**Statement of Work**

**Annual Performance Evaluation of USAID Agricultural Extension Support Activity (AESA) project**

**Dhaka Ahsania Mission**

**July 2015**

**POINT OF CONTACT**

**Shafinaj Rahman**

**Head of Monitoring and Evaluation**

**AESA Project**

**Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh**

**Cell: 01787675439**

**Email: srahman@aesabd.org**

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| **Project Information** |  |
| Project Name | **USAID Agricultural Extension Support Activity** |
|  | **(AESA)** |
|  |  |
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1. **BACKGROUND:**

Central and Southwest Bangladesh has experienced extreme weather events (including two major cyclones in the last 5 years), man-made environmental degradation, increased flooding, changes in seasonality of rains, and salinization of soil and water, causing food and water insecurity. Agricultural productivity has dropped accordingly, resulting in large-scale migration by male family members to city centers, leaving women behind to maintain their families with fragile economic resources, remittances, and limited social safety net arrangements. Therefore, a great need exists to identify alternative livelihood opportunities for women farmers, especially in agriculture and income-generation activities. For this to happen, there must be a stronger agricultural extension system in place that responds to the needs of poor smallholder farmers - particularly women farmers.

Women/smallholder farmers are constrained by a lack of information about recommended farming practices and appropriate inputs, such as stress-tolerant seeds and varieties, and access to fair market price information. As a result they are vulnerable to being taken advantage of by buyers. Many live in remote hard-to-reach areas or are constrained by patriarchal norms and practices that restrict women’s mobility. Agricultural extension agents, who are mostly male, tend to provide services only to larger farmers, and lack adequate communication skills, sense of accountability and means of transport required to provide outreach to the poor in general and women in particular. Centralized and updated database and information systems with the latest scientific research are mostly inaccessible from the field, and research institutions receive insufficient feedback about needs on the ground and smallholder’s adoption of recommended practices. Thus research objectives are often disconnected from field situations and data used by extension agents are often from old research.

Use of ICT is expanding rapidly as a way to connect poor farmers to markets, extension services and other information sources; however access to mobile phones and power sources is limited in remote areas. Poor farmers are often illiterate or semi-literate and at present phones do not have Bangla script, making text messaging difficult. Extension officers may have computers and limited internet connectivity, but not know how to use them to full capacity or to troubleshoot technical problems.

The USAID Agricultural Extension Support Activity (hereafter referred to as “AESA”) works in 12 districts in the central and southwest areas of Bangladesh (Barisal, Dhaka, and Khulna divisions) to implement capacity building and support the development of a farmer demand-driven agricultural extension system, synergized by use of information communication technology (ICT). With the aim of empowering farmers through enhanced knowledge and capacity, , the project works with producer groups to improve their access to quality ag inputs, to information and advice on improved technologies and management practices, to financial capital and to increased market opportunities. The focus is on smallholder farmers, with priority given to women farmers. A key emphasis is working closely with the Government of Bangladesh to identify gaps in existing capacities and build on efforts already under way.

AESA project is implemented under USAID/Bangladesh’s Development Objective 2 (DO2): Food Security Improved. DO2 is the flagship DO for the Feed the Future (FTF) strategy and its objective in Bangladesh: “Availability, Access, and Utilization of Domestically Produced and Nutritious Foods Increased.” The DO2 development hypothesis is: *“addressing vulnerable household constraints to food availability, access, and utilization will lead to positive outcomes for health and income security.”* DO2 incorporates integrated, multi-sectoral interventions promoting diversification to more nutritious and high value crops.

AESA Project supports the Bangladesh Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition Country Investment Plan (CIP), the Government of Bangladesh’s Sixth Five-Year Plan, and the Master Plan for Agricultural Development in Southern Region of Bangladesh for 2012-2021 and complements other USAID Feed the Future (Food Security) programs focusing on cereal grains, fisheries, policy support, value chains, and agro-inputs.

1. **RESULTS FRAMEWORK**

**The Results Framework**

The Agricultural Extension Support Activity development hypothesis is that *if vulnerable smallholder farmers can be linked with access to high-quality extension services and information, farmers will apply improved agricultural practices.* The logical progression from this is that if the Agricultural Extension Support Activity is successful, in concert with other USAID-supported interventions, vulnerable smallholder farmer productivity will increase and food insecurity will decline. A key dimension of the Agricultural Extension Support Activity’s development hypothesis is that ICT-enabled solutions will play a key role in overcoming the challenges vulnerable smallholders currently face in accessing high-quality extension services and information.

