

**Terms of Reference (ToR)**

**for**

**The development of a policy brief on the barriers to, and challenges facing, the most vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities, accessing SSNPs in Bangladesh**

Establishing Vulnerable Peoples’ Rights and Access to Social Safety Net Programmes (EVPRA) Project

This Project is funded by the European Union and implemented by World Vision in collaboration with Pollisree and PUMDO

November, 2016

World Vision

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1. **Background/ Introduction**

This Consultancy Assignment will support the implementation and delivery of the 'Establishing vulnerable peoples' rights and access to social safety net programmes' (EVPRA) project. European Union funded EVPRA project is being implemented by World Vision and its partners Pollisree and PUMDO (Peoples Union of the Marginalized Development Organization).

The overall objective of the EVPRA project is to empower local, civil society organisations (CSOs), local authorities (LAs) and communities to promote access to Social Safety Net Programmes for the most vulnerable communities by enhancing transparency and accountability in the provision of SSNPs. The project is being implemented in close collaboration with government, CSOs and communities in Joypurhat Sadar and Panchbibi sub-districts in Joypurhat district in Rajshahi Division and Fulbari, Dinajpur Sadar, and Birampur sub-districts in Dinajpur district, in Rangpur Division situated in the northern region of the Bangladesh.

EVPRA's key objectives are to:

1: Strengthen the organisational capacity and sustainability of targeted local ethnic minority CSOs.

2:Promote the transparency and accountability of existing government SSNPs.

**3:** Increase the total number of vulnerable people demanding basic human rights and access to SSNPs from the government.

EVPRA will target around 278,000 people, some of whom are from plain land ethnic minority groups including the Santal, Uraon, Mahali, Malo, Mahato, Pahan, Borman, Sing, Kurin, Munda, Robidas, Kormokar, and Horijan. Beneficiaries also include the elderly, the disabled, widowed, deserted and destitute women, poor lactating mothers, school children, landless labourers, and seasonally unemployed farmers.

A rapid needs assessment conducted by project partners at the pre-proposal stage found that the most vulnerable people, specifically those from ethnic plain land minority groups, are not accessing the government’s social safety net programmes (SSNPs) that are necessary to maintain their livelihoods or protect them against household shocks. Respondents included people from ethnic minority groups, other vulnerable people, and local government representatives. Notably, in the Government’s 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020), ethnic minorities in particular are recognised as one of the most socially marginalised groups in Bangladesh. Lack of awareness, low income/assets, social exclusion, and illiteracy are considered barriers towards accessing their basic social and economic rights, including access to Social Safety Net Programmes.

At the National level, the GoB recognises Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) are an important vehicle for reducing extreme poverty and vulnerability. This is emphasised in the GoB's National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) 2015. The GoB's commitment to SSNPs is also reflected in budgetary allocation which has increased from 1.3% of GDP in 1998 to 2.3% in 2011, and has stabilised in recent years at 2.02% of GDP. However, Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) data suggests that a large proportion of poor and vulnerable households are not accessing these SSNPs. There is considerable leakage of allocated funds and a significant percentage (18% in 2010 - NSSS: 2015: xvii), of household beneficiaries are non-poor. As outlined in the NSSS (2015:41), "despite a relatively high level of spending for the GoB, only 35% of the poor in 2010 received any form of social protection benefit." Consequently, the impact on poverty reduction from the amount of money spent in these programmes is less than would be possible with a more efficient and effective Social Security system. The GoB plans to increase its expenditure proposed for core social protection schemes while emphasising the importance of accurate targeting and that transfers go to the right people, including the poorest and most vulnerable.

To address these issues and support the implementation of the NSSS 2015, EVPRA is rolling out World Vision's [Citizen Voice and Action](http://www.wvi.org/health/citizen-voice-and-action-0) (CVA) approach to social accountability. CVA aims to improve the dialogue between communities, CSOs and government in order to improve services, such as SSNPs, that impact the daily lives of families and their children. As part of this the project will conduct national and local level advocacy to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of existing SSNPs policies and to influence the reform of those SSNP policies which create barriers for ethnic minorities’ access. This assignment will contribute significantly to this advocacy. Through this assignment, a policy brief will be developed, which will identify the gaps in and barriers vulnerable people face in accessing SSNPs, due to systems, structures and practices. The policy brief will make recommendations for policy changes to reduce or remove these barriers. The policy brief will capture the feedback provided by local authorities, CSOs and individuals during various project interactions with them regarding SSNP delivery. The policy brief will be shared with sub-district, district and national-level stakeholders throughout the project. Each year a different policy brief will be produced addressing different issues and challenges regarding selected SSNP policies, and it is anticipated these briefs will also identify gradual policy improvements. The briefs will also be discussed during district level meetings with relevant government departments. They will also be shared with donors and others stakeholders working on increasing access to SSNPs or funding for SSNPs.

