**Terms of Reference (ToR)**

**To conduct the Midterm evaluation of the SONGO Project.**

1. **PROJECT BACKGROUND:**

ICCO Cooperation ([www.icco-cooperation.org](http://www.icco-cooperation.org)) is an international organization, whose mission is to end poverty and injustice in the global south, in partnership with enterprising people. We invest in the power and dreams of entrepreneurial people, stimulate their entrepreneurial spirit, and connect them with businesses, governments and social organizations.

ICCO Cooperation is playing the lead role to implement EU funded “Sustained Opportunities for Nutrition Governance (SONGO) project” aims to improve maternal and child nutrition in Kurigram and Gaibandha districts. The SONGO is 5 years long project with 4 inter-linked outcomes; (1) Local nutrition governance and decision-making mechanisms are strengthened (2) Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition Practices are improved (3) Household WASH Practices Improved (4) Household access to nutritious food is improved. RDRS Bangladesh has been ICCO's long standing partner in a variety of large poverty alleviation and development projects in Bangladesh, often with food security components. RDRS will implement the project activities such as community mobilization, capacity building, committees formation, meeting organisation, workshops, monitoring, etc at a field level.

SONGO emphasizes the importance of sustained governance as a primary outcome and a precondition to achieve other outcomes that are based on three interlinked pillars or pathways (as per the UNICEF Conceptual Framework on Under nutrition and used in 2008 & 2013 Lancet Series):

1. HH food and nutrition security (including availability, economic access and use of food)
2. Feeding and care giving resources and practices (including maternal, HH and community levels)
3. Access to and use of health services as well as a safe and hygienic environment (i.e. food, care and health).

While availability and accessibility of nutritious and safe food at HH level is a precondition for improved nutrition it does not automatically lead to improved nutrition among all HH members. Lack of nutrition, health and WASH related knowledge, attitudes and practices as well as intra-HH dynamics often impede nutrition improvement. Evidence has also shown that the extent to which women have access to and control over productive resources, time, knowledge and social support networks largely determine their own nutritional status and the kind of care they provide for their children and for the rest of the HHs. The nutritional status of a woman before and during pregnancy has a direct impact on the development and nutritional status of her baby. In order to address child undernutrition fully, the SONGO project will therefore employ nutrition-specific as well as nutrition-sensitive interventions through a lifecycle approach to deliver the right services and messages to the right person at the right time. The implementation will incorporate a Social and Behavior Change (SBC) strategy, using multiple approaches, ranging from interpersonal communication (such as counseling by health workers) to mass media (such as radio campaigns).

1. **WORKING AREA AND TARGET GROUPS:**

SONGO project is implemented in 18 unions of 6 UPZs in Kurigram and Gaibandha district under Rangpur division with direct beneficiaries of 147,000 households particularly women and children. The approach is based on proven and evolving experiences taking into account the importance of pre-conditions to address e.g. dimensions of availability and access to food as well as the required synergy between interventions and actors at various levels. Interventions will focus on mobilizing and coaching target groups as well as local public, private and development actors to collectively take the necessary actions towards improved nutrition.

Kurigram district:

* Char Rajibpur Upazila: Char Rajibpur and Mohanganj Unions
* Chilmari Upazila: Chilmari and Ramna Unions
* Rowmari Upazila: Bandaber, Dantbhanga and Jadur Char Unions

Gaibandha district:

* Gaibandha Shadar Upazila: Ghagoa ,Gidari and Kamarjani Unions
* Fulchari Upazila: Fulchhari,Udakhali and Kanchi Para Unions
* Sundarganj Upazila: Belka, Chandipur, Haripur, Sreepur and Tarapur Unions

1. **PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTANCY:**

The mid-term evaluation will cover 30 months (September 2018 to March 2021). This mid-term evaluation will focus on this implementation period. The midterm evaluations are forward looking and will capture effectively lessons learnt and provide information on the nature, extent and where possible, the potential impact and sustainability of the SONGO project. The evaluations will assess the programmes’ design, scope, implementation status and the capacity to achieve the expected outcomes. They will collate and analyze lessons learnt, challenges faced and best practices obtained during the implementation period which will inform the rest of the implementation (April 2021 - August 2023) period. The emphasis on lessons learned speaks to the issue of understanding what has and what has not worked as a guide for future planning. The evaluations will assess the performance of the programmes against planned results.

