

## Terms of Reference (ToR) for Final Evaluation of The Mahila Network Project

### 1. Background and Overview

ActionAid is a global justice federation working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. It was founded as a charity in 1972, and throughout its history it has innovated and evolved its approach to better address the structural drivers of poverty and injustice. ActionAid believes people living in poverty and exclusion have the power within them to create change for themselves, their families and communities and ActionAid is a catalyst for that change. In the 1990s, ActionAid adopted a human rights-based approach to development, which is ongoing as its core approach. In 2003, the ActionAid International federation was established, comprising members in every region of the world, and headquartered in South Africa.

ActionAid International Nepal (AAIN) is a member of the federation, working for human rights, anti-poverty and gender equality. It is a non-governmental social justice organisation established in 1982 and working locally in different provinces of Nepal. It is also a part of both national and global social justice movement and other civil society networks, alliances, and coalitions.

ActionAid Nepal is implementing the Mahila Network project in Doti district with the successful completion in Bardiya District. In contemporary Nepalese society, gender equality remains an imperative concern due to the persistent inequities experienced by women in various spheres, particularly within social and economic realms. This disparity is characterized by the unequal distribution of opportunities and resources, which stems from deeply entrenched gender norms that perpetuate women's marginalized status as secondary providers and primary caregivers, rendering them reliant on male counterparts within their households. Addressing this complex issue necessitates a comprehensive approach aimed at dismantling these restrictive norms and fostering an inclusive environment where women can fully access and participate in all aspects of society, thus fostering a just and equitable societal paradigm, ActionAid Nepal is implementing The Mahila Network Project from 2014 starting from Bardiya and extending it to Doti District from 2017.

**The overall goal of the project is to support poor women's social and economic empowerment and right to decent work in Nepal. The expected outcomes of project were;**

- **Outcome 1:** Increase income through Setting up and strengthening women collectives.
- **Outcome 2:** Increase technical knowledge and skills of rural women on sustainable farming practices and value chain.
- **Outcome 3:** Increase awareness on the challenges of women paid and unpaid care work to be recognized by Nepal government and the community.
- **Outcome 4:** Develop women's collective members and labour women networks of Doti at Activists so as to lead the issues and agendas at local, district and national level by themselves.
- **Outcome 5:** Produce materials to be used to for recognition of strength & importance of collectives among Nepal government and stakeholders.

**The project aims to achieve the following results through the project:**

Expand the women collectives from 8 to 20 and form the network capable of raising their collective voice for gender equality.

- At least 60% of the collective members are able to start their own on farm and off farm-based enterprises.
- At least 60% of the collective member gets financial assistance to start their own women led small scale enterprise.
- Establish Gender responsive public services and gender friendly market centers focused on the value chain of product and supply chain management.
- Establish at least two community childcare centers along with other alternatives to reduce workload of women.
- Government to prioritize on the issue of unpaid care work and start addressing it at local level.
- Campaigns are organized by women collective members on women's work (both paid and unpaid), untouchability, child marriage and Chhaupadi.

**2. Objectives of Evaluation**

This evaluation is being conducted as the completion of project evaluation and will cover the entire project implementation period in Doti. The stakeholders for this evaluation will include ActionAid Nepal, partner and the community where the programme has been implemented, and the relevant Government systems actors.

The project has been implemented over seven years (2017-2023). The overall objective of the programme evaluation is to generate knowledge from our experience of implementing The Mahila Network Project and to harvest the positive change from the project focusing women's unpaid care work and alternatives, women's economic empowerment and informal sector women's workers' rights.

Specific objectives of evaluation are listed below.

- Effectiveness of women's in promoting gender equality and economic empowerment of women.
- Evaluate the economic impact of the project by measuring the percentage of collective members who have initiated their own on-farm and off-farm enterprises and the extent of financial support they have received for these ventures.
- Examine the establishment and functionality of gender-responsive public services and gender-friendly market centres along the product value chain and assess their impact on women's economic empowerment.
- Evaluate the establishment and effectiveness of community childcare centres and alternative solutions in reducing the workload of women and assess the government's commitment to addressing unpaid care work at the local level.
- Analyse the impact of the women collective members' campaigns on key issues such as women's work (both paid and unpaid), untouchability, child marriage, and Chhaupadi, in terms of raising awareness and promoting social change.

### 3. Scope of Evaluation

The Final evaluation of the project will cover the entire project duration, from 2017 to 2023 implemented in Doti. Within this period, the evaluation will assess project outcomes at all levels; including all project results, community, partners and project stakeholders. The evaluation will seek to assess the impact and relevance of the project's intervention on the women's economic empowerment addressing women's unpaid care work.