The current results framework from the project’s approved M&E plan is presented below::

Sub IR 3.2: Increased use of ICT by Ag Extension Agents

Assumptions

* That political Instability will not affect project activities significantly
* No major disasters such as cyclones or drought strike Bangladesh
* The project receives continued support from the GOB
* The project receives support from the local population

**IR-1: Agricultural Extension Service provision enhanced**

**IR-2: Smallholder farmers (men &women) in agriculture empowered**

Sub IR 1.1: Capacity of agriculture extension agents enhanced

Sub IR 1.2: Increased outreach to farmers by more equipped agriculture extension agents

Sub IR 2.2: Producer (farmer) groups strengthened

Sub IR 3.3: Increased use of ICT by farmers

Sub IR 2.1: Farmers’ knowledge and capacity in agriculture enhanced

**IR-3: Strengthened application of ICT in agriculture**

Sub IR 3.1: Improved national agricultural info system

**Objective: Increased Farmer Access to Improved Agricultural Extension Service**

1. **PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

The goal of the AESA Project is to strengthen the existing agriculture extension system in 12 districts in the southwest and central Bangladesh in order to sustainably improve food security and nutrition for 110,000 vulnerable smallholder farmers. This goal is supported by three components and related tasks.

* **Component 1**- The USAID Agricultural Extension Support Activity approach starts with empowerment of smallholder farmers (with an emphasis on women farmers), through development of producer groups around non-cereal agricultural products common to southwest Bangladesh. This component aims at giving smallholder farmer a voice to demand extension services, to purchase inputs in bulk and to sell their aggregated produce at fair market prices.
* **Component 2** - Networking, linkages and access to information is enhanced through new information communication technology (ICT) capacity. This allows farmers to make informed decisions about adopting new agricultural technology and farming practices, purchase of quality inputs, and sale of products.

* **Component 3** - addresses transformational change within the public and private extension services, so they not only have the capacity to provide the most relevant and up-to-date technical information, but smallholder farmers have equal access to all government and non-government infrastructure and services in their area. Given the variety of constraints to effectively and holistically improve ag extension service delivery through a single project, the project works more intensively in four target upazilas to demonstrate improved ag extension service delivery through establishing and enabling DAE to support a network of ag extension service centers in each of the four target upazilas. The aim is to allow the Department of Ag Extension (DAE) to observe outcomes in the demo upazilas and commit to adopting those improved practices that are deemed appropriate and valuable.

The project interventions include important elements such as promoting gender equity, participatory and bottom-up decision-making, allowing women a strong voice and visible roles in agri-production and marketing, and two-way research and knowledge sharing between farmers and formal research institutions.

The following table shows the primary tasks and activities associated with each Component for Year 3. Components and tasks are further described in the project’s Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) for Years 1, 2 and 3.

