**Terms of Reference (ToR): Hiring a consultant for a study titled “Gender Equality & Inclusion – Self Assessment”**

**1. About Plan International**

Founded over 85 years ago, Plan International is one of the oldest and largest children's development and humanitarian organizations in the world. Plan International plays an important role in mobilizing children, communities, and civil society organizations to claim the rights of children, especially girls and achieve agreed-upon local development priorities, towards a commitment to ensuring the well-being of children in support of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Plan International works in fifty-two developing countries across Africa, Asia and South America, and twenty-one countries raise funds to support these efforts.

**1.1 About Plan International Bangladesh**

Plan’s vision is of a world in which all children realize their full potential in societies that respect people’s rights and dignity, with high-quality programs that deliver long-lasting benefits. Children are at the heart of everything we do.

Plan International has been operating in Bangladesh since 1993. Plan International Bangladesh’s Country Strategy (2020-2030) is designed to empower adolescent girls and young women, to be heard, to live without fear of violence and to achieve their rights. In doing so, Plan international Bangladesh (PIB) will:

* empower children and young people as drivers of systemic change to gender norms and power relationships;
* promote an enabling environment for girls and young women to realize their sexual and reproductive health and rights and to live free from violence;
* raise public and private sector support for young women to access decent work opportunities in the twenty-first century labour market and have control over resources.

Plan International Bangladesh (PIB) has the country office in Dhaka, from where we are operating projects in Dhaka, Rangpur, Barisal and Chittagong divisions. Since 2017, we have a strong presence at Cox’s Bazar district under Chittagong division. Along with our main office at Cox’s Bazar, we have another field office at Ukhiya. By following the global mandate on emergency response and Disaster Preparedness Process (DPP) 4[[1]](#footnote-1), PIB supports both the Rohingya and host communities through humanitarian projects that provide lifesaving and resilience building assistance, while incorporating disaster risk management in its development work, to ensure protection of the most vulnerable groups, such as children, girls and young women, from the harmful impacts of conflicts, disasters and climate change. PIB also is attempting to strengthen its position within the climate resilience sphere, through a climate resilience model to contribute towards a long-term program that will provide durable solutions for girls, young women and youth in climate impacted areas, with a specific focus on their resilience and adaptive capacity building to the effects of climate change. Through this initiative, PIB will also be a host to the global climate hub which will support the implementation of the model.

**2. Background of the Study**

Gender equality and inclusion are central to make the world a better place for all children both girls and boys to grow and live with dignity. Plan International is a leading organization which dedicates to promoting the rights of girls and striving for gender equality by reflecting its organizational culture, working methods, and relationships with stakeholders and duty bearers.

Therefore, it is imperative to undertake a study on Gender Equality and Inclusion Self-Assessment (GEISA). GEISA participatory reflection encourages staff to ‘take stock’ of all their work, to see how far their work promote gender equality and inclusion. Reviewing and reflecting on the quality and relevance of Plan’s current work allowed staff to understand what was working well, where the gaps were, and to decide on clear actions to improve the quality of work in the future.

The Gender Equality and Inclusion Self-Assessment (GEISA) is intended to help Plan International Bangladesh in comprehending the existing situation and what needs to change, establish clarity on what is to be achieved and how, using a gender and inclusion lens. Plan International Bangladesh has planned to carry out a participatory self-assessment called GEISA, driven by organization's strong ambition to adopt a gender transformative approach.

**3. Details of this Assignment**

**3.1 Specific Objectives of the Study**

The study has the following **objectives**:

1. To undertake a learning and review process on gender equality and inclusion across all Plan’s work, both internal and external.
2. To learn and identify the strengths and challenges of Plan’s gender and inclusion work in order to determine concrete steps for making improvements in Plan’s work on gender equality and inclusion.

Internal Focus of a GEISA: This involves looking at the way Plan International’s structures, policies and procedures promote gender equality and inclusion within our offices and enable staff to achieve the commitments outlined in Plan’s Global Policy on Gender Equality and Inclusion.

