



BRAC University
Procurement Department
Kha 224 Pragati Sarani, Merul Badda,
Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Letter of Invitation

August 25, 2025

To
Concerned Individual/Firm

Subject: Request for Proposal for the “Hiring of Consultant/ Consulting firm — Identify barriers and challenges faced by women from marginal communities in accessing finance for renewable energy livelihoods in climate-vulnerable districts” under CED of BRAC University.

Dear Concern,

BRAC University invites sealed separate (a) Technical proposal and (b) Financial proposal with forwarding letter for the “Hiring of Consultant/ Consulting firm — Identify barriers and challenges faced by women from marginal communities in accessing finance for renewable energy livelihoods in climate-vulnerable districts” under CED of BRAC University as per the mentioned Terms & Conditions in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and Price Schedule of this Request for Proposal. In addition to the hard copies, technical proposal must be submitted in a CD or USB flash drive enclosed in the respective envelopes.

Thanks,

Sincerely Yours
For BRAC University

Kazi Nazmul Islam
Senior Manager, Procurement

Attachment: -

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| a. | Important Details | : | 02 Pages (Page No: 2-3) |
| b. | Terms of Reference (ToR) | : | 03 Pages (Page No: 4-7) |

Important Details

(Schedule of Events, contact & communication details etc.)

1	Context of the Requirement	“Hiring of Consultant/ Consulting firm — Identify barriers and challenges faced by women from marginal communities in accessing finance for renewable energy livelihoods in climate-vulnerable districts” under CED of BRAC University.
2	Brief Description of the Required Services	Please see the TOR (Terms of Reference)
3	Minimum Experience of the Bidders	Minimum Ten (10) Years.
4	Date of Issue	August 25, 2025
5	Contact/Communications & Submission of Tender Address	Director, Procurement Level 04, BRAC University Kha 224 Pragati Sarani, Merul Badda, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh
6	Bid Document Cost (non-refundable)	Nil
7	Payment Terms	Payment will be made upon satisfactory provision of services. The Outsourcing Individual/Firm will submit an invoice after completion of service every month. The Invoice will be certified by Administration Department, BRAC University as defined in the TOR
8	Value Added Tax on Price Proposal	Must be inclusive of VAT and other applicable Direct/Indirect Taxes
9	Validity Period of Proposals <i>(Counting for the last day of submission of quotes)</i>	Minimum 90 days In exceptional circumstances, BRAC University may request the Proposer to extend the validity of the Proposal beyond what has been initially indicated in this RFP. The Proposal shall then confirm the extension in writing, without any modification whatsoever on the Proposal.
10	Person(s) to review the services and authorize the disbursement of payment	Ms. Sabrina Nourin Senior Research Associate/ Project Manager Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) Level 3, Zone-D, BRAC University Kha 224 Pragati Sarani, Merul Badda, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh E-mail: sabrina.nourin@bracu.ac.bd
11	Duration of Contract	02 (Two) Months with option to no cost extension.
12	Notice Period for Termination	15 (Fifteen) Days
13	Criteria for Contract Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined Scoring Method. Technical & Financial Offer will be evaluated separately. • Full acceptance of the BRAC University Contract General Terms and Conditions (GTC). This is a mandatory criterion and cannot be deleted regardless of the nature of services required. Non acceptance of the GTC may be grounds for the rejection of the Proposal.
14	Criteria for the Assessment of Proposal	Technical & Financial Offer will be evaluated separately.
15	BRAC University will award the contract to:	An Individual/Firm
16	Annexes to this RFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed TOR (Annex: A) • Price Schedule (Annex: B)
17	Contact Person for Inquiries (Written inquiries only)	For RFP Purpose Mr. Kazi Nazmul Islam Senior Manager, Procurement e-mail: knazmul@bracu.ac.bd For Technical Clarification Purpose: Ms. Sabrina Nourin Senior Research Associate/ Project Manager Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) Level 3, Zone-D, BRAC University Kha 224 Pragati Sarani, Merul Badda, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh E-mail: ced@bracu.ac.bd
18	Last Date of Submission of Proposal/Bids	On September 07, 2025 by 5:00 PM at the Department of Procurement, BRAC University, Level 04, Kha 224 Pragati Sarani, Merul Badda, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh. <i>“Technical proposals with a soft copy (CD or USB flash drive) and financial proposals must be submitted in separate sealed envelopes which must be enclosed in a single outer envelope.”</i>
19	Opening of Proposal	No Public Opening.