### **Ag Extension Project Components, Tasks and Activities for Year 3:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Component 1: Enhance access to, and utilization of, agricultural extension services by smallholder farmers (including women)** | | |
| *Task 1.1: Community mobilization and formation of smallholder farmer producer groups* | 1.1.1: Selection of target communities and formation of Farmer Producer Groups (FPGs) | |
| *Task 1.2: Training and capacity building of new and existing farmer producer groups* | 1.2.1: Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA) and Farmer Producer Group Action Plans prepared for new FPGs | |
| 1.2.2: FPG Training and Capacity-building including  - Develop and improve training and capacity building modules  - FPG farmer leader training on improved production technologies and agricultural practices  - FPG farmer leader capacity building on facilitation, collective action, access to market information, market analyses | |
| 1.2.3: Agriculture demonstration plots and aquaculture demonstration ponds | |
| 1.2.4: Identify and link farmer groups with public-sector (government) extension agents | |
| 1.2.5: Identify and link farmer groups with value chain stakeholders from private sector | |
| 1.2.6: Train farmer leaders in the use of ICT; introduce and build capacity in use of ICT by FPG members | |
| 1.2.7: Development and application of Participatory Performance Tracking (PPT) tool for FPGs | |
| 1.2.8: Increase awareness of health and nutrition issues among FPG members | |
| *Task 1.3: Enhance access to quality, affordable inputs and expand market opportunities for farmers to sell their outputs* | 1.3.1 Conduct a survey of value chain actors, including public and private extension service providers, within the project area of influence | |
| 1.3.2 Assess market opportunities per value chain | |
| 1.3.3 Link farmers and farmer groups to input sellers and output market opportunities | |
| *Task 1.4: Link smallholder farmers to formal financial services* | 1.4.1: Agricultural finance service provider mapping | |
| 1.4.2:Deliver agricultural finance capacity building to all Farmer Producer Groups | |
| 1.4.3: Linking producer groups to identified MFIs | |
| 1.4.4: Assessment of farmer access to informal credit | |
| 1.4.5: Increase usage of ICT to disseminate agricultural information in FPG level | |
| **Component 2: Expand and strengthen ICT mechanisms to increase access to agricultural market information, knowledge and technologies** | | |
| *Task 2.1: Develop a strategy for expanded use of ICT in extension services* | 2.1.1: Agricultural market information assessment | |
| 2.1.2: End-of-Year ICT strategy review | |
| 2.1.3: Regional e-ag-conference to expose stakeholders to ICT-enhanced extensions Systems | |
| 2.1.4 Monitoring & evaluation of ICT interventions | |
| *Task 2.2: Development of user-friendly ICT tools and applications to increase farmer and extension agent access to agricultural production and market information* | 2.2.1: Continue Agro Knowledge Bank Portal development | |
| 2.2.2: Develop ICT-based Reporting and Data Analytics app for SAAOs | |
| 2.2.3: Develop Farmer Query System | |
| 2.2.4: Develop Targeted SMS and Voice Messaging to farmers and extension agents | |
| 2.2.5: Develop Decision Support System (DSS) for extension agents | |
| 2.2.6: Develop Multimedia phone content for farmers, extension agents and ag input sellers | |
| **Component 3:  Strengthen capacity of agricultural extension service agents (public and private) to proactively respond to the needs of small holder farmers, with an emphasis on women.** | | |
| *Task 3.1:Increase skills and capacity of public sector agricultural extension agents in providing extension services* | | 3.1.1: Public extension agent training and skills development on improved ag practices, group facilitation, gender, communication, ag marketing, and other topics |
| 3.1.3 Collaboration with the Agriculture Information Service (AIS) for developing AIS capacity |
| *3.2 Increase or develop the capacity of private-sector extension agents in providing extension services* | | 3.2.1: Facilitate capacity building and strengthening of inputs retailers to enable embedded advisory services |
| 3.2.2: Capacity-building of Local Service Providers (LSPs) |
| 3.2.3: Collaboration with inputs companies and agribusiness firms |
| *Task 3.3: Increase capacity of agricultural extension agents in the use of ICT tools* | | 3.3.1: ICT orientation for extension agents (including resource farmers) |
| 3.3.2: Smartphone-based gaming knowledge applications for extension agents |
| *Task 3.4: Enhance mobility and communication resources of extension workers to better reach smallholder farmers and women.* | | 3.4.1: Provision of motorcycles to DAE, DOF and DLS field offices, focusing on 4 demo upazilas |
| 3.4.2: Provision of communications equipment and support to DAE, DoF and DLS field offices |
| *Task 3.5: Intensive work with public and private extension agents in 4 selected upazilas to demonstrate improved ag extension service delivery through block- level ag extension centers.* | | 3.5.1: Establish block-level extension centers in 4 demo upazilas |
|  | | 3.5.2: Intensive capacity building and training to government extension agents associated with the block-level extension centers |
|  | | 3.5.3: Enhance the capacity of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) to train its field extension agents (including ICT enhancements). |
| Cross-cutting 1: Gender integration | | FPG members trained on gender issues/awareness |
| Extension agents trained on gender sensitization |
| Cross-cutting 2: Environmental compliance | | Assessment of potential Negative Environmental Impacts from project activities |
|  | | Preparation of Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plans (EMMPs) |

The AESA Project works in partnership at multiple levels within the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). Formal institutional arrangements have been made for collaboration between AESA Project and its partners, and the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) and the Agriculture Information Service (AIS) under the Ministry of Agriculture. Arrangements will also be made with the Department of Livestock Services and Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock. These agreements allow the GoB to work closely, provide support to, and participate in, the project implementation whenever required.

Though the project initially started with an ambitious target of 200,000 farmers in 20 districts / 40 upazilas as beneficiaries of improved extension service, focusing on a broader outreach, the program scope was realigned in 2015 so that it would contribute to more intensive quality of services to beneficiaries. With this adjustment, AESA’s targeted number of farmer beneficiaries was reduced from 200,000 to 110,000 in 12 districts / 26 upazilas.

1. **EVALUATION PURPOSE**

The annual performance evaluation will measure the annual performance of the project from October 2014 through September 2015 based primarily on the list indicators provided in annex 1. In addition, the evaluation will collect qualitative information on annual project performance. The evaluators will estimate the degree of contribution of each indicator result towards the achievement of project objectives.

Finally the evaluation will analyze existing constraints and suggest any emerging opportunities for enhancing the impact of project interventions to strengthen the extension system in southwest Bangladesh. The evaluation will be shared amongst USAID and other stakeholders.

Major objectives of this evaluation are

1. To review and analyze to what extent the AESA project has progressed in achieving its objectives and intended results
2. Assess to what extent the project is meeting its established targets
3. Identify major constraints in achieving expected project results and propose ways of overcoming them

4) Provide recommendations for adjustments or modifications to definitions for the project’s custom indicators.

The evaluation will cover the project period from October 2014 through September 2015.