1. **Key Objectives of the assignment:**

The key objectives of this Assignment are:

1. To identify gaps and barriers in the effective implementation and enforcement of existing SSNP policies, specifically budgets, systems, structures and delivery practices of the 9 targeted SSNPs in Dinajpur Sadar, Birampur and Fulbari Upazila under Dinajpur District and Joypurhat Sadar, Panchbibi Upazila under Joypurhat District.
2. To make recommendations for policy changes to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of existing SSNP policies and to influence the reform of those SSNP policies which have gaps regarding, or create barriers for ethnic minorities.
3. To capture feedback from local authorities, CSO members and communities on the challenges and barriers vulnerable people, specifically including ethnic minorities, face in accessing SSNPs in Bangladesh

To develop and publish a Policy Brief on the barriers to, and challenges facing, the most vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities, accessing the 9 target SSNPs in Bangladesh to support the successful implementation and delivery of the NSSS

To deliver these objectives the consultant or consultancy firm will:

a) Review all policy documents regarding SSNPs system, structure and practices, specifically related to the 9 target SSNPs

b) Review the synthesis paper on SSNP standards recently developed by the EVPRA Project

c) Review the guidance note for the inclusion of CSOs representative in the local government SSNP Committees recently developed by the EVPRA project

d) Review the National Social Security Strategy, 2015, particularly focusing on implementation arrangements for the NSSS.

e) Review existing grievance/complaints mechanisms in the delivery of SSNP services

f) Consult with communities, ethnic minorities CSO members, local authorities regarding the delivery and implementation of the 9 selected SSNPs to develop recommendations regarding necessary policy changes that will enhance the most vulnerable peoples’ access to SSNPs

g) Present policy brief findings in front of 5 relevant ministries, and EVPRA project stakeholders at the National Level

2. The policy brief will:

1. Focus on the 9 SSNPs targeted by the EVPRA project
2. Make clear and specific recommendations for policy changes that will enhance the most vulnerable peoples’ access, specifically considering ethnic minorities’ access to SSNPs
3. Be produced in English

EVPRA is particularly focused on increasing access to the following 9 SSNPS

1. Old Age Allowance - Ministry of Social Welfare
2. Allowances for the financially insolvent disabled - Ministry of Social Welfare
3. Allowance for the widowed, deserted and destitute women - Ministry of Social Welfare
4. Maternity allowance program for poor lactating mothers - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
5. Vulnerable group development (VGD)- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
6. Vulnerable group feeding (VGF)– Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
7. Food for works (FFW)- Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
8. Secondary Education Stipend Project (SESP)- Ministry of Education
9. Primary Education Stipend Project (PESP)- Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.
10. **Duties and responsibilities:**

**Major tasks and responsibilities of the Individual Consultant or Consultancy Firm**

The consulting firm/ or consultant (s) will be responsible for fulfilling the following key tasks:

* Forming and managing his/her team in order to conduct all activities and processes required in order to achieve the quality and fulfil the requirements of the assignment as agreed with World Vision
* Remunerating all members of the Firm/ team.
* Reading all project background documentation AND researching all necessary Government documentation on SSNPs (Example: National Social Security Strategy 2015; Office order of respective ministry or department on SSNP administration, Union Parishad manual, etc). The consultant must share with World Vision a list of all the documents and verify the current relevancy of the documents with the Government of Bangladesh.
* According to the government service delivery of SSNP, there are 145 SSNPs in Bangladesh. Out of those EVPRA will concentrate on only nine (9) SSNP mentioned in the objectives. The policy brief must focus on these 9 SSNPs and is non-negotiable.
* Development of an assignment plan and schedule and seeking approval from WV. The Plan must include the plan/ schedule and outline of the assessment design and methodologies.
* Design and development of appropriate quantitative & qualitative tools in English and Bengali ensuring that key objectives and deliverables of this research are covered.
* Translation of specific tools into Bengali or relevant local language (including ethnic minority people’s languages) as needed for data collection
* The consultant(s)/firm will work 5 days in the field for collection of qualitative and quantitative data through using the KII/FGD/Structure questionnaire tools.
* In preparation for the field mission, the Consultant must organise at least two (2) days comprehensive training for the team to ensure the assignment policy brief and field research objectives are understood, that WV Child Protection policies are understood and adhered to, and that the plan is developed considering the field level realities
* Participation in regular interim and final briefings with EVPRA project team
* Ensuring full and inclusive stakeholder participation in the SSNP research, consulting with selected ethnic minority beneficiaries who have access to the 9 SSNPs in the project sites.
* Submitting of draft policy brief with soft copy data sets (computer entered data) for validation and verification, to the EVPRA project team for review and feedback.
* Submitting the final policy brief (a set of three coloured copies) to the EVPRA Project Management for final approval accompanied by a soft copy of report and all primary data (hard and soft copy), tables and database (SPSS ) based on which report have been produced.
* With the support of WVB, the consultant(s)/Firm will present the findings in front of relevant ministries (Representative of Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education) and different level EVPRA project stakeholders (Relevant NGOs, Local Government representative etc.) at the National Level
* Ensuring compliance with child protection policies and informed consent of participants in the various assessment steps.
* S/he will sign the behaviour protocol after confirming this assignment

