks	# Risks are not high and adequate / workable mitigation strategies proposed.	10
7. Exports	# Demonstrated capacity to export products outside of Bhutan, Business plan shows commitment for export orientation within the duration of the project	5
8. Core value chain	Plan focuses on potato, citrus and dairy.	5
TOTAL		**100**

6. Scoring and Decision-Making Process

Each IEC member shall complete and sign an individual scoring sheet before the collective deliberation. The IEC may discuss material differences in individual assessments, and members may revise their individual scores following the discussion. Any revision shall be documented in the final individual scoring sheet. The PMU will calculate the final score as the simple average of the final individual scores and present the calculation to the IEC for verification. All members sign the consolidated evaluation report, which records the individual scores, average score, recommendation, conditions, and any dissenting opinion.

- **Pre-evaluation immersion:** The project will organise a one-day immersion programme for IEC members to familiarise them with the project, PP approach, evaluation criteria, scoring matrix, and evaluation process.

During evaluation, the following process would be followed for each BP by the IEC:

- **Document review:** IEC members will review all documents submitted (as mentioned under Section 9) against the prescribed evaluation criteria.
- **Interaction with PPs:** IEC members will have a brief interaction with the PPs to discuss and seek clarifications on their BPs, if needed.

- **Independent Review:** Each IEC member shall independently review, score and provide qualitative comment on the assigned BPs using the prescribed template.
- **Business Plan scoring:** IEC members shall discuss individual assessment criteria and agree on one common agreed BP score, documenting the rationale for their score. The consolidated scoring sheet shall be signed by all IEC members and submitted to the PMU with recommendations for approval, conditional approval, revision, or rejection.
- **Final Decision:** The final decision to award a Matching Grant for the BP will be made by the Project Steering Committee (PSC). The IEC recommendation does not itself approve or award a Matching Grant.

7. Qualification and Experience

The Food Technology Expert provides capital investment appraisal particularly on value addition equipment and infrastructure for the value chain of Productive Partnership Business Plans, ensuring that proposed partnerships are market-oriented, commercially viable, technologically feasible and capable of generating sustainable income for Producer Organizations through strong linkages with Lead Partners and private sector markets.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in food technology
- Minimum 5 years of relevant professional experience in post-harvest and food technology development.

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree or higher in food technology with specialization in post-harvest and food preservation engineering
- Experience working with Producer Organizations, cooperatives, agribusiness enterprises, SMEs, exporters, or private sector market actors.

Required Competencies

- Strong understanding of end-to-end value chains, post-harvest and food processing technology equipment and infrastructure.
- Ability to assess the technological adoption feasibility of Productive Partnerships.

8. Key responsibilities and deliverables

Food Technology Expert will be responsible for the following deliverables as part of the IEC.

Table 2: Expert's Responsibilities

Evaluation Area	Responsibility
Technological feasibility	Review the capital investment for the technology adoption on processing and infrastructure between Lead partner and Producer Organization.
Value chain analysis	Evaluate value addition, processing, packaging, logistics, storage, aggregation and market demand.
Product quality control	Assess the critical control point measures for ensuring the finish product quality, food safety and quality considerations.
Others	Contribute to other aspects of the common Evaluation and Scoring Framework.

Deliverables

- Completed and signed individual scoring and qualitative review sheet for each assigned BP with substantive written comments on commercial and market feasibility
- All members sit together and provide final BP score with justifications and recommendations for approval.

9. Documents to be shared with IEC Members

The IEC members will receive the following documents for their desk review.

- Submitted BP and financial, budget, and procurement annexes
- Final commercial agreement
- Report on relevant desk-review and E&S screening from the PMU
- Report on desk review and field verification/validation from the PMU/TWG.
- Any other supporting documents

10. Duration and Level of Effort

- The engagement shall be short-term and intermittent, linked to Business Plan evaluation cycles.
- Level of effort shall depend on the number of proposals.

11. Confidentiality, Ethics, and Conflict of Interest

- All proposals, documents, and deliberations shall be treated as strictly confidential.
- Value chain IEC members shall submit a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration and recuse themselves where conflicts arise.
- All evaluations shall be conducted with independence, objectivity, and transparency, consistent with World Bank ethical standards.

12. Remuneration

Professional fees and reimbursements shall be paid in accordance with approved rate quoted rate per BP by individual and approved by tender committee after evaluation.

13. Selection Process

The selection process shall include the following steps:

- **Screening of Applications:** Applications will be screened for eligibility, qualifications, and relevant experience.
- **Shortlisting:** Shortlisted candidates may be empanelled or invited for further interaction, if required.
- **Assessment / Interaction (if required):** The PMU may conduct interviews or technical interactions to assess suitability.

14. How to Apply

Interested and eligible candidates should submit the following documents:

a. Cover Letter indicating:
   - Area of expertise being applied for
   - Relevant experience related to Business Plan appraisal / evaluation.
   - Availability for short-term assignments
   - Expected per BP fee rate.

b. Curriculum vitae (C) (maximum 5 pages) including:

   - Educational qualifications
   - Professional experience
   - Relevant assignments and evaluations undertaken.
   - Contact details of at least two professional referees.

c. Declaration of Conflict of Interest (Template attached)

- A signed statement declaring conflict of interest (or not) with potential applicants under the Productive Partnerships component.

d. Proof of Identity and Professional Credentials (self-attested copies)

e. All documents should be submitted in PDF format.

15. Selection Criteria for Food Technology Expert

Proposals will be assessed based on Individual Consultant's Qualifications and Experience.

Table 3: Selection Criteria for Food Technology Expert

Criteria	**Scoring Points**
Academic qualifications: Bachelor or Master's degree or higher in the Food Technology	• Master degree or higher: 25 • Bachelor degree: 10
Technical and professional experiences with minimum of 5 years	• Above 7 years: 25 • 5-7 years: 15

Relevant experience in similar agribusiness assessments and evaluations	• Experience in evaluation of Business Plans or technical proposal related to agriculture and livestock (40 points):
	  ○ Evaluation of BP: 25
	  ○ Evaluation of technical proposal: 15

Experience with World Bank or other donor-funded projects in the Food Technology domain	10
Total	**100**

16. Submission

Applications should be submitted by email or through the designated project portal, as specified in the official advertisement, with the subject line:

Application for IEC Expert – **Food Technology Expert**

E-mail for submission: rinchenchedup@moal.gov.bt (Rinchen Chedup, Procurement Specialist) and sherubg@moal.gov.bt (Project Manager)

Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

The PMU reserves the right to constitute the IEC from the shortlisted/ empanelled experts as per project requirements.