1. **EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The evaluators will undertake a descriptive and normative evaluation supported by quantitative indicator information to measure project performance over the previous year. The evaluators will assess the assumptions made and risks anticipated in establishing the development hypothesis. As part of the evaluation, the evaluation team shall review relevant documentation, including the project’s USAID-approved Program Description (PD), Annual Implementation Plans, Cooperative Agreement and M&E Plan. The annual performance evaluation must answer the following questions:

*Relevance:*

* How well is the project performing against stated targets? What is working well and what is not?
* Is the development approach that the project is following benefitting the entire sector (in this case, agricultural extension services) or simply a few selected individuals/organizations?
* Is the existing list of project indicators sufficient to measure project performance? Are there additional indicators that should be considered for future project performance measurement?

*Effectiveness:*

IR1: Agricultural Extension Service Provision Enhanced

* What types of assistance have government extension agents received from the project? Did they find the assistance useful? If yes, what are the reasons for that? Which one was most useful and why?
* What are the differences between the project’s assistance to government extension agents compared to the support provided by the government extension agencies who employ them?
* How many of the project-assisted government extension agents are providing ‘regular’ extension services to the farmer producer groups? (The term ‘regular’ is defined in the M&E Plan) What made them change their behavior, if any? (indicator 2)
* Has the average number of field visits (as defined by the project) conducted by the project-assisted government extension agents in the four demonstration upazilas of Kalia (Narail), Chowgacha (Jessore), Faridpur Sadar and Barisal Sadar increased? If yes, what were the likely causes that led to this outcome? i.e. What motivated the extension agents to change their behavior? (indicator 4)
* Have extension agents – either public or private - received assistance from the project on the use of ICT applications for assisting farmers? Do the extension agents find the project assistance on ICT applications useful? Have any of the extension agents received similar assistance previously?
* How many extension agents are using project-assisted ICT-based applications for assisting farmers? How are the extension agents benefiting from using the project assisted ICT applications? How are they benefiting the farmers? (indicator 19)
* What are the other type of project assistance that the extension agents think can increase their efficiency?

*Specific to Task 3.5 – Demonstration of Improved Ag Extension Service Delivery in 4 selected Upazilas*

* Are the Ag Extension Service Centers established under this task being operating as anticipated? i.e. Are government extension agents receiving clients and providing advisory services? If so, from which sector (crop, livestock, fisheries)? Are extension materials available for distribution?
* Are farmers (both project beneficiaries and non-project beneficiaries) aware of the existence of the Ag Extension Service Centers? Do farmers perceive the centers as beneficial? Have they ever visited a center? If so, how easily were they able to locate and access the centers? Was the service and information that they received helpful?
* Are other stakeholders besides farmers making use of the Ag Extension Service Centers (private extension agents, service providers, inputs retailers, etc.)?
* Do the extension agents think their concerned department should replicate the improved service delivery model and capacity development initiatives being demonstrated under this task? What do they feel is the likelihood that this will occur?

IR2:

* What are the types of assistance that the farmer producer groups received from the project that helped improve their access to extension services? As a result of project assistance, how many of the farmer producer groups have accessed extension services either a) through facilitated support from the project or b) on their own initiative? Which project assistance was most helpful to the farmer producer groups for getting access to extension? (indicator 11)
* What assistance was provided by the project to farmer producer groups designed to lead to adoption of improved technology for farming? Did the farmers find the project assistance useful in this regard? How many beneficiary farmers adopted one or more of the project-assisted technologies? (indicator 7)
* What is estimated farm size or land area which came under the adoption of one or more of improved project-assisted technology/s or management practices? As a result of the adoption of such technologies, if any, did the farmer producers achieve increased productivity or decreased cost of production? Which improved technology (for each of the project’s six prioritized value chains) did the farmers find most useful? (indicator 6)
* What are the type of assistance that the farmer producer groups received from the project, for accessing appropriate inputs or expanded market channels? Did the farmer producer groups find the assistance useful? How many farmer producer groups have accessed appropriate inputs required for improved technology or sold through expanded market opportunities? Do these linkages seem sustainable? (indicator 12, 13)
* What types of assistance have been provided by the project to facilitate farmers’ access to MFI loans? Did the farmers find the project assistance useful? Note: Evaluators should verify information for 10% of farmers reported by the project as having received MFI loans as a result of project assistance (indicator 9)
* Are farmer producer groups replicating the collective action approach that is being facilitated by the project to meet other ag-related needs? How many have done so? In what ways (examples)? What is the farmer or group leaders’ role in such replication? What obstacles are the groups facing when trying to engage in collective activities? Was the replication useful in terms of improved access, linkage, production, income etc.? How? (indicator new under 2.2)
* How has the project facilitated the introduction of ICT tools and approaches for use and adoption by farmers? Are there signs of early adoption of these ICT tools and approaches? Which seems most useful for the farmers? (indicator 20)

*Cross-cutting:*

* What targeted efforts is the project engaging in to improve access of women smallholder farmers to extension services?
* What targeted efforts is the project engaging in to improve the capacity of women extension agents to provide extension services, for example, through training, increased mobility, increased numbers of female agents, or other?
* Has the project created increased awareness of gender issues in agriculture among project beneficiaries?
* Do beneficiary farmers perceive any value in the nutrition messaging they have received via project activities? Have they modified any of their own behaviors as a result? Have they adopted any new nutrition-related practices such as use of Tippy Taps?
* What is the project’s approach for mitigating potential adverse environmental impacts from project activities?

