

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Consultancy Assignment for Guidance and Supervision of Climate Field School Activities under ALTER Project, Phase-II

I. Objectives of the Consultancy

The consultant will play a key role in ensuring the successful implementation of Climate Field School (CFS) initiative under Adaptive Livelihood Towards Establishing Resilient communities (ALTER) project, Phase-II implemented by AOSED with cooperation of Bread for the World. By introducing farmers to climate-smart agriculture and year-round farming techniques, the CFS will serve as a model for capacity building and sustainable adaptation to climate change.

The specific objectives include:

1. **Capacity building:** Build the capacity of farmer facilitators and beneficiaries by developing practical knowledge of climate-adaptive agriculture, crop diversification, and climate resilient farming practices.
2. **Operationalize Climate Field School:** Support the creation of structured, participatory learning hub where farmers can receive hands-on training on sustainable agriculture practice.
3. **Sustainability:** Ensure the sustainability of adaptive farming methods by empowering local farmer facilitators to continue CFS sessions independently.
4. **Monitoring and Reporting:** Oversee CFS activities to ensure they align with the ALTER project's goals and document progress for learning and improvement.
5. **Gender Inclusiveness:** Promote the equal participation of male and female farmers in the program, ensuring equitable benefits for all community members.

2. Scope of Work

The consultant will deliver the following key activities to ensure the effective implementation and management of the Farmer's Field School initiative:

a. Develop Training Modules

- **Review and alignment:** Study existing training modules developed by the government of Bangladesh and other organizations to ensure alignment with best practices.
- **Customization:** Adapt these materials to focus on climate-smart agriculture, such as saline-resistant crops, water management, integrated pest management, and crop rotation.
- **Localization:** Tailor the module to specific climate, soil, and environmental conditions of Paikhacha, Khulna.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensure the materials are accessible, considering the literacy level of participants, and include illustrations, hands-on guides, and local examples.

b. Facilitate Farmers Field School Sessions

- **Curriculum Design:** Develop a year-round curriculum covering techniques to crop, vegetable, and fruit cultivation, as well as adaptive methods to cope with salinity and associated climate vulnerabilities.

- **Farmer-led approach:** Empower farmer facilitator to deliver training sessions with guidance, ensuring sustainability and community ownership.
- **Practical demonstrations:** Conduct on-field demonstrations of innovative and resilient farming practices to enhance farmer understanding and skills.

c. Conduct Soil Testing

- **Sampling:** Collect five soil samples from selected villages (Mahmudkati, Ramnathpur, Noakati, Baka, and Debduar) of Paikgacha Upazila to represent local agricultural conditions.
- **Analysis:** Assess salinity levels, nutrient availability, pH balance, and other key factors impacting soil fertility.
- **Recommendations:** Provide actionable insights to improve soil health, such as organic amendments, crop selection, and irrigation practices.

d. Conduct Training for Farmers and Facilitators

- **Training Sessions:** Conduct two daylong training workshops, engaging farmer facilitators and selected beneficiaries.
- **Topics Covered:** Climate-smart farming techniques, crop/vegetable/fruit diversification, pest and disease management, and post-harvest practices.
- **Engagement Tools:** Use participatory tools like group discussions, case studies, and role-playing to make training interactive.
- **Documentation:** Develop simple handouts or guides for participants to use during and after the training.

e. Evaluate Climate-Resilient Crop Varieties

- **Field Trials:** Test 100 varieties of climate-resilient crops, vegetables, and fruits in the local context of Paikgacha to identify the most suitable options.
- **Evaluation Metrics:** Assess yield, resistance to salinity, adaptability to changing climate conditions, and pest tolerance.
- **Recommendations:** Develop a report summarizing findings and suggest the most effective varieties for widespread adoption.

f. Monitor and Supervise CFS Activities

- **Monitoring Framework:** Design a structured monitoring system to track the progress of CFS activities.
- **Field Visits:** Conduct bi-monthly and ad-hoc visits to assess the quality of facilitation, farmer participation, and outcomes.
- **Progress Reports:** Provide progress reports with observations, challenges, lessons, and recommendations for improvements.

g. Community Engagement and Support

- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Work closely with farmer facilitators, beneficiaries, and AOSED staff to ensure smooth implementation.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a system to gather regular feedback from farmers on the usefulness of training and CFS sessions.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Promote exchange visits or peer-to-peer learning among farmers to encourage broader adoption of practices.