**Major Tasks of the EVPRA Project and WV Bangladesh**

The Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator of the EVPRA Project will provide overall guidance and coordination support to the consultancy firm/consultant and Advocacy and Communication Coordinator will organise thepolicy conference in collaboration with relevant government ministries and departments. World Vision, Pollisree and PUMDO will provide the facilitation support on the field level research activities specific to the locations/Sub Districts each organisation is covering. If necessary, the M&E Coordinator will provide relevant contacts to the research team at the division or district level CSO, government department or SSNP beneficiaries where relevant. The EVPRA project staff will monitor the progress and oversee the quality of output during the day to day activities of the researcher(s).

Specifically, WVB will:

* Organise and bear the cost of National level policy brief dialogue workshop in front of relevant ministries and different level stakeholders
* Provide relevant project documents to the selected research service supplier/firm;
* Monitor the progress of the research process as per agreed work plan
* Review and give feedback on the work plan, tools in applicable languages, as well as draft research reports within reasonable time.
* Coordinate within WV departments, PUMDO, and Pollisree in order to support the implementation of the consultant’s assignment plan, schedule, and policy brief.
* Coordinate with all reviewers (EVPRA team, World Vision National & Regional Office and WVUK) to ensure that comments from different reviewers are consolidated and shared with the consultants in a timely manner and ensures that all comments are incorporated in the report;
* Make payments based on agreed terms (the payment agreed terms i.e. 40% upon submission of 1st draft on time, 60% after final submission at agreed quality and on time)

1. **Key deliverables:**

At the start of the research work, an inception report will be submitted. Additionally, and the main product of this assignment will be a policy brief on the barriers to, and challenges facing, the most vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities, accessing 9 targeted SSNPs in Bangladesh. This policy brief will contain recommendations for policy changes to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of existing SSNP policies and to influence the reform of those SSNP policies which have gaps regarding, or create barriers for ethnic minorities. The policy brief paper must be produced in English and focus on the 9 target SSNPs of the EVPRA project.

In addition to the SSNPs related policy, the consultant(s) or firm will annex to the report any case studies of actual practices by local duty bearers in the provision of the 9 types of SSNPs in the different Sub Districts. This document will be preserved as valuable records and evidence for EVPRA activities in the future.

Specifically, the policy brief will be submitted together with relevant data sets in the following form:

* The final policy brief must be in colour print (both in hard and soft copy).
* The final policy brief has to follow EU Visibility guidelines
* Interview Answer sheets, FGD data entries, where applicable;
* Summary of primary and secondary data tables/matrixes used in the report (both in hard and soft copy).
* Draft report for review and submit final report incorporating comments received from WV

1. **Duration and timeline:**

This research assignment should be completed within a maximum of 45 days (including weekends and holidays). This should be completed no later than 30th January, 2017 following the timeline below:

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| --- | --- |
| **Duration** |  |
| Expected Start Date: | 15th December 2016 |
| End Date: | 30 th January, 2017 |
| **Proposed Milestones to be included in Consultant Work Plan** |  |
| Research and Synthesis design including final detailed work plan: | 17th December, 2016 |
| Draft l Report: | 20th January, 2017 |
| Findings presentation to the Delegation | 25th January 2017 |
| Final Evaluation Report: | 30th January, 2017 |
| Present the policy brief findings in front relevant ministries | 1st – 5th February, 2017 |

**Work plan& Timetable (tentative - to be developed by Consultant / Firm)**

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| --- | --- |
| **Activities** | **Working days** |
| Review secondary sources | 9 |
| Prepare assessment framework, methodology, tools, propose work plan | 2 |
| Visits/interviews with relevant government departments in Dhaka | 3 |
| Travel to/from the project areas | 2 |
| Briefing by World Vision in Bangladesh (EVPRA team), refining of field tools, if needed, and other preparatory work | 1 |
| Field work (visits, interviews etc.) | 5 |
| Initial data analysis on site and presentation of top findings to EVPRA team & key project stakeholders | 3 |
| Preparation of first draft and final report, including presentation to World Vision/EU Delegation and submission of final report | 20 |

1. **Assignment Location**

The policy brief on the barriers to, and challenges facing, the most vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities, accessing SSNPs in Bangladesh will focus on the EVPRA project sites namely Joypurhat Sadar and Panchbibi sub-districts in Joypurhat district, and Fulbari and Birampur sub-districts, Dinajpur Sadar, and in Dinajpur district, Rajshahi and Rangpur Division, Bangladesh.

