

Terms of Reference (TOR)

For

Baseline study of “Building climate adaptive farming opportunities and improved livelihoods for women and marginalised groups in Nepal”

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1. BACKGROUND

Practical Action is a global change-making group that consists of a UK registered charity with community projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America, an independent publishing company and a technical consulting service. It combines these specialisms to multiply its impact and help shape a world that works better for everyone. In Nepal, Practical Action is focused on putting ingenious ideas into work to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable wellbeing through working in three expertise change areas: **Farming that works; Energy that transforms** and **Resilience that protects**.

Under Farming that works programme, Practical Action Nepal Office has been implementing a 3 years project titled “Building climate adaptive farming opportunities and improved livelihoods for women and marginalised groups in Nepal” in eight Rural/Municipalities of three districts; Dang (Dangisaran & Shantinagar municipalities), Rolpa (Rumtigadi, Triveni, Thawang & Pariwartan) and Rukum East (Bhume & Puthauttarganga) of Lumbini Province in Nepal since January 2022. The project is co-funded by the UK Aid Match fund and is being implemented through local NGO- Development Concern Society (DECOS) at Libang, Rolpa. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to Nepal Government's SDG 1 target of reducing extreme poverty to less than five per cent by 2030 whereas the specific objective of the project is to improve economic and social resilience from market oriented agriculture production and off-farm employment of 6,000 women, men from marginalised groups and people living with disability in province 5 in Dang, Rolpa and Rukum East Districts in Nepal. The project works directly with 6,000 beneficiaries (women: 4,691, men: 1,092 and people with disability: 217), farmers’ cooperatives, CSOs, women networks, agro-vets, business service providers, insurance companies, Bank and financial institutions, Development partners and local government.

The project is expected to achieve following five broad expected results to achieve objective of the project within its duration of 36 months.

1. Increased agriculture production and climate resilience
2. Improved market linkages
3. Increased entrepreneurial capacity
4. Increased access to affordable credit and finance
5. Reduced drudgery and increased empowerment

To guide project implementation and establish a bench mark for monitoring and evaluating project outputs (expected results), outcomes (specific objective) and impact (overall goal), Practical Action intends to carry out a baseline study in three (Dang, Rolpa and East Rukum) Districts of Lumbini Province of Nepal.

2. NATURE OF ISSUE

Province 5 is home to the second highest number of multi-dimensionally poor people in Nepal and is one of DFID’s 3 priority provinces. Rolpa, Rukum and Dang are marginalised districts, where Rukum and Rolpa are hilly and poorly connected to roads and markets. Within the districts, there is high poverty, marginalisation, and potential for economic and social empowerment. Most of the households in the selected communities are poor, marginalised and vulnerable. Among them most vulnerable are women, especially women heads of household whose husbands died during the civil war (1996-2006) or have migrated for work, people with disabilities and both women and men from socially marginalised groups, mainly Dalit and Janajati. Poor soil, low literacy, low access to capital, inputs, and markets all limit productivity and incomes. Single women and marginalised groups have disproportionately poorer access and have more limited control over productive resources (land, irrigation, credit, knowledge, and market connections). Despite contributing more than two-third of agricultural labor, about 90% of women do not formally own any land, which restricts their

access to credit and subsidies. This forces women to continue working in subsistence agriculture, that makes them more economically and socially vulnerable. Women also have barriers to their movement caused by household work burden, social norms and taboos such as not being able to travel alone, limiting their access to knowledge and information about new technologies, opportunities and business linkages limiting their ability to pursue alternative livelihood options. These districts are heavily reliant on small scale agriculture for food and income and are not yet self-sufficient for food. Climate change has made the monsoon rains less predictable, and reduced the winter rains, making winter crops very uncertain.

Therefore, the project (Building climate adaptive farming opportunities and improved livelihoods for women and marginalised groups in Nepal) has been launched recently to reduce extreme poverty and improve economic and social resilience of targeted people from market oriented agriculture production and off-farm employment opportunities.

In this context, the project has planned to conduct baseline study in the project areas. The purpose of the study is to guide project implementation and establish a benchmark against log frame indicators for monitoring and evaluating project outputs, outcomes and impact in future.

3. OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the baseline study is to establish the benchmark against the log frame indicators of the project particularly focusing on project outputs, outcomes and impact. It also measures the women empowerment index and present context of the target communities.

The specific objectives are,

1. Measure the baseline value of the expected results of the project with disaggregation such as ethnicity, caste and disability data, and recommend for any adjustments to the milestones in the log frame.
2. Measure the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) in targeted communities and suggest the potential interventions that support women empowerment
3. Assess present context and situation of the communities in various aspects of the project including agriculture production, value chains, market access and credit facilities, and suggest possible solutions and interventions to achieve the expected results of the project.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

Based on the specific objective of the study, the following are the major scopes of this study. However, the detailed scope of study will be discussed and finalized during an inception period of study.