This includes analysing:

* Our organizational culture and how it affects the diverse groups of people who work in Plan International.
* Accountability and transparency for addressing gender inequality and exclusion issues in the organization.
* Staff terms and work conditions (such as maternity and paternity leave, work/life balance, and sexual harassment at work).
* Staff training and learning support to strengthen the quality of work on gender equality and inclusion.
* Staffing structures and processes including equal opportunities for professional growth and promotion.
* The extent to which Plan’s programmes and influencing work is gender transformative and inclusive.
* Allocation of adequate budgets and resources for gender equality and inclusion.
* Research, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management for gender equality and inclusion work.
* The extent to which Plan’s internal and external communications reflect our commitment to gender equality and inclusion.

**3.2 Key Questions of the Study**

Although the objectives of the study are defined above, PIB seeks answers to the following key questions. However, this list is not exhaustive. The Consultant/Firm is expected to expand upon these questions and provide additional key inquiries, detailing them in the data collection tools as appropriate.

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| --- | --- |
| **Theme/Area** | **Key Questions** |
| **Strengths of offices and staff of Plan’s gender and social inclusion work** | **Workforce Composition**   1. What is your existing staff data telling you about your workforce composition? 2. Is there gender parity in staff across the organization? 3. What is the percentage of female staff across different departments and grades? 4. What is the percentage of senior management staff who are women? 5. What is the total staff break down for different demographic factors?   **Informal Culture**   1. How does the office value diverse women? Do women feel heard and involved in key decisions? 2. What is the informal interaction like in the office? 3. Is there a culture of support and encouragement that enable diverse groups of women and men – especially those with children - to work well in the organisation? If not where do the main barriers lie? 4. Are there employee networks/forums set up for under-represented group of people? If yes, which groups? 5. Does the office actively promote inclusion and respect for diversity for all staff? How? How well do the leaders in the office role model Plan’s values and behaviours? 6. Do staff understand how to live the values and behaviours and translate them into their daily work? How do you know?   **Formal Culture – integration into policies and processes**   1. Are the different HR policies and procedures responsive to the different   needs of diverse women and men?   1. What are the gender differences and issues around e.g. recruitment, staff turnover, training, promotion, and terms and conditions (including family friendly policies such as maternity and paternity leave, flexi-time, security and travel when pregnant or with small children)? 2. How do you ensure parity for other social identities such as race class, ethnicity etc? 3. How is sexual harassment, bullying or discrimination dealt with in the 25 workplaces? Are there policies in place to specifically deal with this issue? 4. How well has the global policy on gender and inclusion been socialized with staff? 5. Are staff aware of these policies? How do you know? 6. How do you create safe spaces for staff to raise concerns regarding harassment, bullying or discrimination and other wellbeing issues? 7. How well has the values-based leadership framework been embedded in the office? What is still left to do?   **Capacity building / Learning**   1. Do staff performance objectives include gender equality or inclusion competencies? Are these parts of some staff objectives and not others? 2. What about senior management? 3. What training do staff receive on gender equality and inclusion? Is it sufficient? If not why? What changes are being seen as a result of staff training on gender equality or inclusion? 4. Are there internal gender equality or inclusion champions or advocates who promote gender equality and inclusion and support staff learning? 5. Do job descriptions include gender equality or inclusion competencies? 6. Are these parts of some job descriptions and not others?   **Resources**   1. Who is responsible for work on gender equality and inclusion? Do they have enough seniority to influence decisions on resources? 2. Is gender equality and inclusion work budgeted for every year? How much is spent on gender equality and inclusion work either separately or together?     **Monitoring and Evaluation**   1. How do you measure progress in the workplace? 2. How is work on gender equality and inclusion reported and monitored? |