## SCOPE AND FOCUS OF THE MID TERM EVALUATION

**4.1 Scope**

The SONGO project midterm evaluations will assess the effectiveness of the implementation strategy. It will also look at issues of coordination, consortium arrangements, institutional strengthening, beneficiary participation, replication and sustainability of the programme. The evaluation will include review of the project design, and assumptions made at the beginning of the project development process. It will assess whether the project results are on track; capacities built, and cross cutting issues of gender and human rights have been addressed. It will also assess whether the project implementation strategy has been optimum and recommend areas for improvement and learning. The mid-term evaluation will also assess the synergy with other projects implemented in the same area of local nutrition governance and suggest ways of creating more synergy. The linkage of results to the overall SONGO logframe will be analyzed including the relevance of the indicators set.

**4.2 The Evaluation Questions**

The following key questions will guide the mid-term project evaluations:

**i. Relevance** – ( The design and focus of the project)

* To what extent are the stated outcomes and outputs for the SONGO Project on track?
* To what extent have the SONGO results so far contributed to the results in the area of Governance and Foundational issues related to malnutrition?
* What factors have contributed to achieving or hindering achievement of the intended outputs and outcomes?
* Was the strategy adopted and inputs identified, realistic, appropriate and adequate for achievement of the results?
* Has the partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?

**ii).Effectiveness**- (The management processes and their appropriateness in supporting delivery)

* Are the project management strategies for both the project effective in delivering desired/planned results?
* Is there a suitable M&E framework to monitor and support the implementation of the targeted results?
* Are the programmes effective in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries, and what results can we show?

**iii). Efficiency** – (Of Project Implementation)

* Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs? Did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred? Were the resources effectively utilized?
* What factors are contributing to implementation efficiency?
* Do projects’ activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors?
* How is the project management structure operating?
* How efficient are the management and accountability structures of the project?
* How did the project financial management processes and procedures affect project implementation?
* What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project implementation process?

**iv). Sustainability**

* To what extent are the benefits of the programmes likely to be sustained after the completion of the project interventions?
* What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of the project outcomes and benefits after completion of SONGO?
* How effective are the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project including contributing factors and constraints?
* Are the plans to support beneficiaries in the coming period likely to contribute to the sustainability component?
* What are the key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects of sustainability of the Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach?
* Describe the main lessons that have emerged. - What are the recommendations for similar support in future?

## METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION:

The study should be conducted using mixed methods and gather information from both primary and secondary sources including drawing on successes from similar initiatives and contexts around the country. The consultant(s) will be required to design a detailed methodology, tools and work plan in close consultation with the SONGO team.

We ask the *following requirements* are observed in the submission of proposals for consideration:

* Quantitative Assessment: Proposal and Work Plan should take into account a minimum of 15 core health, nutrition, WASH, food security indicators (each multi-question), basic demographic/household profiling. Proposals should consider application of FANTA/WHO/BBS methodologies, and observation of basic nutrition observations (e.g. stunting, exclusive breastfeeding, equitable food distribution, dietary diversity etc.) observed to appropriate quality standards. A minimum list of specific indicators for consideration is given below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SL** | **Specific Indicators** |
| 1 | Minimum Dietary Diversity (Women, Children), Incl. MDDW5, MDDC4 |
| 2 | Proportion (%) of infants aged 0-6 months fed exclusively with breast milk |
| 3 | Households practicing equitable food distribution  (among all households members- consumption of 3 types of food: heat and energy producing; recovery and growth; immunity enhancing) |
| 4 | Households using ORT and ZINC to treat diarrhea in Children-Under-5 |
| 5 | Incidence of Children-Under-5 suffering from diarrhea |
| 6 | Households performing safe handwashing practices with soap (after defecation, before child feeding, before cooking minimum.) |
| 7 | Households that are food secure (HFIAS) |
| 8 | # Months of adequate household food provisioning (MAHFP) |
| 9 | Poverty status of households (Lower/Upper HIES lines and PPI) |
| 10 | Union Parishads that have access to and use up to date available nutrition data |
| 11 | Prevalence of Stunting among Children-Under-5 |
| 12 | Community people are satisfied with the availability and delivery of health services |

In addition to the above, the quantitative assessment should make a plan to collect a variety of insightful indicators/insights into the project themes of 1) Gender and empowerment, 2) Adolescent Health and Nutrition, 3) WASH Facilities sanitation and behaviour knowledge, 4) Income sources/dependence and livelihoods, 5) Agriculture practices - Climate Smart Agriculture and Good Agricultural Practices, 6) Governance Awareness and engagement, 7) Nutrition Service Provision and utilisation.