*Impact:*

* What have been the achievements of activities implemented under AESA to date?
* Are there any early signs of impact evident within the project’s area of influence?
* Are there any externalities or unintended consequences related to implementation of AESA that the project should consider?

The evaluation team will be able to seek clarification on any of these evaluation questions during an initial Team Planning Meeting. If required, the project may reform some of these questions based on discussions with the Team.

1. **Methodology for mid-term evaluation**

The evaluation team will work in close coordination with the AESA project throughout the assignment. The evaluation team will review and revise the list of key questions and issues to be addressed and will develop a final proposed draft to be presented during the first meeting with the AESA team. When conducting the evaluation, the evaluators should collect data and information supported by valid evidence. Methodology should be both qualitative and quantitative conducted using a participatory approach. All questionnaires should be shared with the project for final approval.

For each of the evaluation questions, the data collection and analysis method should be described using an Evaluation Design Matrix. This will include details on how representative sample surveys will be designed and conducted, focus group interviews will be transcribed and analyzed; what procedures will be used to analyze qualitative data from key informant and other stakeholder interviews; and how the evaluation will weigh and integrate qualitative data with quantitative data from the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan and project performance monitoring records.

The evaluation methodology should yield gender disaggregated data and reflect attention to gender relations such as the participation of women in group leadership, farmer training, market linkage etc. Methodological strengths and weaknesses should be explicitly described in the evaluation report.

In completing this SOW, the evaluation team shall perform the following activities:

* Gather and review existing relevant background information related to extension service provision and food security in Bangladesh and begin identifying organizations and donors involved in the sector.
* Submit resumes of any enumerators or other consultants to be hired to the AESA Head of M&E for review and approval.
* The evaluation team should use in-person interviews, sample surveys conducted via field visits, direct observations, comparative evaluation designs, literature review, key interviews, and analysis of existing data to answer the evaluation questions.

The team will:

* + Meet with relevant project staff to get a solid understanding of program objectives under its current and planned interventions;
  + Continue reviewing assessments and reports related to extension service provision and food security in Bangladesh
  + Conduct targeted field visits in order to conduct sample surveys, and collect the relevant performance information;
  + Conduct key interviews with targeted stakeholders. Stakeholders will be identified in consultation with the project;
  + Hold meetings with relevant government agencies, donors and other organizations including civil society and the private sector;

The evaluators will analyze the data and information collected and identify correlations, major trends and issues. The basic unit of analysis will be data and information collected by the evaluation team.

1. **EXISTING SOURCES OF INFORMATION:**

The evaluation team should consult a broad range of background documents apart from project documents provided by AESA. The evaluators will review existing documents, reports and data to build their evaluation report. The project will make the documents available. The documents reviewed by evaluators must include the following:

* The Cooperative Agreement between USAID/Bangladesh and Dhaka Ahsania Mission and relevant modification/s
* Sub award agreements with the technical partners, CARE and mPower
* Program Description
* M&E plan of AESA project
* Value chain Selection Report prepared by CARE
* Input Market need assessment by CARE
* Input and Output Market Analysis by CARE
* ICT Needs Assessment survey by mPower
* ICT Strategy by mPower
* Gender Strategy by CARE
* Project quarterly and annual reports
* Project Annual Implementation Plans (Years 1, 2 and 3)
* Project Area Map
* DQA reports (if any)
* USAID/Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2011-16 (Public version)
* USAID Bangladesh DO:2 PMP

1. **DELIVERABLES**

All deliverables are internal to AESA and the Evaluation Team unless otherwise instructed by AESA. Evaluation deliverables include:

**Evaluation Team Planning Meeting:** Essential in organizing the team’s efforts. During the meeting, the team should review and discuss the SOW in its entirety, clarify team members’ role and responsibilities, work plan, develop data collection methods, review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the assignment and instruments and to prepare for the in-brief with AESA.

**Work Plan:** The Evaluator will prepare a detailed work plan that includes task, timeline, methodology, outlining approach to be used in answering each evaluation question, team responsibility, document review, key informant and stakeholder meetings, site visits, survey implementation, travel time, debriefings (for AESA, implementing partner and, if decided, USAID and stakeholders), draft and final report writing. The work plan will include a data analysis plan. The work plan will be submitted to the Head of M&E, AESA for approval no later than the fifth day after commencement of the evaluation.

**In-brief Meeting:** In brief with AESA: Within five working days of start of activities;

**Evaluation Design Matrix:** A table that lists each evaluation question and the corresponding information sought, information sources, data collection sources, data analysis methods, and limitations. The matrix should be finalized and shared with AESA Head of M&E before evaluation field work starts. It should also be included as an annex in the evaluation report.