1. **Competencies, Required Skills and Experience**

The consultant(s) and/or the firm should have proven knowledge and policy research experience on social development issues, and have access to relevant government departments providing SSNP services. The consultant (s)/ firm should have proven experience in writing and publishing reports for a variety of audiences, and must also have significant experience of qualitative research methods meeting the demands of large institutional donor-funded programmes. The consultant(s)/firm should have the capacity to coordinate activities with government departments and other stakeholders and evidence of producing high quality, published researches on policy brief. The consultant(s)/ firm and members of the assessment team demonstrate excellent conceptual, analytical and communication skills and ability to write clear and useful reports in English. The team should be able to manage specified time and resources and to work under tight deadlines.

Importantly, the assessment team must be willing to work in remote areas, and have experience in working with ethnic minority groups and with the extreme poor. The members of the assessment team must also have strong experience in undertaking similar research assignments in rural Bangladesh.

Career résumés of individual consultants will include academic training and technical skills in related field as social and policy research, knowledge of ethnic minority systems/cultural dynamics, community development and knowledge of the region and, where appropriate, of the local language. Also, the consultant/firm should have capacity in regards of logistics and facilities including data analysis and report writing; work plan and time, detail proposal of the assessment; context - appropriate methods of data collection in conducting this research.

The team to be dispatched to the field should have 50% male and 50% female composition and as much as possible be recruited locally or within the region. The team should have relevant knowledge of the local culture and customary practices enough to show respect and tolerance to rural communities.

1. **To Apply**

Applications (in English) must be sent by email to ***wvb\_scm@wvi.org*** *(with cc to AlfredGhosh@wvi.org; MdNazrul\_Islam@wvi.org)*by **3rd January 2017**, at 23:59 Bangladesh time indicating ‘Proposal for EVPRA project “**Development of a policy brief on the barriers to, and challenges facing, the most vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities, accessing SSNPs in Bangladesh”** in the subject line. It should contain the following elements:

1. Consultant profile: To include organisational and legal details, Core competencies of organisation/ individual, relevant experiences in doing social and policy research, a statement of confirmation that the applicant is a registered company, with its own business bank account, and its own professional liability insurance. Attach curriculum vitae of each member of the team (maximum 3 pages each) clearly spelling out qualifications and experience.
2. Detailed policy research outline for the assignment (The development of a policy brief on the barriers to, and challenges facing, the most vulnerable people, including ethnic minorities, accessing SSNPs in Bangladesh)**,** including an outline ofqualitative and quantitative data collection methods.
3. Evidence of how the consultant(s)/firm meet the ToR requirements, setting out the conceptual framework on how the work will be undertaken. This part will be based on the information provided in the TOR.
4. Detailed work plan and detailed timeframe for secondary data review, primary data collection, analysis and reporting: including ethical consideration , if any, internal monitoring, etc
5. Detailed Cost estimate, demonstrating value for money and including human resource mobilisation, travel expenses for data collection, supplies, salary and remuneration (separating core consultancy costs and daily rates of team members), cost of relevant tools, administrative costs and other costs in separate line items. Please specify if VAT or any local taxes have been included where applicable. All quotations submitted must be inclusive of all costs;
6. Indication of availability (in relation to start and end dates). **The deadline is not negotiable.**
7. A statement regarding the legal, financial and professional independence of the consultant(s)/firm from World Vision, PUMDO and POLLISREE, and a declaration of any real or perceived conflict of interest with any of the project stakeholder.
8. The selected Consultant(s)/ firm will be required to undergo Child Protection screening, training and adhere to WV's Child Protection Policy.
9. For consulting firm/agency/organisation copy of VAT registration certificate and valid TIN are to be presented;
10. One sample of previous relevant and related work to be attached
11. **Management of Applications**

World Vision will not be able to acknowledge or reply to all applications received. Applicants being considered will hear from WV within 5 calendar days after the closing date of this request for application either additional information or a face –to-face presentation.

**Annex 1**

*Ethical principles for World Vision evaluation and research*