The scope of The Mahila Network Project evaluation is outlined by its adherence to ActionAid's monitoring and evaluation framework, aligned with the organization's Global Monitoring Framework and M&E requirements. Thus, this evaluation will build on these findings, with further exploration of the relationships between Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability. It encompasses a comprehensive assessment of project outcomes intricately linked to its overarching objective, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the project's impact and its alignment with ActionAid's monitoring and evaluation standards.

### 4. Key evaluation questions:

The following key questions will guide the programme evaluation.

#### i) Relevance:

- a. To what extent do the design and activities of the project reflect the current needs and priorities of the community members? Are they relevant to the objectives of the project?
- b. What are the views of relevant stakeholders (primarily program participants, with selected inputs from community leaders, government representatives & private sector employers) towards the program? For example, do they consider it an opportunity, a threat, or are they indifferent?

**ii) Effectiveness:** Describe the Country Team management processes and their appropriateness in supporting women and their community to achieve their aims within the results framework laid out by The Mahila Network Project.

- Was the programme effective in delivering desired/planned results?
- To what extent did the Programme's Monitoring and Evaluation and support mechanisms contribute to creating programme results?
- What were the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the programme, and how effective were they at different scales? How were they engaged with women and their related system actors? Were differences between interventions with women and men observable?
- How effective has the programme been in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results were achieved?
- What strategies, and with whom, are recommended and what issues should we anticipate will arise as The Mahila Network Project results and communities go forward?

#### iii) Efficiency – Programme Implementation

- Was the process of achieving results efficient? How did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) relate to the resources, including finances, as they were allocated? What resources taken in the widest sense were most efficiently deployed? What resources could have been used differently?

- Did programme interventions overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors)? Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs? If stakeholders identify different approaches, they consider might have been more efficient, what are those approaches, and would they have delivered the same, or 'better' results?
- Did collaborations with state actors and institutions contribute to the programme's efficiency?
- How efficient were the management and accountability structures of the programme?
- How did the programme's financial management processes and procedures affect programme implementation?
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the programme's implementation process?

#### iv) Sustainability

- To what extent are the benefits of the programme likely to be sustained, and for whom, after the completion of this programme?
- What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of programme outcomes and benefits after completion of the programme?
- Describe key factors that will require attention to improve prospects of sustainability of programme outcomes, community empowerment, and the potential for replication of the approach.
- How were resilience, responsiveness, and robustness of partnerships strengthened or expanded at the individual and organisational levels?
- Whom does continuity and sustainability rely?
- What main lessons have emerged?
- What are the recommendations for similar support in future?

### 5. Expected Approach and Methodology

The methodology will, be developed by the consultant, as well as all relevant tools and presented guided by the Monitoring and Evaluation framework of ActionAid International Nepal. This evaluation will combine both qualitative and quantitative results of the project and data collection and evaluation techniques using the following methods:

- a. **Desk review:** The evaluation will review relevant project documents, proposals, project periodic reports (Half Yearly and Yearly Reports) along with some other documents such as policy documents and IECs produced by project.
- b. **Focus Group Discussions:** The project qualitative results will be collected by using focus group discussions along with the validation of the project quantitative results.
- c. **Household Survey:** Systematic survey of households (beneficiary) in the project area to measure changes in entrepreneurship and income levels. This survey will include questions on income, employment, access to resources, and other relevant factors.
- d. **Qualitative case study collection and KII:** Some change stories of the collective members will be collected representing the change project brought in the lives of women. The story will need to represent all the project outcomes using the KII tools for which consultant will develop the questionnaire for the KII.
- e. **Interviews with Project stakeholders:** In addition, the evaluation will also conduct interviews with key project stakeholders including Local Government and other likeminded organizations focusing the project policy advocacy work.

- f. **Interview with project partner:** Interview will be conducted with the partners board members, project implementing team members and field staffs to gather substantial anecdotal evidence on the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and timeliness of the project activities implementation and delivery.

## 6. Expected Deliverables

The following deliverables from the Consultant are expected:

**i) An inception report** prepared and submitted to ActionAid Nepal, outlining the key scope of the work, and intended work plan with analysis, and evaluation questions (**after 7 calendar days** of commencing the evaluation process which shall include at least one online consultation during the preparation of the inception report). The inception report should detail the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by action; an evaluability assessment based on proposed methods; proposed sources of data; and data collection procedures. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities, and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product.

**ii) An interim draft report** sent after 15 days of the completion of the field study. The interim draft report sent to AAIN will identify and analyse the gap, ensure the data validation, and for the Quality Assurance process. AAIN will provide the feedbacks within 7 calendar days.