**Data Collection Instruments:** Development and submission of data collection instruments to AESA during the design phase and after the evaluation is completed;

**Regular Updates:** The Evaluation Team Leader will brief the Head of M&E on progress with the evaluation on at least a weekly basis, in person or by electronic communication. Any delays or complications must be quickly communicated to AESA as early as possible to allow quick resolution and to minimize any disruptions to the evaluation. Emerging opportunities to strengthen the evaluation should also be discussed with AESA as they arise.

**Preliminary Draft Evaluation Report*:*** The Evaluator will submit a Preliminary Draft Evaluation Report to the AESA Head of M&E five working days before the project debriefing. Within three working days after receipt, AESA staff will provide preliminary comments prior to the debriefing.

**Debriefing with AESA:** The Evaluator will present the major evaluation findings to DAM and its technical partners, CARE and mPower through a PowerPoint presentation. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and issues as well as any preliminary recommendations. The team will consider AESA comments and incorporate them in the Draft Evaluation Report.

**Debriefing with Stakeholders:** The team will present the major findings from the evaluation to AESA and USAID through a PowerPoint presentation. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and activities only, with no recommendations for possible modifications to project approaches, results, or activities. The team will consider USAID comments and incorporate them appropriately in drafting the evaluation report.

**Draft Evaluation Report** - A draft report on the findings and recommendations should be submitted to AESA 10 days after the debriefing. The written report should clearly describe findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report should answer all the evaluation questions and the structure of the report should make it clear how the questions were answered. The draft report must meet the criteria set forth under the Final Report section below. AESA will provide comments on the draft report within 10 working days of submission.

**Final Evaluation Report*:*** The Evaluator will submit a Final Evaluation Report that incorporates AESA comments and suggestions no later than five working days after AESA provides written comments on the Draft Evaluation Report. The format of the final report is provided below. The report will be submitted in English, electronically. The final report should meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

* The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
* Evaluation report shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
* The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the AESA Head of M&E.
* Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
* Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, etc.).
* Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people’s opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
* Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
* Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
* Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a table of contents, table of figures (as appropriate), acronyms, executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, research design and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Where appropriate, the evaluation should utilize tables and graphs to link with data and other relevant information. The report should include, in the annex, any dissenting views by any team member or by AESA on any of the findings or recommendations. The report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes. A second version of this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information will be submitted (also electronically, in English) to AESA for dissemination among stakeholders.

All quantitative data, if gathered, should be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by DAM and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. A thumb drive with all the data should be provided to the Head of M&E, AESA.

The final report will be edited and formatted by the Evaluator and provided to AESA 5 working days after the project has reviewed the content and approved the final revised version of the report.

1. **TECHNICAL DIRECTION:**

The Evaluation team will work under the guidance and general direction of the AESA Head of M&E, Shafinaj Rahman.

1. **EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION**

The team should include one team leader and two technical consultants. The former should be an evaluation specialist with expertise in two or more of the following areas: agricultural extension system, value chain design and implementation, extension capacity building, project evaluations and assessments, agriculture and food security. The technical consultants should have an excellent understanding of agricultural extension system (public and private) in Bangladesh and experience in agriculture and capacity building project evaluations in Bangladesh. Preferably, the two technical consultants will have complementary experience and backgrounds including: a community development specialist with supply/value chain experience, and an ag extension specialist.

**Team Leader (Evaluation Specialist)**:

The team leader should be a Bangladeshi national who have a post graduate degree in agricultural economics, agribusiness management or an applicable social sciences field. The Team Leader should have experience in leading evaluation teams, especially for agricultural extension support or capacity building projects, and preparing documents that are objective, evidence-based, and well organized. S/he should have extensive experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative evaluations and strong familiarity with agricultural extension capacity building. The Team Leader should be familiar with USAID regulations and systems including Feed the Future performance monitoring guidance, gender policies and guidance, project management, budgeting, and financial analysis and reporting. Good oral and written skills in English and Bangla are required. Relevant experience in Bangladesh is required.

The Team Leader will provide overall leadership for the team, and s/he will finalize the evaluation design, coordinate activities, arrange periodic meetings, consolidate individual input from team members, and coordinate the process of assembling the final findings and recommendations into a high quality document. S/he will lead the preparation and presentation of the key evaluation findings and recommendations to the AESA team and other major partners.

**Community Development Specialist:**

The Community Development Specialist should have a Bachelor’s degree in an applicable field. S/he will be a Bangladeshi national with a minimum of 10 years of experience in areas of community development and collective action, preferably with a focus on agriculture / livelihoods. S/he will have excellent understanding of the developments in the community development through collective action approaches in the context of rural Bangladesh. Experience of overseeing large survey process is desired. Familiarity with USAID regulations and systems including Feed the Future performance monitoring guidance, evaluation guidance and project management is preferred.