3. Methodology

The consultant is expected to propose a comprehensive methodology for achieving the objectives, incorporating the following elements:

1. **Participatory Approach:**
 - Actively involve farmer facilitators, male and female farmers, and project staff in designing and implementing CFS activities.
 - Ensure that the methodology emphasizes community ownership and sustainability.
2. **Hands-On Learning:**
 - Deliver interactive and practical training through field demonstrations, participatory group work, and real-world problem-solving.
3. **Evidence-Based Techniques:**
 - Use scientific methods for soil analysis, crop evaluation, and agricultural techniques to ensure effectiveness.
 - Incorporate local knowledge and practices into modern, adaptive farming solutions.
4. **Inclusiveness and Sensitivity:**
 - Ensure equal participation of male and female farmers while addressing the needs of marginalized groups.
 - Use inclusive language, culturally appropriate materials, and gender-sensitive facilitation techniques.
5. **Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation:**
 - Regularly assess the effectiveness of CFS activities and make necessary adjustments based on feedback and observed outcomes.

4. Key Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverable	Description
Customized training modules	Develop and deliver context-specific training materials for climate-smart farming.
Farmers Field School (CFS) operationalization	Fully functional CFS established with a year-round learning curriculum.
Soil test results and recommendations	Comprehensive analysis and soil health improvement recommendations.
Two daylong training sessions	Two participatory workshops for farmer facilitators and selected farmers.
Facilitation of CFS sessions	Conduct participatory CFS sessions.
Evaluation report on crop varieties	Detailed report on the performance of 100 climate-resilient crop varieties.
Regular monitoring reports	Bi-monthly updates on progress, challenges, and suggestions for improvement.
Final consultancy report	Comprehensive summary of achievements, challenges, and recommendations.

5. Application Process

Interested consultants must submit a **Technical Proposal** and **Financial Proposal** in two separate sealed envelopes by **January 30, 2025**.

- **Technical Proposal:**
 - Resumes of individual/team members, highlighting relevant experience.
 - Cover letter.
 - Narrative proposal detailing methodology, timeline, tools, and level of effort for each activity.
 - Copies of relevant documents (e.g., TIN Certificate, National ID).
- **Financial Proposal:**
 - A detailed budget specifying consultancy fees, travel costs, and other associated expenses.
 - VAT and tax details as per government regulations.

Submission Address:

Chairman, Procurement Committee

An Organization for Socio-Economic Development (AOSED)
334 Sher-A-Bangla Road (1st floor), Khulna-9100, Bangladesh

6. Qualification Requirements

- A Master’s degree in agriculture (Specialization in Horticulture, Soil Science, Environmental Science etc.).
- At least three years of professional experience in climate adaptation, agriculture, or rural development projects.
- Proven expertise in developing training materials, facilitating trainings, field assessment and conducting evaluations.
- Publications on climate-smart agriculture, protective cultivation, organic farming etc.
- Strong communication and reporting skills.
- Familiarity with the coastal agricultural context of Bangladesh, including challenges related to salinity and extreme weather events.

7. Communication and Reporting

The consultant will maintain regular communication with AOSED project staff and submit progress updates as follows:

- Bi-monthly monitoring reports after field visits.
- Immediate reporting of critical issues requiring attention.
- A final consultancy report summarizing the outcomes of all activities.

8. Payment Terms

- Payments will be made quarterly, based on the successful completion of deliverables and milestones.
- Payments will be made through an account payee cheque, with VAT and AIT deductions as per government regulations.
- The consultant will be responsible for all travel, accommodation, and associated costs.

9. Ethical Considerations

The consultant must adhere to the following ethical principles throughout the assignment:

- **Inclusiveness:** Ensure equitable participation of beneficiaries from diverse backgrounds, including marginalized groups and individuals with disabilities.
- **Transparency and Integrity:** Maintain honesty in all activities, processes, and reporting.
- **Confidentiality:** Safeguard sensitive information and identities of participants.

- **Do No Harm:** Ensure activities do not negatively impact the environment, community dynamics, or individuals.
- **Safeguarding:** Demonstrate the highest standards of behavior toward vulnerable groups, ensuring safety and dignity.

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