| **Programme & Influencing** | 1. What percentage of programmes are gender aware and what percent are inclusive and gender transformative? 2. Is gender equality and inclusion analysis consistently being done during programme design? 3. Is there sex and age disaggregated data about the numbers of girls and boys, women and men involved in each programme? Is data disaggregated by age and another factor, like disability, language, and ethnicity? 4. Are the different needs of diverse girls and boys (or women and men) recognized and understood? What about the different needs within groups of girls and boys? Are their different needs addressed in the programmes? 5. Do programmes consistently identify outcomes related to gender equality and inclusion? Are Programmes tackling the root causes of gender inequality and exclusion (social norms, cultural beliefs, values)? 6. What is done to address discrimination (i.e. their exclusion and lack of power) against girls and women? Are programmes aiming to transform gender relations and exclusion? 7. Is the programme work focused more on improving the daily conditions, or the social position of girls and women (meaning how they are valued in society)? 8. How are boys and men being involved in gender equality and inclusion programme work? How does Plan work with ‘difficult’ gender issues, e.g. resistance from men or women, or social norms that lead to gender discrimination? 9. Do staff have the knowledge and skills for integrating gender equality and inclusion within programme work? What do they find most challenging? What are the examples of success? 10. To what extent is your influencing work tackling, and communicating about, inequality and exclusion and the need to promote changes in power relations? 11. What has been done about girls and their specific gender issues in your campaigns? What issues have you campaigned on? 12. What do you lobby for in relation to women’s and girls’ rights across different sub-groups? 13. Do you include gender equality issues in your advocacy work on the CRC and CEDAW? Does your UPR or CRPD analysis reflect gender equality issues? 14. How have you integrated gender equality and inclusion issues into your office’s advocacy work that are not specific to BIAAG? |
| **Marketing and Communications** | 1. What kind of messages and images are used by Plan to present our work? Do these reflect Plan’s commitments to gender equality, inclusion and girls’ rights? 2. Is gender equality and inclusion being integrated into the communications to sponsors, sponsored children and their families? 3. Do staff know how to ensure their externally facing documents and presentations are gender transformative and consistent with Plan’s core purpose to strive for a just world and equality for girls? 4. Is the language gender sensitive, showing awareness of the differences in status, power, access, and choices between women and men and girls and boys and within groups of children? 5. Overall what is changing for different groups of women and girls as a result of this work, and how is this being communicated? |
| **Partnership** | 1. Who are your main partners? Do they share Plan’s commitments to   gender equality and inclusion?   1. Do the criteria for partner selection include a commitment to addressing gender inequality and exclusion? Is this a priority? 2. Do you choose partners on the basis of their diversity and sensitivity to issues of gender inequality, exclusion and marginalisation? 3. What training do you give partners on gender equality or inclusion? How do you work with them on issues of girls’ and children’s rights for diverse communities? 4. Do you work with other partners to influence groups – communities, local leaders, Government, donors - that do not see gender inequality and exclusion as key development issues? 5. Do you have partners that specialize on gender equality or inclusion? How many? To what extent is your office expanding the number of gender transformative partnerships? 6. Does this include national and local women’s organisations, academic institutions; organisations with specific expertise in gender equality and inclusion analysis; and organisations that work with boys and men for gender equality and inclusion? 7. Do you work with representative organizations? Such as indigenous women’s groups or disabled persons’ organizations? |

