**Terms of Reference (ToR)**

Documenting Learning from the Bangla LED Model: Process, Stakeholder engagement and Sustainability Outcomes

1. **Introduction**

PRABRIDDHI is a Local Economic Development (LED) project, funded by the Governments of Bangladesh and Switzerland, co-implemented by the Local Government Division (LGD) and Swisscontact. The current phase of the project (September 2020 – August 2025) focuses on further developing the LED approach in participating municipalities of Bangladesh, capacity building of stakeholders and facilitators of LED and anchoring of the approach on national level. The project is being implemented in seven municipalities - **Shibganj, Jashore, Bogura,** **Bhairab, Dinajpur, Kushtia and Cox’s Bazar** respectively**.**

1. **Background and Project Overview**

The PRABRIDDHI project aims to create an improved Business Enabling Environment and support inclusive services for key actors by the municipalities and other providers. A “territorial change management initiative” will be induced to foster Local Economic Development. The project supports the municipalities and local businesses to create a common platform and processes for identifying the key blockages for business growth which impacts wealth and employment generation. At this moment, multiple projects, and investments (financed by the government of Bangladesh as well as development partners) are focusing on the evolvement of municipalities and to upgrade the infrastructure at municipal level. PRABRIDDHI complements these investments by utilising human and financial resources to enhance the competitiveness of municipalities and induce business growth. It also supports private companies through partnerships to reduce the risks associated in piloting new business strategies that create economic opportunities for women, men, and marginalised groups. The project also encourages businesses to adopt green practices and develop sustainable business models, which in turn stimulates economic growth while safeguarding the environment.

An integral component of the PRABRIDDHI project's strategy is the implementation of the Bangla LED model. This model emphasizes participatory planning, bottom-up development, and public-private collaboration, aiming to create a competitive advantage for local enterprises and enhance communities' economic and social well-being within the target municipalities. The Bangla LED Model aims to foster sustainable economic growth, leveraging local resources and engaging community stakeholders in development.

The PRABRIDDHI project is entering its final phase, with implementation concluding in December 2025. As the project draws to an end, it is essential to document its key achievements, insights, and effects at the municipal level. Such documentation will help ensure:

* **Sustainability:** Identification of mechanisms that can be maintained by local stakeholders beyond the project’s lifespan.
* **Scalability:** Identification of mechanisms that can be scaled up by relevant stakeholders organically and beyond the project’s lifespan.
* **Cohesion and Legacy:** Understanding how various interventions have reinforced one another and contributed to a durable “Local Economic Development” (LED) model.
* **Policy Influence and Replication:** Confirmation of results and attribution evidence that can inform policy decisions and encourage replication of the Bangla LED approach in other secondary cities.

To advance its strategic objectives, PRABRIDDHI intends to commission a qualified firm to conduct a process-level learning assessment across all partner municipalities, focusing on the implementation of the Bangla Local Economic Development (LED) model. This assessment is designed to generate structured learning on how the LED process has evolved over time and how it has contributed to enhancing local economic competitiveness.

The primary objective is to analyze the processes through which the LED model has been operationalized—capturing the learning on how programmatic interventions have shaped municipal decision-making, strengthened public-private collaboration, and opened new avenues for local stakeholders to drive sustainable development. Additionally, this assessment will particularly emphasize learning derived from implementation experiences, enabling a better understanding of the enabling and constraining factors encountered throughout the LED journey.

1. **Scope of Work**

This assessment is designed to surface practical insights from PRABRIDDHI’s Bangla Local Economic Development (LED) rollout across partner municipalities. The study will focus on three core areas:

**1. Process Review of the Bangla LED Model**
The assessment will examine each phase of the LED cycle—research and stakeholder consultation, awareness‑raising, Rapid Economic Appraisal (REA), quick‑win initiatives, and long‑term planning—to determine what worked, what didn’t, and why. To achieve this, the consultant agency will:

* **Conduct a desk review** of PRABRIDDHI program materials (project documents, intervention plans, logframes, reports, and studies) to trace the implementation journey and surface documented evidence.
* **Interview key stakeholders**—municipal partners, LGD representatives, private‑sector actors, and local entrepreneurs—to gather real‑world examples, capture emerging best practices, and identify scalable innovations.
* **Hold expert consultations** (Key Informant Interviews) with the LED project’s core technical team (Team Leader, Advisor, long‑term consultants, etc.) to deepen understanding of lessons learned and inform next steps.