20	Tender Security	Nil
21	Performance Security	Nil
22	Costs to be borne by bidders	All costs and expenses incurred by Bidders in any way associated with the development, preparation, and submission of their responses to the RFP, including but not limited to attendance at meetings, discussions, presentations, demonstrations, etc. and providing any additional information required by the Organization, will be borne entirely and exclusively by the Bidder and the Organization shall not liable for any costs and/or expenses.

Note: -

The above dates are tentative and subject to change without any prior notice or intimation. Bidders will be informed through email from the Procurement Department, BRAC University for any changes/addendums to the above dates and/or any other changes to this RFP.

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Position: Consultant/Consulting firm—Identify barriers and challenges faced by women from marginal communities in accessing finance for renewable energy livelihoods in climate-vulnerable districts.

Project Title: Strengthening and scaling up climate-resilient livelihoods for women and other marginalized groups in the climate hotspots of Bangladesh (EmPower II)

Project Number: CFP No. UNW-AP-BGD-CFP-2024-006

Location: Selected geographic locations in Bangladesh.

Implementing Partner: Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED), BRAC University.

Deadline to Apply: September 07, 2025 at 5:00 PM (Bangladesh Time)

Contact Email: ced@bracu.ac.bd

1. Introduction

The Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) at BRAC University, established in 2011 under the visionary leadership of Sir Fazle Hasan Abed (KCMG), stands as a driving force in building an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem and sustainable innovation in Bangladesh. CED nurtures and empowers aspiring and established entrepreneurs, promotes social innovation, scales knowledge and skills, supports community development, conducts interdisciplinary research, advances welfare initiatives, and forges development opportunities through strategic networking.

As an implementing partner of the EmPower Phase II project funded by UN Women and UNEP, CED is inviting applications from qualified individual consultants/consulting firms to identify the barriers and challenges faced by women, particularly from marginal and climate-vulnerable communities, in accessing finance for renewable energy-based, climate-resilient livelihoods across five targeted districts. This initiative contributes to the project's broader goal of strengthening gender-responsive, climate-resilient livelihoods and financial inclusion for women and marginalized groups in Bangladesh.

2. Project Description

Bangladesh, one of the most climate-vulnerable countries globally, faces significant challenges from rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation. Women and marginalized groups are disproportionately impacted due to socio-economic, financial, and structural barriers. In response, this project: Strengthening and scaling up climate-resilient livelihoods for women and other marginalized groups in the climate hotspots of Bangladesh under the EmPower II initiative seeks to promote inclusive, renewable energy-based, climate-resilient livelihoods by strengthening partnerships, building capacities, and facilitating access to finance and resources.

3. Objectives of Assignment

The main objectives of this consultancy are to identify the barriers and challenges faced by women, particularly from marginal and climate-vulnerable communities in accessing finance for renewable energy-based, climate-resilient livelihoods in the mentioned geographic location, which has been divided into clusters.

4. Geographic Location

- Cluster 1: Khulna & Satkhira (Upazilas: Koyra, Dacope, Shyamnagar, Kaliganj)
- Cluster 2: Jamalpur & Kurigram (Upazilas: Islampur, Dewanganj, Kurigram Sadar, Chilmari)
- Cluster 3: Cox's Bazar (Upazilas: Chakaria, Teknaf)

5. Scope of Work

The individual consultant/consulting firm will be responsible for delivering the following:

- Review of existing literature, government policies, and data to understand barriers faced by women from marginal communities in accessing financial resources for renewable energy businesses in the five-target climate-vulnerable districts.
- Engage with key stakeholders including policymakers, local NGOs, financial institutions, civil society organizations, and renewable energy sector experts through qualitative methods (e.g., Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions) to gather insights on the financial inclusion challenges of women in the targeted areas at mentioned districts.
- Facilitate consultations with marginalized women in the climate-vulnerable districts to document lived experiences and challenges related to access to finance.
- Analyze the collected data to identify socio-economic, institutional, and cultural barriers that limit women's access to credit and financial services.
- Prepare a report documenting the barriers and challenges identified, ensuring the findings are grounded in the context of marginal women's access to finance in the mentioned climate vulnerable districts.

