

**GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE  
INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

**STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION  
(BL-L1031)**

**Terms of Reference  
Financial Specialist**

**I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 One strategy of the National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030 refers to maximization of the Government of Belize's (GoB) revenue generating potential. For the years 2015, 2016 and 2017, the reported Income Tax and General Sales Tax earnings for the GoB were 61.6%, 61.0%, 71.5% respectively of the total revenue and grants for the country. With these departments contributing to more than half of Belize's total revenue, it is clear why objective four of the Ministry of Finance's (MOF) Fiscal Strategy Statement of 2018/19 includes making revenue collection more effective and forceful.
- 1.2 Following good practices and recommendations from the Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC), the Supporting Economic Management in the Caribbean (SEMCAR) Program of the World Bank (WB), and other external agencies, current taxation reform objectives were developed in alignment with the National objectives and strategies. The aim is to increase the country's economic activity by modernizing and streamlining the national tax system. In order to achieve the stated aim, the GoB has decided to:
- (a) Modernize its tax administration by merging the existing Income Tax Department (ITD) and the Department of General Sales Tax (DGST) into a single function-based tax administration.
  - (b) To procure and implement a new Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS)
- 1.3 Publications on international development show that the functional organizational and management structure as the most successfully implemented for tax administration purposes. Indeed, the GoB is following such good practices toward the design of its new tax administration governance and organizational structure which, once fully implemented, should provide a robust foundation for the Government to meet its current tax reform objectives and strategies.

In order to order to facilitate the process, the Tax Modernization Program was initiated in October 2018 comprising of five main projects/components including: (a) Communication and Change Management; (b) Organization/Human Resources (HR)/Infrastructure; (c)

Business Processes Re-engineering; (d) Legislative Framework; and (e) Information Technology. These will be implemented in phases, with the existing core areas of the ITD and DGST operating as the new, consolidated functional organization, the Belize Tax Service (BTS).

- 1.4 To support this endeavour, the GoB has requested the support of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to fund a five-year project through a US\$14.0 million investment loan; in particular, “Strengthening of Tax Administration” (BL-L1031). The main objective of the Project is to strengthen Belize’s tax administration aimed at increasing tax revenue collection, through the following specific objectives: (a) increasing the effectiveness of the Government to collect taxes, through improvement in the tax administration governance and; (b) increasing tax administration efficiency, through improvement in the operational processes and modernization of the technological infrastructure.
- 1.5 The MoF is responsible for the implementation of the overall Belize Tax Modernization Program and, for this purpose it has established a Program Management Office (PMO) under the Office of the Financial Secretary to support the implementation of the Program along with the consolidation of the BTS. In this respect, the MoF has been designated as the Executing Agency (EA) of BL-L1031. For this purpose, a Project Executing Unit (PEU) will be established in the PMO with concrete technical, administrative, financial, control and planning, monitoring and evaluation responsibilities for the IDB-funded initiative. In addition, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be created to facilitate the coordination between the agencies involved as part of the Project execution structure, and to provide strategic advice and monitoring to/of the overall implementation process. The PSC will consist of key implementing agencies and stakeholders. and will be chaired by the MoF
- 1.6 The present Terms of Reference (ToR) will support the contracting of the Financial Specialist for the PEU under a contractual arrangement with the MoF, and as part of the BL-L1031 initiative.

## **II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF WORK**

- 2.1 The objective of the position is to lead the overall financial management responsibilities of the Project (i.e. accounting, budget administration, treasury, and asset management), and for ensuring the presence of the necessary control environment for effective and transparent financial reporting in compliance with IDB and national regulations.
- 2.2 The Financial Specialist is responsible for the overall financial management and administration aspects of the project BL-L1031, by leading and executing the fiduciary functions for all components of the Project in accordance with national legislative requirements and the financial management policies and ethical code of the IDB and the GoB. In particular the Financial Specialist: (a) ensures that appropriate financial and

accounting systems and controls are implemented so that all Project activities are executed in accordance with the applicable MoF and the Bank's financial and accounting requirements; and (b) assists the Project Coordinator with monitoring Project activities to meet the stipulated Project objectives, transparency and accountability requirements as they relate to the planned expenditures and asset allocation.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIVITIES

3.1 The main responsibilities of the Financial Specialist include, among others:

- (a) Managing, in an effective and transparent manner, the financial resources of the Project
- (b) Preparing the "Chart of Accounts" of the Project and submitting it for consideration and non-objection of the Bank.
- (c) Maintaining the *payment and budgetary records* of the Project in the Smart Stream system/platform, following the guidelines of the MoF, and implementing a parallel Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform to maintain the *accounting, budgetary and treasury records of the Program (including the general ledger) as well as the preparation of financial reports*.
- (d) Preparing the Project's Financial Plan, including the investment and disbursement plans in accordance to Pluri-Annual Execution Plan/Project Execution Plan (PEP), the Annual Operational Plan (AOP), and the Procurement Plan (PP).
- (e) Following applicable national and internal procedures, executing *through the Treasury Single Account (TSA)* the payments, transfers and disbursement of resources to cover the Program's eligible expenses to contractors, goods and services providers, consultants, and other.
- (f) Preparing and submitting, for consideration of the IDB, the bi-annual budget execution reports and financial statements in formats agreed with the Bank and classified by component and product/activity.
- (g) Preparing and submitting to the Bank, the expense reports and supporting documentation, along with the requests for advances of funds.
- (h) Maintaining an adequate filing system for the Programs' financial records (budget, accounting and treasury), including the payment records, among others.
- (i) Contracting the annual independent external audits, following IDB norms and procedures.

### 3.2 Specific financial management activities include:

- (a) Review the Project Operational Manual (POM), the PEP, the AOP, the PP and other Project documents to ensure complete and comprehensive understanding of the intended goals, activities and results of the Project, including their financial planning and management implications.
- (b) Review the IDB financial management policies and GoB financial regulations to ensure full understanding and familiarity with the payment processes and requirements and controls, following the purchase and contracting of goods, works and services nationally and internationally.
- (c) Manage, update and maintain the accounting system to allow for the identification of the sources and uses of Project funds and reporting in line with standard and generally accepted financial management requirements based on Bank and GoB policies and procedures.
- (d) Provide for the effective administration of the Project's financial/budget control system.
- (e) Prepare the Project's annual budget by component and consolidated, along with Disbursement Schedule, Financial Plan and other, and work in collaboration with the PEU's Procurement Specialist to contribute to the drafting of the annual PP with respect to costs and expenditures.
- (f) Maintain updated financial statements and audit reports to support disbursement requests to the Bank, and work with PMO and PEU personnel to prepare the justification of expenses from previous disbursements, according to component activities contained in the Financial Plan and the Advance of Funds.
- (g) Provide guidance to the PMO and PEU team with respect to eligible and ineligible expenses according to the Loan Contract.
- (h) Provide regular updates to the PMO/PEU management team on Project budget status, with attention to tracking and monitoring budget expenses, Project financial benchmarks and results, against the PEP, AOP, PP and overall Financial Plan.
- (i) Coordinate with personnel of the MoF for the implementation and execution of the payment system, taking into consideration process controls, signatories, authorizations and other.
- (j) Provide for the execution of payments to contractors and goods and services

providers, following the stipulations contained in the POM, while aiming at an effective compliance with time cycle requirements and targets.