**2. Knowledge Capture and Adaptation**
The assessment will document how each municipality adopted and adapted the Bangla LED process—highlighting enabling factors, encountered challenges, and context‑driven solutions. This “living” knowledge base will distill both immediate takeaways and longer‑term strategic insights, providing donors and practitioners with clear guidance on designing, replicating, and scaling LED initiatives.

**3. Targeted Recommendations**
Based on its findings, the consultant agency will provide forward-looking recommendations to strengthen the institutionalization of the LED process. These insights will also inform a roadmap for replicating the Bangla LED model in other secondary cities in Bangladesh and beyond**.**

Together, these three pillars will ensure the assessment delivers actionable learning and a clear path to more effective, sustainable local economic development.

1. **Duration of the Contract**

The duration of the assignment will be from **August 1 – 30 October 2025.**

1. **Geographic Location and Sector focused**

The assignments will be carried out in all Municipalities:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **District** | **Municipality** |
| Chapinawabganj | Shibganj  |
| Dinajpur | Dinajpur |
| Cox’s bazar | Cox’s bazar |
| Bogura | Bogura |
| Jashore  | Jashore  |
| Kushtia  | Kushtia  |
| Kishoreganj  | Bhairab |

1. **Major Tasks and deliverables**

| **Major Tasks** | **Key Deliverables** | **Brief Description of Deliverable** | **Measurable Indicators** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Inception and Planning** | **Inception Report** | A detailed plan outlining objectives, methodology, tools, timeline, and roles to guide the assessment. | Report submitted and approved by PRABRIDDHI | 1 Weeks  |
| **2. Desk Review and Tool Finalization** | **Assessment Tools** | Finalized tools, including KII guides, FGD checklists, questionnaires and consent forms to be used during fieldwork. | Set of tools submitted and approved | 1 Weeks  |
| **3. Field Data Collection** | **Fieldwork Summary Report** | A brief report summarizing field activities, locations visited, number and type of respondents, and initial insights or issues. | Field visits completed; report submitted with activity summary | 2 weeks |
| **4. Data Analysis and Interpretation** | **Draft Assessment Report** | Preliminary findings from field data analysis, including emerging themes, key changes observed, and draft recommendations. | Draft report submitted for review | 2 weeks  |
| **6. Final Reporting** | **Final Assessment Report** | Comprehensive, revised version of the report with final findings, case examples, and categorized recommendations (short, medium, long-term). | Final report approved by PRABRIDDHI | 2 Weeks  |
| **Summary Brief / Policy Note** | A concise 2–4 page document summarizing main findings and recommendations for external sharing and policy dialogue. | Summary note submitted and approved |
| **7. Closure and Handover** | **Final Package Submission** | Submission of all final deliverables in editable and PDF formats, including tools, datasets, reports.  | All materials submitted and acknowledged | October 27  |

1. **Reporting**

The selected firm will report to the Manager- MRM and Communications – PRABRIDDHI.

1. **Qualifications of the firm**

The selected firm must demonstrate the following qualifications and competencies:

* **Proven Track Record:** The team leader of the firm must have at least ten (10) years’ experience in areas such as governance, local economic development (LED), skills development, local government, municipal service delivery, and political economy analysis. Other core team members must have at least eight (8) years of experience in designing and conducting assessments, evaluations, or applied research studies. The prior experience of working with international development agencies or donor-funded projects will be considered an asset.
* **Expertise in Monitoring and Results Measurement (MRM):** Demonstrated technical capacity in developing evaluation frameworks, designing mixed-method research tools, and applying both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Familiarity with OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and participatory evaluation approaches will be highly valued.
* **Team Composition:** The firm must propose a qualified team with relevant academic background and practical experience in research, evaluation, and data analysis. At minimum, the team should include: a Team Leader/Lead Evaluator, Field Coordinator, Data Analysts, and a Report Writer. All team members should have prior experience working in development projects and must demonstrate the ability to deliver high-quality outputs under tight deadlines.
* **Local Context Understanding:** The team leader, field coordinator and analysts must have prior experience in working with municipal stakeholders, local government institutions, private sector and community-level actors in Bangladesh. The firm must demonstrate cultural sensitivity, contextual knowledge, understanding of municipal political economy and the ability to navigate fieldwork logistics in diverse urban settings.
* **Learning and Communication Orientation:** The firm should be able to distil complex data into actionable insights and clearly communicate findings to a non-technical audience, including project teams, government stakeholders, and donors. Experience in developing user-friendly reports and facilitating validation workshops will be considered a strong asset.
1. **Payment Schedule**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Percentage** | **Description** |
| 1. Upon Contract Signing
 | **30%** | Signing of the agreement and submission of Inception Report. |
| 1. Mid-Term Deliverables Submission
 | **30%** | Completion of the data collection, and submission of field report. |
| 1. Upon Completion of All Deliverables
 | **40%** | Successful submission of the final reports, Policy brief.  |

All payments will be made upon approval of the deliverables by the Manager- MRM and Communications, PRABRIDDHI.