**3.3 Scope of the Study**

The study will cover the following geographic context and meet target groups/stakeholders:

* **Geographical Focus**: The geographical focus of this assignment will be different districts of Dhaka, Cox’s Bazar, Barishal, Bhola, Barguna, and Rangpur divisions. Exact districts to be selected upon discussion after onboarding the consultant/firm.
* **Target Groups**: The study participants (or, target groups) for this study includes the following:
* PIB & Partner staffs;
* Government and institutional stakeholders;
* Community and traditional leaders;
* Religious leaders (Imams, Hindu priests, Buddhist monks, Christian priests)
* Community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs working on child rights and gender issues;
* Direct Program participants.

**3.4 Intended Users of the Study & Key Stakeholders Involved**

The primary users of this evaluation study will be the country management team and staff of Plan International. The findings will inform a SWOT analysis, identify existing gaps, and contribute to the development of an action plan focused on enhancing gender diversity, inclusion, and protection.

**3.5 Key Deliverables of this Assignment**

The key deliverables for this assignment are listed below – the Consultant/Firm is expected to propose a timeline for each deliverable in their proposal.

1. An Inception report including the details work plan, details of the methodology and tools.
2. A draft and final report on the GEISA.
3. Complete data set
4. Presentation materials for the dissemination of GEISA report.
5. A summary of recommendations and Gender and Inclusion Action Plan.

**3.6 Key Activities in Summary**

* Develop tools, share them with PIB for validation, train the data enumerators, and conduct field testing before using them in the ground, ensuring the tools are context-appropriate, translated into the local language and aligned with study objectives.
* Conduct a field study in accordance with the agreed-upon methodology.
* Prepare and submit a draft report to PIB for review and feedback.
* Address the feedback provided by PIB and finalize the report, including an illustrated version (PIB will assist with proper branding).
* Prepare a final report and presentation for national-level sharing, which includes actionable recommendations for PIB and other stakeholders to integrate into future programmes.

**4. Methodology, Data, and Ethical Guidelines**

**4.1 Methodology**

The selected Consultant/Firm will be responsible for developing the final methodology in consultation with PIB and sharing it accordingly before commencing on-ground activities. In their proposal, the Consultant/Firm is expected to provide a detailed explanation of how they will execute the assignment in the field, including possible steps, personnel engagement, and any expectations from PIB regarding community mobilization or other requirements. PIB anticipates that the Consultant/Firm will apply a participatory, mixed-methods approach. The following are some pointers that the Consultant/Firm can consider:

* **Desk Review**: The consultant/firm will review existing literature, policies, and secondary data aligned with the objectives and key questions of the study.
* **Quantitative Surveys**: The consultant/firm may choose to conduct quantitative surveys aligned with the objectives and key questions of the study.
* **Qualitative Tools**: In addition to focus group discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), innovative participatory methods such as participatory learning and action (PLA) can be used to engage diverse stakeholders, with a focus on integrating local knowledge and developing context-specific, sustainable solutions.
* **Stakeholder Consultations**: Conduct workshops and interviews with key stakeholders for validation and additional insights.
* **Digital Tools:** Digital tools will be used as appropriate.

Note: The consultant is also expected to suggest the most suitable methodology in the proposal to achieve the objectives of this assignment.

**4.2 Data Quality Assurance and Limitations**

The consultant/firm should indicate in their proposal a quality assurance plan that sets out the systems and processes for ensuring the quality of all key deliverables from the start to end of this consultancy. This should include the proposed approaches to:

* Piloting of all tools in non-selected communities.
* Training of enumerators, field supervisors, interviewers, and data entry teams including in safeguarding and research ethics.
* Logistic and management planning of the study.
* Field work protocols and data verification, including back-checking and quality control by supervisors.
* Data cleaning and editing before analysis

**4.3 Ethics**

Plan International is committed to ensuring that the rights of those participating in data collection or analysis are respected and protected, in accordance with the *Ethical MERL Framework* and our *Global Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People*. These documents can be found in the Annexes.

Appropriate, safe, non-discriminatory participation of all stakeholders will be ensured, and special attention will be paid to the needs of children and other vulnerable groups. The data collection methods will uphold the dignity, safety, privacy, and sensitivities for the girls and young women that they interact with. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be guaranteed as these personal identifiable data will not be published anywhere and will only be used to ensure data quality by persons who have received safeguarding and ethical standards orientation.

**5. Timeframe of this Assignment**

The total consultancy is expected to be completed within 60 calendar days, including the production of final deliverables. The consultant/firm is required to develop a draft work plan, which will be discussed and agreed upon. The timeline will commence from the date of signing the contract.