3.3 Specific financial monitoring and reporting activities include:

- (a) Establish and maintain adequate financial, accounting, and internal control systems to allow for effective monitoring and reporting on, among others, planned versus actual budget execution on a continual basis.
- (b) Prepare payment requests and corresponding expenditure reports and financial statements as per requirements, and any other finance documents necessary in close liaison with the MoF.
- (c) Prepare and review notes, reports and presentations for the IDB, the PMO, Financial Secretary, and PSC as necessary.
- (d) Coordinate and cooperate with the independent external auditing firm on an annual basis and ensure submission of annual audited financial statements within 120 days of close of each fiscal year (i.e. 31st July) and at Project completion within 120 days after last disbursement.
- (e) Provide monitoring and oversight as required to the financial administration of Project activities, in conjunction with technical specialists of the MoF, PMO and PEU.
- (f) Work with the Procurement Specialist and the Project Coordinator to prepare regular updates to the PEP, AOP, and PP and corresponding Financial Plan and inform on the quarterly Project status reports to MoF.
- (g) Follow-up and reporting to the Project Coordinator and Program Manager as required, ensuring status updates, and timely preparation of periodic financial reports for presentation to the PSC and other management instances.
- (h) Maintain and inventory of all assets and investments of the Project in coordination with the finance and administrative officers of the MoF.

3.4 The Financial Specialist shall undertake his/her work with the guidance of and coordination with the MoF and the PMO, and in accordance with the Loan Contract, annual work plan, and IDB financial management and procurement policies and in compliance with GoB regulations. Finally, the Financial Specialist will provide the necessary support to team members of the PMO, PEU and MoF with respect to payment requests, financial reporting, and information sharing.

#### IV. DELIVERABLES

- 4.1 The Financial Specialist will be responsible for preparing/updating the following reports which are considered recurrent deliverables or responsibilities:
- (a) Chart of Accounts.
  - (b) Financial Plan.
  - (c) Annual Budget.
  - (d) Monthly and quarterly financial reports.
  - (e) Cash flow projections.
  - (f) Filed accounting records.
  - (g) Payment of Invoices and recording.
  - (h) Internal and external audit responses and actions.
  - (i) Financial administration analysis and recommendations.
  - (j) POM (financial management section).
  - (k) Other.

#### V. QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

- 5.1 **Education:** Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Financial Auditing, or other related fields with an equivalent recognized qualification in Accounting.
- 5.2 **Work Experience:** At least three years of proven work experience in project Financial Management is required. Proven experience working in a similar capacity for a project financed by a multi-lateral institution such as the IDB will be an asset. An Accountant Certification and/or membership of a recognized accountancy body will also be considered an asset.
- 5.3 **Skills:** (a) Have excellent computer skills, including Microsoft Office and QuickBooks or other similar accounting software; knowledge and experience working with Microsoft Project would also be an advantage; (b) Working knowledge of internationally accepted accounting principles, guidelines and best practices is required; (c) working knowledge of

Belize's Taxation Regime, as well as all relevant financial and procurement-based policies, procedures and/or regulations; (d) ability to prepare, analyze, interpret, and evaluate financial reports and accounting records while being detail-orientated, meticulous, and accurate in all aspects of the job; (e) task orientated and able to prioritize projects, multitask and meet tight deadlines; (f) fluent in written and spoken English with the ability to express data in a concise and clear manner; (g) team player and possess strong self-motivation and initiative; (h) sound decision making skills and objectivity with the proven ability to act with confidentiality and discretion; (i) in-depth knowledge of auditing and accounting principles, and a general awareness of financial practices and procedures of government and private/public initiatives and operations; (j) professional, honest and display strong business ethics and integrity; and (k) experience with the Government of Belize Smart Stream platform will be of significant benefit.

## **VI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- 6.1 The Financial Specialist reports to the Project Coordinator of the PEU. He/she shall work in close coordination with the staff of the MoF and especially the members of the PMO, the BTS and the Finance Officer of the Ministry.

## **VII. COMPENSATION**

- 7.1 The Financial Specialist will be paid a monthly salary to be established during the contracting process.
- 7.2 Given the staff-like tasks and responsibilities of the PEU personnel, reports (deliverables) do not apply. Instead, performance assessment reports from the supervisor.

## **VIII. APPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Deadline for submission of application letter and curriculum vitae is **June 14th, 2019**. Applications should be addressed to the **Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Attn: Program Manager, Tax Modernization Program Office** and submitted via e-mail to [michelle.longsworth@mof.gov.bz](mailto:michelle.longsworth@mof.gov.bz) marked *MTAB Financial Specialist* in the subject header. Only short-listed applicants will be notified.