- i. The consultant needs to review project document, log-frame, and other relevant documents to have clear understanding of project's objective and expected results;
- ii. As specified in objective, data collection, compilation and analysis will be carried out at different levels to find baseline information of output, outcome and impact with respect to their indicators as reflected on log frame of the project;
- iii. Conduct the assessment of WEAI and identify the gaps, potential opportunities and strategies to work together with women to reduce drudgery and increase empowerment;
- iv. The team needs to integrate gender and social inclusion aspects in entire process of the study.

5. STUDY AREA

The study will be carried out in eight rural/municipalities of three districts; Dang (Dangisaran & Shantinagar municipalities), Rolpa (Rumtigadi, Triveni, Thawang & Pariwartan) and Rukum East (Bhume & Puthauttarganga) of Lumbini Province in Nepal.

6. METHODOLOGY

Based on objective and scope of baseline study, appropriate approach and methodology have to be proposed. The sample size should adequately represent the population of the study in project areas. Mainly household survey, FGD and KII for both qualitative and quantitative methods, including data processing and analysis, triangulation of data/information have to be clearly mentioned. The methodology and tools will be finalized together with Practical Action project team. The following steps would guide the process however the external consultant and team can propose methods within this broad framework

A. Inception Phase:

- After the formal agreement, the assignment will start with an inception phase;
- This phase will undertake a desk review of project document, log-frame, and other relevant documents to have a clear understanding of objective and outcomes as well as expected result of the project;
- Collect and analyse project related secondary data information;
- Develop checklist for data collection through proposed methods (HHs interview, FGD and KII) and ensure the Washington Group Short Set tool for identifying the disability in the communities.
- Develop a plan for each indicator using the Indicator Measurement Plan Template in the PQD of Practical Action.
- The consultant will also refine how s/he is going to undertake the assessment, analysis, and what sources of information they are going to use for the study;
- Based on the review and assessment, prepare an inception report including a clear cut methodology, timeline, schedule and steps to be followed to undertake the study;
- The inception phase will end with submission of the inception report and finalize it after incorporating comments from Practical Action team.

B. Interim Phase:

- After inception phase, the assessment will then progress to the interim phase which includes field work and collection of field information based on checklist;
- The team will utilize different data collection tools such as; household survey, field observation, expert interviews, key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussion (FGDs), interaction meeting/workshop with communities, local and provincial governments and other stakeholders as well as validating information with community and relevant stakeholders;
- The consultants will present the brief progress reports/presentation after the data collection is complete with information on the tasks accomplished and need to revisit tools and methodologies, content of the report proposed if deemed so.

C. Reporting phase:

- After completing the field work, the consultant should submit the draft report of baseline survey which will be reviewed by the technical team of Practical Action Nepal for feedback/suggestions;
- The consultant will incorporate input and submit the revised version;
- The full draft of the report will be reviewed by Practical Action team;
- Finally, the consultant will submit the final report by incorporating all comments from reviewers.

7. DELIVERABLES

The followings are the expected deliverables from this assignment;

- **Inception report:** an inception report incorporating findings of desk review, conceptual framework of the assessment, details of applicable tools and methodologies together with details of work plan, checklists, time schedules as well as tentative table of content for the final baseline report.
- **Draft and final reports:** Detail draft report meeting the objectives of the ToR and with the methodologies in line with the table of content developed and agreed in Inception Report. Final baseline survey report will be the end product after incorporation of all the comments from reviewers.
- **Raw generated data:** The consultant's needs to submit the data generated in the process of this study in Excel as well as other field related photos during field observation.

8. EXPERTISE AND MANAGEMENT

The consulting firm should have good experience in qualitative and quantitative research; clear understanding of similar studies (Baseline, midterm, and end-line). Prior working experience in Province-5, and project working areas as well as baseline study of project related to agriculture and climate resilience. Besides, prior experience of conducting assessment of Women's Empowerment for Agriculture Index (WEAI) will be an asset. Consultant team should have strong data analysis skill on SPSS, STATA. The consultant shall comprise of three team members as below, however the consulting firm can propose as per need and scope of the assignment. The respective team members should have following qualification and expertise:

Team Leader:

The Team Leader will manage the overall assignment. S/he will ensure that the various elements of the baseline survey are efficiently planned and undertake with an appropriate manner that provides clear conclusion. The Team Leader will also be responsible for effective liaison with key stakeholders while conducting the assignment and should have following qualification and expertise:

- Team Leader should have at least Master's Degree (PhD Preferred) in Agriculture and a proven track record of at least seven years of extensive work experiences in monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- Have experience of conducting similar studies (Baseline, midterm, end-line) and research studies in related field;
- Experience on climate change impact and fragility risk and possible adaptation measures for economic and social resilience from market oriented agriculture and off-farm employment opportunities;
- Have strong and clear understanding on research methodology and experience on using SPSS or similar statistical software for data entry and analysis;
- Prior experience of conducting Assessment of Women Empowerment for Agriculture Index (WEAI) will be an asset;
- Proven analytical and report writing skills is a must;
- Prior experience of managing teams of similar consulting assignments;
- Strong organizational, written and oral presentation skills;
- Demonstrate ability to work under deadlines, handle multiple tasks, and take initiative

Socio Economist:

- S/he should have at least Master's Degree in Economics/ Social Science and have proven track record of at least five years of conducting similar studies related to agriculture as well as economic and social resilience from market led agriculture perspective;
- Strong understanding on research methodology and experience on using different social research tools and techniques;
- Have experience on using SPSS, STATA or similar statistical software for data entry and analysis;
- Prior experience of conducting Assessment of Women Empowerment for Agriculture Index (WEAI) should be an asset;
- Understanding of climate change adaptation and contextual climate vulnerabilities as well as understanding on the nexus between climate change on water, land and forest;
- Experience on Agro-ecology, economic and social resilience from market oriented agriculture perspective

Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Expert:

- The Gender expert should have at least master degree in Gender Studies/Social Science and a proven track record of at least three years of work experience in similar field;
- Have experience of conducting similar studies (Baseline, midterm, end-line) and research studies in GESI perspective;
- Good understanding of women drudgery, empowerment strategy and analysis skill in GESI perspectives;
- Strong expertise in gender analysis on agriculture and climate resilience related projects/programs;
- Experience on climate change impact and fragility risk and possible adaptation measures in GESI perspective for economic and social resilience from market oriented agriculture and off-farm employment opportunities;
- Prior experience of conducting Assessment of Women Empowerment for Agriculture Index (WEAI) should be an asset.

9. BUDGET

The maximum available budget is **NPR 1,500,000** (In words: Fifteen hundred thousand rupees only) **inclusive of applicable taxes**. This includes consultant's fee (including team members and enumerators), lodging/accommodation, air fare/travel and stationaries including all other cost associated with this study. All applicable taxes will be deducted at source.

The payment will be done in three instalments: 40% of total agreed amount shall be disbursed upon submission of inception report, 30% will be disbursed upon submission of draft report, and remaining 30% will be paid after submission of final report and all other deliverables mentioned in section 7 of ToR.

Apart from the above, submission of the following will be taken into account during the selection process:

- a. A full technical and financial proposal along with the budget breakdown;
- b. A copy of Company Registration;
- c. A copy of VAT certificate (obligatory);
- d. A copy of tax clearance for last fiscal year from Inland Revenue Office; and
- e. All proposed professionals must sign the copy of clearly mentioning their proposed position in this assignment.

10. DURATION AND TIMELINE

The consultant is expected to complete the task within three months of the commencement of the assignment which is anticipated to be effective from 24th February 2022 and will be completed by 23rd of May 2022. A draft schedule is given below, which can be refined after consultation with consultant:

SN	Activities	Time Period
1.	Preparatory work and inception report (consisting of framework of study, sample design, checklist, methodology, timeline, schedule etc.)	By 7 March 2022
2.	Orientation to enumerators and questionnaire testing	By 19 March 2022
3.	Field work, data collection from field (eight municipalities in three districts) – Maximum 15 days	22 March – 5 April 2022
4.	First draft reports submission	By 22 of April 2022
5.	The consultant will incorporate input/comments and submit the revised version	By 7 of May , 2022
6.	Final report submission after incorporating all comments from reviewers	By 23 May 2022

11. EVALUATION CRITERIA

All received proposal shall be reviewed following different indicators. These will be but not limited to sound understanding of the assignment, competent methodology, consistency, coherence and compliance, experience of the team leader, composition of the team and efficient budget planning.

12. INVITATION FOR THE LETTER OF INTEREST

Practical Action Nepal Office requests consulting firms (registered in VAT) to submit (i) an application highlighting the letter of interest (LoI) (ii) brief technical proposal along with your proposed methodology (not more than 7 pages) (iii) recently updated CV, and (iv) a financial proposal with detail cost breakdown to conduct the proposed work to following address on or before 17:00 hrs., 16 February 2022 in separate envelope properly marked with the proposal type sealed. The outer envelope should be marked as **“Baseline study of Building climate adaptive farming opportunities and improved livelihoods for women and marginalised groups in Nepal”**.

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Practical Action believes in and follows through a fair and competitive process to recruit the consultant in all of its assignment to ensure quality assurance.

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