The Community Development Specialist will support the Team Leader, serving as a “resource person” on community development/ collective action in Bangladesh.

S/he will participate in team meetings, key informant interviews, group meetings, site visits, and draft the sections of the report relevant to his/her expertise and role in the team. S/he will also participate in presenting the report to AESA or other stakeholders and be responsible for addressing pertinent comments.

**Extension Capacity Building Specialist:**

The Extension Capacity Building Specialist must have a Bachelor’s degree in agricultural economics, agriculture, public administration or any other applicable field. S/he will be a Bangladeshi national with a minimum of 10 years of experience in areas of extension capacity building in Bangladesh, agricultural production – hopefully with a number of the six project value chains, evaluation of public sector capacity building projects in Bangladesh. S/he will have excellent understanding of the developments in the agricultural extension system worldwide, gaps in public and private sector agricultural extension system of Bangladesh, opportunities to fill those gaps, work system and culture of Bangladesh agricultural extension system. Experience of overseeing large survey process is desired. Familiarity with USAID regulations and systems including Feed the Future performance monitoring guidance, evaluation guidance and project management is preferred.

The Extension Capacity Building Specialist will support the Team Leader, serving as a “resource person” on extension system in Bangladesh.

S/he will participate in team meetings, key informant interviews, group meetings, site visits, and draft the sections of the report relevant to his/her expertise and role in the team. S/he will also participate in presenting the report to AESA or other stakeholders and be responsible for addressing pertinent comments.

**Conflict of Interest**

All evaluation team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated. AESA will provide the conflict of interest forms.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **IX.** | **LEVEL OF EFFORT (LOE)** |  |  |
| Below is an estimate of the evaluation level of effort (LOE). | |  |  |
|  | |  |  |
| **Level of Efforts of Team Members by Task Deliverables** | |  |  |
|  | |  |  |
| **Task/Deliverable** | | **Duration / LOE** | |
|  |  | **Team** | **Technical** |
|  |  | **Leader** | **Specialists** |
|  | |  |  |
| Review background documents and offshore preparation work | | 4 days | 3 days |
|  | |  |  |
| Team Planning meeting and meeting with AESA | | 2 days | 2 days |
| Development of Evaluation Work Plan (concurrent with document | | 2 day | 2 day |
| review and initial meetings) | |  |  |
|  | |  |  |
| Information and data collection. Includes sample surveys, interviews with key informants (stakeholders and AESA staff) and site visits | | 10 days | 15 days |
|  | |  |  |
| Discussion, analysis, and draft evaluation report in country including | | 10 days | 10 days |
| discussion with AESA **(preliminary draft report due to AESA)** | |  |  |
|  | |  |  |
| AESA provides preliminary comments prior to the debriefing | |  |  |
|  | |  |  |
| Debrief meetings with AESA | | 1 day | 1 day |
|  | |  |  |
| Debrief meetings with key stakeholders | | 1 day | 1 day |
| Team Leader meets with Technical Specialists and AESA to | | 1 day | 1 day |
| synthesize findings/discussion | |  |  |
|  | |  |  |
| AESA provides written comments on draft report | |  |  |
| Team revises draft report and **submits final draft to AESA** | | 10 days | 5 days |
|  | |  |  |
| AESA completes final review | |  |  |
| Editing and formatting of report and completed final report submitted to AESA | | 5 days |  |
| **AESA accepts final report** | |  |  |
| **Total Estimated LOE** | | **46 days** | **40 days** |
|  |  |  | **(2 people)** |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **SCHEDULING AND LOGISTICS**

**Funding and Logistical Support**

The Evaluation team will be responsible for all administrative and logistical support, including identification and fielding appropriate local staff. They will take care of arranging and scheduling meetings, international and local travel (if required), hotel bookings, working/office spaces, computers, printing, and photocopying. AESA field staff may assist to arrange field visits in the project area.

The evaluation team should be able to make all logistic arrangements, including the vehicle arrangements, for travel within and outside Dhaka and should not expect any logistic support from AESA.

**Scheduling**

Work is to be carried out over a period of approximately 11-12 weeks, beginning in August 2015, with field work completed in September 2015 and final report and close out concluding October 2015.

A six-day work week (Saturday-Thursday) is authorized for the evaluation team. The evaluation team will submit a work plan as part of the evaluation methodology proposal with timeline and develop a Gantt chart displaying the time periods during which activities occur.