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| **Particulars** | **Timeline** | **Responsible** |
| Submit inception report and draft tools | 7 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Review inception report and draft tools | 5 days | Plan |
| Address feedback and finalize inception report and tools | 3 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Train Data enumerators including a session on safeguarding | 3 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Field test and adjust the tools based on findings | 3 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Fieldwork, data cleaning, and analysis | 20 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Submit 1st draft report along with all relevant data and materials | 6 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Review 1st draft report | 4 days | Plan |
| Submit 2nd draft report addressing feedback | 3 days | Consultant/Firm |
| Review 2nd draft report | 3 days | Plan |
| Submit final report along with study brief and presentation | 3 days | Consultant/Firm |

**6. Supervision and Management of Assignment**

The consultant/firm will work under the management of the Advisor – Gender, Diversity, Inclusion, and Protection (GDIP) of PIB. Additionally, the designated member(s) from the Programme Quality and Innovation (PQI) team will also provide their technical support to the consultant/firm as appropriate for this assignment. The consultant/firm will be directly accountable to the PIB focal person(s), and will keep the focal person(s) continually informed on the progress of the assignment updates via email and other forms of communication.

**7. Expected Competencies of Consultant/Firm**

To ensure the successful execution of this scoping study, Plan International Bangladesh invites qualified and experienced professionals to contribute to the interdisciplinary nature of the research. Proposals may be submitted by individuals or firms. Bidders are required to submit the CVs (maximum of 4 pages each) of all experts, accompanied by a brief summary for each in the designated section of the proposal:

The selected consultant/firm should possess the following qualifications, expertise, and competencies to successfully conduct this study:

**1. Technical Expertise & Research Experience**

* Experience in undertaking a gender and inclusion assessment in Plan or another NGO.
* Experience of working in or with an organisation focusing on girls’ rights, gender equality and/or applying feminist principles.
* Strong facilitation skills and hands-on experience of working in participatory ways with staff groups, partners and communities.
* Strong gender and inclusion analytical skills and knowledge/experience of different gender and inclusion tools.
* The ability to select the best approach/methodology for different groups and audiences.
* Openness to listen, learn and accurately record the GEISA findings.
* Good report-writing skills are essential, together with the ability of writing in a clear, concise ways.
* An ability to negotiate challenging findings from the GEISA with staff and senior management team
* Experience with rights-based programme approaches.
* An understanding of the linkages between children’s rights, gender equality and inclusion.

**2. Research Methodology & Analytical Skills**

* Demonstrated ability to design and implement mixed-methods research (qualitative and quantitative), ensuring methodological rigor.
* Experience in developing research tools, including structured and semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interview guides, and participatory tools for engaging adolescents.
* Advanced skills in qualitative data analysis (thematic coding, narrative analysis) and quantitative data processing using statistical software (e.g., SPSS, Stata, R).
* Proven ability to ensure ethical research compliance, including obtaining informed consent, safeguarding minors, and applying do-no-harm principles.

**3. Experience in Working with Diverse Stakeholders**

* Experience in engaging with government entities, local government officials, law enforcement agencies, and community-based structures (such as CMPCs).
* Strong track record in conducting research with adolescents, young men, and survivors of child marriage, ensuring gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches.
* Ability to work collaboratively with NGOs, civil society organizations, and development partners focused on child protection and adolescent well-being.

**4. Communication & Reporting Skills**

* Strong analytical and writing skills, with the ability to synthesize findings into clear, action-oriented reports and policy briefs.
* Ability to present research findings through data visualization, storytelling approaches, and evidence-based advocacy.
* Experience in facilitating stakeholder validation workshops and disseminating research insights effectively.

**Data Enumerators**:

The consultant/firm may recruit data enumerators as per their plan and include the associated costs in their proposed budget.

**8. Application Process**

The technical and financial proposals with along with the CVs of the lead consultant and other expertise (as applicable) with 03 relevant work samples, and three references (including one from an INGO) should be submitted electronically to the email address: [Planbd.consultant.hiring@plan-international.org](mailto:Planbd.consultant.hiring@plan-international.org) with the title “**Proposals for Gender Equality & Inclusion – Self Assessment”** as subject line**.**

Proposal submitted to any other email account except this and in hard copy will be treated as disqualified.

Submissions after the deadline **15 April, 2025** will be treated as disqualified. The proposals should be submitted in pdf format.