**iii) A draft comprehensive report** sent after incorporating the feedbacks from AAIN for review by all key stakeholders (ActionAid Nepal; communities; partners). ActionAid Nepal shall be responsible for ensuring timely engagements. AAIN team will provide comments within 7 calendar days after the receipt of the Draft Report.

**iv) The Final Project Evaluation Report:** The Final Evaluation Report submitted to AAIN after 7 days upon receiving the feedbacks received from AAIN on the draft comprehensive report of the project.

## 7. Timeframe

The consultancy assignment will start from 1 October 2023 to 30 November 2023 for an estimated duration of 25 working days to cover the desk review, field, data gathering, analysis and finalizing report and presentation of report to AAN, and relevant stakeholders. Consultant must submit the final report to AAIN by 30 November 2023. The lead evaluator will facilitate timekeeping with weekly check-ins for briefings at each stage.

Output	Timeline
Design the Final Evaluation questionnaire, methodologies, and tools	October 1 <sup>st</sup> week
Finalize information/data collection plan	October 1 <sup>st</sup> week
Collect information/data from the field	October 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> week
Data analysis and produce first draft report	November 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> week
Review draft report as per the comments	November 3 <sup>rd</sup> week
Produce final report present with AAIN	November 4 <sup>th</sup> week

## 8. Reporting

The Consultant will work closely with and report to Program Officer, and Impact Assessment and Learning Manager, AAIN.

## 9. Consultancy Fees and Payment Modality

Interested Individuals should send their consultancy fee with detailed breakdowns for this assignment including applicable taxes. The payment shall be made in the following instalments:

Instalment	Percentage	Condition
1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment	50% of total amount	After signing the agreement
2 <sup>nd</sup> Instalment	50% of total amount	After completion of the overall assigned task

## 10. Consultant's Profile

The consultant should be expert with the following competencies:

- Bachelor's or master's degree in a social sciences or related field
- At least 5 to 7 years of experience in related research and evaluation field and working with international organizations.
- Knowledge of research methodologies and tools.
- Knowledge of using digital tools for research surveys.
- Knowledge and experience in the field of development, aid effectiveness, and knowledge of *behaviour change* methodologies.
- Knowledge and understanding of international and country-level implementation of social development programmes.
- An understanding of female lived experience and in what ways this differs from the experience of males in the communities, families, labour allocation, incomes, and social relations.
- Knowledge and experience of project formulation and evaluation.
- Good communication and coordination skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Strong skills in data analysis software such as SPSS, MS Excel, etc.

## 11. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Key Areas for Proposal Evaluation	Weightage
<b>Technical Proposal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding of assignment and delivery approach (10 points)</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated 5 years of experience in related research field (5 points)</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated the capacity to carry out the assignment (20 points)</li> <li>➤ References to past works (5 points)</li> </ul>	40%
<b>Financial Proposal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A clear financial proposal linked to the technical proposal, highlighting key costs and any reimbursable expenses (if any)</li> </ul>	60%

## 12. Proposal Submission Guideline

Interested consultancy firms/individuals who meet the above requirement should send their technical and financial proposals to [jobs.nepal@actonaid.org](mailto:jobs.nepal@actonaid.org) by Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 17:00 hrs.

- The proposal should demonstrate sound knowledge, technical skills and capability as required by the nature of the work of the assignment and understanding of the requisite tasks set forth in the terms of reference.
- Eligible individual should submit their individual profile and financial proposal.
- At least two positive references/recommendations from past employers must be submitted.
- Enclose a copy of company registration with latest renewal, VAT certificate with latest renewal, and citizenship certificate of the proposed consultant (in case of firm).
- Enclose a copy of citizenship certificate and PAN certificate (in case of individual).

### Annex 1: Structure of the Report

The content and structure of the final analytical report with findings, recommendations and lessons learnt covering the scope of the evaluation should meet the requirements of ActionAid Nepal and Irish Aid and should include the following:

- Executive summary (around 1-2 pages)
- Introduction (1 page)
- Description of the evaluation methodology (around 4-6 pages)
- Situational analysis/context regarding the outcome, outputs, and programme approach (4-6 pages)
- Key findings (inputs, output, outcomes (with details of qualitative achievement)) by result (around 10-15 pages)
- Summarise findings based on Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability point of view (around 6 pages)
- Best practices and lessons learned and future programming opportunities (4-6 pages)
- Conclusions and recommendations (4-5 pages)
- Appendices: Charts, terms of reference, people interviewed, pictures, literature reference.