1. **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The total pages, excluding references and annexes, should not be more than 30 pages. The following content should be included in the report:

1. Table of Contents
2. Executive Summary
3. Introduction
4. The Development Problem and AESA’s Response
5. Purpose of the Evaluation
6. Methodology
7. Findings/Conclusions
8. Recommendations
9. Lessons Learned
10. Annexes –to include statement of work, documents reviewed, evaluation methods, data generated from the evaluation, tools used, interview lists and tables. References**,** including bibliographical documentation, meetings, interviews and focus group discussions, must be included as an annex. Annexes should be succinct, pertinent and readable. Should also include if necessary, a statement of differences regarding significant unresolved difference of opinion by funders, implementers, or members of the evaluation team on any of the findings or recommendations. The Evaluation Design Matrix (methodology for each question) must be presented as an annex to the report.

An electronic copy of the report should be submitted to Head of M&E, AESA at each step – preliminary draft, final draft, accepted. In addition, a printed hard copy of the finally accepted report should be mailed to AESA office, Dhaka.

## Annex 1: List of Indicators: Agricultural Extension Services Activity project

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SL NO.** | **SPS REFERENCE (F)/Custom** | **INDICATOR NAME** | | **TYPE[[1]](#footnote-1)** |  |  |
|  |  | | **Project Objective: Increased Farmer Access to Improved Agricultural Extension Service** | | | |
| 1 | Custom | Number of farmer producer groups accessing improved extension services | | Outcome |  |  |
|  |  | | **IR 1: Agricultural Extension Service Provision Enhanced** | | | |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 1.1Capacity of Agriculture Extension Agents Enhanced* | | | |
| 2 | Custom | Number of extension agents (public and private) regularly providing services to producer groups | | Outcome |  |  |
| 3-a | 4.5.2-7 | Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training | | (RiA) (WOG)  Output |  |  |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 1.2: Increased Outreach to Farmers by more equipped Agriculture Extension Agents* | | | |
| 4 | Custom | Average number of field visits conducted by extension agents per year increased in the four demo upazilas | | Outcome |  |  |
| 5 | Custom | Number of extension agents who received motorbikes | | Output |  |  |
|  |  | | **IR 2: Smallholder Farmers (men & women) in Agriculture Empowered** | | | |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 2.1:Farmer’s Knowledge and Capacity in Agriculture Enhanced* | | | |
| 6 | 4.5.2-2 | Number of hectares of land under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance | | (RiA) (WOG)  Outcome |  |  |
| 7 | 4.5.2-5 | Number of farmers and others who have applied improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance | | (RiA) (WOG)\*  Outcome |  |  |
| 3-b | 4.5.2-7 | Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training | | (RiA) (WOG)  Output |  |  |
| 8 | 4.5.2-27 | Number of members of producer organizations and community based organizations receiving USG  assistance (S) | | Output |  |  |
| 9 | Custom | Number of farmers that have received MFI loans | | Outcome |  |  |
| 10 | 4.5.2-30 | Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving USG assistance to access loans | | (S)  Output |  |  |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 2.2: Producer (Farmer) Groups Strengthened* | | | |
| 11 | Custom | Number of producer (farmer) groups accessing extension services | | Outcome |  |  |
| 12 | Custom | Number of producer (farmer) groups accessing appropriate inputs required for adoption of improved technologies | | Outcome |  |  |
| 13 | Custom | Number of producer (farmer) groups selling through expanded market opportunities | | Outcome |  |  |
| 14 | 4.5.2-11 | Number of food security private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users  associations, women’s groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance | | (RiA) (WOG)  Output |  |  |
|  |  | | **IR 3: Strengthened Application of ICT in Agriculture** | | | |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 3.1: Improved National Agriculture Info System* | | | |
| 15 | Custom | Agricultural knowledge portal established | | Output |  |  |
| 16 | Custom | Number of call centers for farmers enhanced | | Output |  |  |
| 17 | Custom | Number of ICT applications developed and made available for farmers and extension agents in 4 demo upazilas | | Output |  |  |
| 18 | Custom | Number of audio-visual products made available for farmers and extension agents | | Output |  |  |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 3.2: Increased Use of ICT by Ag Extension Agents* | | | |
| 19 | Custom | Number of Agriculture Extension agents using project-assisted ICT-based applications for assisting farmers | | Outcome |  |  |
|  |  | | *Sub-IR 3.3: Increased Use of ICT by Farmers* | | | |
| 20 | Custom | Number of farmers accessing information through new ICT channels | | Outcome |  |  |

**Additional Internal Indicators:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Custom | Number of Block level Ag Extension Services Centers established and open to the public in four upazilas (Barisal Sadar, Narail Kalia, Jessore Chougacha, Faridpur Sadar) | Output |  |  |
|  | Custom | Number of agriculture extension centers providing two-way enhanced ag extension services to producer groups | Outcome |  |  |
|  | Custom | Number of project-assisted farmers using collective action approach to meet other ag related needs | Outcome |  |  |

1. FTF Classification of Indicators: (R)=Required Indicator; (RIA)=Required if Applicable Indicator; (S)=Standard Indicator; (WOG)=Whole of Government Indicator (all RiA) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)