6. Deliverables

- An inception report outlining the methodology, stakeholder engagement plan, sample selection criteria, and proposed structure of the final deliverable. This will serve as the guiding framework for the assignment and be submitted within the first week of contract signing.
- A draft report (maximum 10 pages) presenting preliminary findings on barriers and challenges faced by women in accessing finance for renewable energy-based livelihoods in the five targeted districts. The draft will include an overview of existing initiatives, financial access gaps, and emerging opportunities.
- A final report incorporating feedback provided by CED on the draft, with detailed analysis of the findings and practical recommendations on how these can inform and strengthen EmPower II interventions for improving women's access to finance in climate-vulnerable communities.

7. Duration of Assignment

The duration of the Assignment is 2 months, possibly starting from 01 October 2025.

8. Selection Criteria

A. Eligible Applicants:

This assignment is open to individual consultants or consulting firms with proven expertise in gender-responsive livelihood assessments, renewable energy entrepreneurship, and socio-economic research. Eligible applicants must:

- Lead consultant (in case of a firm) or individual applicant must hold at least a Master's degree in a relevant discipline such as economics, gender studies, development studies, environmental science, or other related social sciences.

- Independent consultants/consultancy firms/research institutions/NGOs with at least 10 years' experience in gender analysis, access-to-finance studies, and/or renewable energy-related livelihood assessments.
- Have a proven track record in conducting field-based research with marginalized and climate-vulnerable communities, including the use of qualitative methods (e.g., KIIs, FGDs).
- Be legally eligible to operate in Bangladesh, with valid documentation (e.g., TIN, trade license, or institutional registration, if applicable).
- Be proficient in preparing analytical reports in English, with the ability to engage local communities in Bangla where required.
- Relevant prior experience in identifying barriers to women's access to finance, particularly for renewable energy-based livelihoods, will be given preference.

B. Eligible Proposals Must:

- Clearly align with the objective of identifying barriers and challenges faced by women from marginal communities in accessing finance for renewable energy-based livelihoods in the five targeted climate-vulnerable districts.
- Include a practical and inclusive methodology for data collection, analysis, and validation (e.g., KIIs, FGDs).
- Address financial, cultural, and institutional challenges that limit women's participation in renewable energy-based livelihoods.
- Outline a realistic work plan and timeline, including the delivery of an inception report, draft report, and final report (maximum 10 pages).
- Submit a cover letter clearly demonstrating relevant previous experience and outlining the applicant's capacity to deliver the assignment within the agreed timeline.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to gender equality, inclusion, and the socio-economic empowerment of marginalized women.
- Address intersectional issues of gender, climate vulnerability, and financial inclusion.
- Commit to timely submission of high-quality deliverables.

C. Evaluation Criteria:

Proposal	Criteria	Score
Technical Proposal	Understanding of the assignment	10
	Proposed methodology	10
	Professional capacity and qualifications to carry out the assignment (such as relevant skills, knowledge, resources)	20
	Relevant experience in a similar task, including a summary of past assignments, evidence of successful completion, and an acknowledgement	20
	Presentation (bidders scoring 70% and above in the technical proposal)	20
	Sub-total	80
Financial Proposal	Value for money	20
	Sub-total	20
	Total	100

N.B: Bidders who obtain at least 70% marks in the technical evaluation will be invited to deliver a short presentation. Financial proposals will be opened only for those who achieve a minimum of 70% marks.

9. Budget and Mode of Payment

Installment	Payment Amount	Deliverable
1st Installment	30%	Upon submission and acceptance of the inception report
2nd Installment	40%	Upon submission and acceptance of the draft report
3rd Installment	30%	Upon successful completion of the final report

- The proposed budget should be within BDT 500,000, inclusive of applicable VAT and tax.
- All the payment would be made through bank transfer or account payee cheque by the name of the consultant/firm.
- VAT and Tax will be applied as per the existing government rules (if applicable).

10. Required/Legal Documents

It is mandatory for the bidding Consultancy firm/Consultant to submit documentary evidence demonstrating their legal, taxation and financial status. This includes:

- Maximum 03 pages of detailed CV of the lead consultant/team members
- Company Profile (If applicable)
- Cover letter, highlighting relevant experience and summarizing the consultant's/firm's proven track record and previous works in relevant areas.
- Updated Tax Identification Number (TIN) Certificate
- VAT Registration Certificate. (If applicable)
- Business Identification Number (BIN) (If applicable)
- Certificate of Incorporation (If applicable)
- Trade License (If applicable)
- Joint Stock Registration Certificate (If applicable)