1. **Proposal Submission Guidelines**

Interested data and research firms are invited to submit a comprehensive proposal that aligns with the Terms of Reference (ToR). The proposal must be prepared in English and include the following components:

* 1. **Technical Proposal**
* **Understanding of the Assignment:** A brief overview demonstrating the firm’s understanding of the objectives, scope, and intended outcomes of the assignment.
* **Methodology and Approach:** A detailed explanation of how the firm plans to execute the three components of the assignment: (1) Assessment Design and Strategy, (2) Data Collection and Evidence Gathering, (3) Data Analysis, Validation, and Reporting. This should include proposed strategies, data harvesting approach, collection plans in municipalities, and reporting structure.
* **Work Plan and Timeline:** A detailed, phase-wise work plan highlighting major activities, timelines, and responsible team members.
* **Team Composition and Profiles:** Brief bios of key personnel assigned to the project, clearly mentioning their roles, relevant experience, and technical expertise. CVs of team members should be attached as annexes.
	1. **Financial Proposal**
* **Detailed Budget Breakdown:** An itemized budget in BDT clearly listing costs for each activity, including consultancy fees, travel, logistics, content production, content boosting, and training facilitation.
* **Payment Schedule:** The financial proposal must align with the milestone-based payment schedule outlined in the ToR.
1. **Submission Format and Required Documents**

The proposal must be submitted in **soft copy** clearly marked with the name of the assignment: “**Documenting Learning from the Bangla LED Model: Process, Stakeholder engagement and Sustainability Outcomes”.**

In addition to the technical and financial proposals, applicants are required to submit valid documentation demonstrating their legal, financial, and taxation status. These documents must be included as annexes in the proposal and should comprise the following (as applicable):

* Copy of valid Tax Identification Number (TIN)
* Copy of Trade License (for registered businesses)
* Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms (RJSC) Certificate (if registered under RJSC)
* Proof of Segregated Bank Account, including name and address of the account
* Any other relevant and valid certifications issued by government authorities

Additionally, the applicant must comply with the following financial conditions:

* The agency is responsible for all applicable Advance Income Tax (AIT) and VAT.
* The total VAT amount must be clearly stated in the financial proposal.

*Incomplete proposals or those lacking required documentation will not be considered for evaluation.*

1. **Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

| **Section** | **Criteria** | **Weight (%)** | **Remarks** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Technical Proposal** | Profile and Expertise of Key Personnel (max 3 pages) | 10% | Academic qualifications, roles, and relevant experience of core team members  |
| Understanding of the Assignment and Methodology (max 5–7 pages) | 40% | Depth of understanding of PRABRIDDHI’s objectives and an actionable, well-articulated approach. |
| Detailed Work Plan and Timeline (max 2–3 pages) | 20% | Structured, realistic plan with milestones, deliverables, and municipality-specific timelines. |
| **Subtotal** |  | **70%** |  |
| **Financial Proposal** | Budget Breakdown and Cost Effectiveness | **30%** | Clear, competitive budget with VAT/AIT breakdown and cost justifications. |
| **Total** |  | **100%** |  |

1. **Submission Instruction**

Interested agencies are requested to submit sealed envelopes containing hard copies of the technical and financial proposals separately by **August 05.** Proposals must be addressed to:

**Samaun Bhuiyan**

Sr. Coordinator – Business Administration

PRABRIDDHI - Local Economic Development (LED)

Swisscontact

Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation

House 28, Road 43, Gulshan-2, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

*In addition to the hard copy submission, the technical proposal must also be emailed to:* *bd.prabriddhi@swisscontact.org**.* Please mention “Process-Level Learning of PRABRIDDHI’s LED Efforts” in the subject line of the email.For any queries or additional information, please contact via email at *bd.prabriddhi@swisscontact.org*.

***N.B.:*** *Only shortlisted agencies meeting the qualification criteria will be contacted.**Proposals received after the deadline or not submitted according to the specified requirements will be disqualified and will not be considered.*