* The Consultancy team should explore a methodology/approach to obtain an area-estimate for *low-birth weight* incidence. This may or may not be a part of the quantitative methodology
* Aim to sample a minimum of **1000** households with at least one Child-Under-5 residing. The approach should be pseudo-random, according to this requirement with all 6 Upazilas visited. However:
  + Of this, at least **350** households should be surveyed with at least 1 Child under 6 months of age
  + at least **400** households should be surveyed with at least 1 Child between 6-23 months of age
* Mobile Data Collection tools used for quantitative assessments, with incoming submissions accessible by SONGO PMEL team nightly. Tools could include (but are not limited to) CommCare, Kobo, ODK, SurveyCTO platforms. Paper based Collection Methodologies for quantitative collection ***will not be considered***.
* Qualitative Analytical frameworks should be clear to indicate how findings from qualitative tools (minimum FGDs and KIIs - others also desirable) will be analysed and findings organised. Indicative framework examples must be included in the proposal.
  + Qualitative assessments should take into consideration the consultation/inclusion of a range of Nutrition Specific and Sensitive stakeholders from the SONGO working area, especially who are relevant at the Union and Upazila levels, with consideration of key actors at the District level (especially line-dept. officials). Key beneficiary groups should be consulted also.
  + Public, Private, Governance actors (Nutrition specific and sensitive) and Civil Society sectors and groups should be covered.
  + Governance committees organizational skill, capacity/capability, visibility and achievements (Nutrition related; e.g. UNCCs, UDCCs, WATSAN committee, certain UP Standing committees etc.)

## DELIVERABLES:

* The chosen consultant should submit an inception report after reviewing the project documents and communication with SONGO team;
* A detailed work plan and methodologies which can be adjusted after sharing with SONGO team;
* Interview schedule/questionnaire for household data collection and FGD,KIIs which will be revised by SONGO team before applying for data collection;
* The final report of the assessment with potential recommendations both soft and hard copy;
* The copies of all resource materials used (including data, interview transcripts etc) should be submitted in Soft Copy upon completion of the assignment.
* Furthermore, three full printed hard copies of the final report will be required to be submitted to ICCO upon completion of the consultancy.

1. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONSULTANT (not limited to):**

* The consultant will be required to supply the expected deliverables including inception report, work plan, data collection tools, draft and final assessment report etc..
* Consult with SONGO PMEL and Operation Team before finalization of survey methodologies as well as working-strategies to conduct assessment at field level.
* Arrange report sharing meetings with SONGO staff, and ICCO country office staff in order to incorporate reviewed feedback in the final report.
* Submit the final report of the assessment to ICCO management for final approval accompanied by a soft copy of the report and all primary databases.
* Should comply with ICCO code of conduct for consultancy work.

1. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF ICCO (not limited to):**

* Provide information about the SONGO working area, community, beneficiary, stakeholders, market intermediaries, and others if needed.
* Upon request from consultant(s), facilitate meetings/interviews/discussions with key local stakeholders.
* Receive all the above-mentioned deliverables from the consultant(s) with checking quality.
* Keep close connection with consultant(s)

1. **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE OF CONSULTANT (S):**

***The Lead consultant*** proposed will be the primary communication and focal point of the study and should have the following qualifications:

* An advanced degree in Nutrition Science /development studies/social sciences/Agriculture/ Management/ Economics or other relevant disciplines from any reputed university;
* At least 5 years experience in leading/ conducting similar types of assignments in home and/abroad.
* Having in-depth knowledge and understanding about basic nutrition, food habits/consumption behaviour of rural people especially hard to reach areas.
* Experience in different survey methodologies for qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.
* Should have excellent english writing and presentation skills
* Ability to work under pressure and to deliver in a timely manner without compromising quality standards