**Preparation of proposal:** The proposal should be divided into **two parts**: i) technical; and ii) financial and submitted in two **separate** folders.

**i) Outline of the technical proposal:** The technical part of the proposal should not exceed **15 pages** and **MUST** include the following elements:

* A detailed methodology and timeframe, including dates for the submission of the inception report, final deliverables, and a detailed working schedule.
* A summary of experience in conducting similar projects.
* CVs of the Team Leader and key team members who will be directly involved in this study, highlighting relevant experience to carry out the scoping study as annexure.
* The proposal should also include a summary of the technical experts and Team Leader’s experience and outline how it aligns with the scope of work.

The proposal **should not** contain any publicity materials or brochures about the bidder. To maintain consistency in the proposal, bidders are instructed to follow the structure below:

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| --- | --- |
| **Chapter** | **Page Limit (max.)** |
| Introduction | 1 page |
| Purpose and objectives | 2 pages |
| The technical aspect of the proposal, methodology, analytical framework, and work plan | 9 pages |
| Proposed team, consultant/firm’s summary of experience | 3 pages |
| **In total** | **15 pages** |
| *\*Exceeding the page limit may result in disadvantage in terms of assessing the proposals* | |

**ii) Outline of the financial proposal:** Interested bidders have to submit their financial proposal along with the technical proposal as specified above. The financial proposal should be inclusive of all VAT and taxes as per the policy of the Government of Bangladesh, which will be deducted at source before payment. Expenses not specified in the financial proposal or not mentioned in any section of the agreement shall be the sole responsibility of the Consultant/Firm. If any data is found to be unacceptable, field visits should be conducted to rectify any errors.

Other notes for the financial proposal are as follows:

* The proposed price will be considered a single package fee for the entire service and deliverables. The agreed price will be paid to BDT directly by the PIB office.
* The consultant/firm shall be solely responsible for the insurance (health, travel, etc.) of themselves and their team members.
* Compliance with local laws regarding taxes/VAT is the sole responsibility of the consultant/firm and must be reflected in the financial proposal.
* All pages of the financial proposal should be signed by the respective representative of the bidder organization. In case of submission via email, the consultant/firm must ensure that the document is signed, scanned, and sent.
* All costs should be inclusive of VAT and taxes.
* The financial proposal must include a copy of the VAT registration certificate (for consulting firms) and a copy of a valid TIN certificate.

For any clarification, please contact Mr. Enamul Haque, Supply and Procurement Specialist, Plan International Bangladesh, Email: [Enamul.Haque@plan-international.org](mailto:Enamul.Haque@plan-international.org)

**9. Payment Schedule**

The payment for this assignment will be made in 3 (three) instalments, following the below schedule-

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| **Instalments** | **Percentage** | **Timeline** |
| First instalment | 30 | After receiving the inception report with detailed methodology and other contents. |
| Second instalment | 30 | After receiving the first draft report and completion of the district-level workshops |
| Third instalment | 40 | After the acceptance of final report and other related contents |

Payment will be disbursed upon the approval of the Advisor-GDIP of PIB. Until and unless there is consensus on the materials agreed by both parties, PIB will not pay for the quoted and agreed price.

**10. Parameters for Selection**

The following table outlines the selection criteria-

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| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Score** |
| Relevant competency of team leader and team composition | 35 |
| Appropriate methodology to address study objectives | 40 |
| Amount of budget and justification | 25 |

**11. Bindings**

All documents, contents, photos, papers and data produced during the assignment are to be treated as Plan International Bangladesh’s property and restricted for public use.

**12. Annexes**

Annex 1: Plan International Global Policy Safeguarding



Annex 2: Ethical MERL Framework  


Annex 3: Plan International Global PSHEA Policy



Annex 4: Plan International Global Policy on Gender Equality and Inclusion



Annex 5: Plan International Conflicts of Interest Policy



Annex 6: Plan International Global Anti-Fraud Policy



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1. Disaster Preparedness Plan (DPP) 4, Plan International Bangladesh, 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)