***The Consult’s team*** must include:

* Experts in Qualitative Research Methodologies and Analytical Frameworks
* Demonstrated understanding (prior research experience preferable) in themes of governance, WASH, nutrition, gender, WASH, livelihoods and agriculture.
* Knowledge of sustainability approaches and strategies
* Clear Statistical Analysis abilities, using one of STATA, SPSS or R software
* Demonstrated experience in Mobile data collection methodologies

1. **TENTATIVE TIME FRAME:**

This consultancy is expected to be completed within 120 **Calendar days**. The following table provides an indicative timeframe that ICCO expects final completion of each step. Consultants are expected to plan according to this timeline and it is to their discretion to submit drafts of the deliverables early enough to ensure appropriate time for feedback and finalisation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SL** | **Key Items** | **Indicative Date of Completion** |
| 1 | Onboarding | ***31st March 2021*** |
| 2 | Pre-Study preparation:   * plan adjustment, measurement plan, approved study tools, analytical framework | ***20th April 2021*** |
| 3 | Report-Skeleton Finalisation | ***5th May 2021*** |
| 4 | Primary Quantitative data collection training, completion, quality checks and submission of final dataset | ***10th May 2021*** |
| 5 | Primary Qualitative data collection completion, quality checks, transcribing of findings | ***4th June 2021*** |
| 6 | Data Tables Submission for review | ***4th June 2021*** |
| 7 | 1st Draft of Mid-term Evaluation Report submitted | ***22nd June 2021*** |
| 8 | Feedback Incorporated by consultants and Revised Report draft submission | ***9th July 2021*** |
| 9 | **Final Submission** Finalisation of All aspects of Submission and Deliverables | ***18th July 2021*** |

Any deviation from this timeline will require prior notice of no less than 14 days before the indicated dates given. Consultant Applicants must be very careful to respect the **final submission date** as indicated in the table above.

1. **SELECTION PROCESS**:

The proposal evaluation team will scrutinize all the submitted proposals and make a shortlist based on the evaluation criteria. Among the shortlisted proposals, the proposal evaluation team will select two/three potential consultancy firms/consultant(s) and sit with them to know how they (consultant) will execute the assignment through presentation. After that the best performing consulting firm/Consultant will be notified for awarding.

1. **PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS:**

The evaluation of the consultant will be based on the Combined Scoring method – where the methodology, qualification and experiences is given 80% weightage and financial offer will be given 20% weightage. Only consultants meeting a minimum of 70% of total points under technical evaluation would be considered for the financial evaluation. Following specific criteria would be assessed

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SL** | **Scoring criteria** | **Marks** |
|  | **Technical proposal** | **(80)** |
|  | Quality Quality of Midline design and methodology (including sampling, data collection process, techniques and tools, quality control mechanisms to be used) | 35 |
|  | Organizational profile/consultants team profile (team composition and expertise of the technical team, division of roles.) | 15 |
|  | Work Plan and Clear breakdown of tasks according to timeline | 10 |
|  | Experience of similar types of work, reporting evidence etc. | 20 |
|  | **Financial proposal** (Proposed amount and justification, logical and detailed breakdown of budget) | **(20)** |

1. **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL**

Interested consultant(s)/consulting firms must submit the following documents for appraisal. Proposers who do not submit the below mentioned documents will not be considered for further evaluation.

The proposal should include:

* Updated CV of Consultant(s) with highlighting similar achievements
* Introduction letter including a brief overview of the assignment
* Technical proposal (understanding, methodologies, work plan, quality control etc.)
* Financial proposal with detailed itemized budget (honorarium, travel, enumeration cost etc.)
* Any report of midterm evaluation of any Nutrition and governance project that review team can make good realization about the competency of the consultant for evaluating the proposal.
* Submit the photocopy of updated trade license, Income tax, VAT, organization profile (for firm only).

Prospective consultants should submit a written proposal (Technical and Financial) **soft copy** duly signed by the authority to: [procurement.bd@icco.nl](mailto:procurement.bd@icco.nl)

Any queries about the consultancy should be addressed to Md. Shariful Islam, M: +8801777743289 at [s.islam@icco.nl](mailto:s.islam@icco.nl) or Pratik Patel, [p.patel@ico.nl](mailto:p.patel@ico.nl)

***\*\*ICCO Cooperation holds the authority to cancel the process and/or the work order without any compensation if the deliverables do not match the contract***

**Deadline: 20 March 2021**