

Terms of Reference for

Final Evaluation of “Empowering smallholders to strengthen local democratic governance (KHAMATAYAN)” project.

1. Introduction:

Project Name	Empowering smallholders to strengthen local democratic governance (KHAMATAYAN) project
Project Location	Bangladesh – Mymensingh, Sherpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha & Satkhira Districts
Project duration	1 st January 2018 to 31 st December 2021
Co-Donor	European Union
Implementing agency and partners	The project is led by Traidcraft Exchange and co-implemented by INGO- Christian Aid, Solidarites International, LINGO- RDS, GUK, Shushilan
Key stakeholders	SHG members, Agro Producers’ Association (UAPA & DAPA), private service providers, Government departments, Local Authorities (LAs), Partner organizations

“Empowering smallholders to strengthen local democratic governance (KHAMATAYAN) Project” is a consortium initiative of Traidcraft Exchange, Christian Aid and Solidarites International implementing through three local partners RDS, GUK and Shushilan. The project is underway in 19 Upazilas under Mymensingh, Sherpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha & Satkhira District. The European Union providing financial support by aiming to **ensure inclusive economic development in rural Bangladesh by stimulating the effective engagement of smallholder farmer-led CSOs in local democratic governance.** The proposed project aims to strengthen the governance, accountability and sustainability of smallholder-led grassroots CSOs and facilitate their constructive engagement with LAs in local democratic governance, inclusive policy development and implementation. It will empower smallholder- led CSOs (District and Upazila associations, Self-help Groups (SHGs) to proactively engage with LAs to ensure policies and practices strengthen the economic and social rights of marginalized farming communities. It has worked closely with LAs to develop their capacity to engage in inclusive partnerships with local CSOs and to recognize the constructive role civil society plays in local democratic governance. Smallholder farmers have empowered to collectively voice, demand and negotiate their economic and social rights by actively engaging with LAs – benefiting from social and extension services, appropriate resources, and increased access to social safety-net programmes by marginalized groups (women, ethnic minorities, disabled people). In this way, the project has ensured farmers’ inclusion in the development process, addressing issues of agricultural governance and contributing to reduced inequality and injustice. It has enabled smallholder-led CSOs and LAs to fulfil their potential as key stakeholders in the process of inclusive economic and social development.

Specific Objective of the project: To catalyze Local Authorities (LAs) and smallholder-led CSOs to develop innovative and inclusive partnerships that strengthen the economic and social rights of small and marginal farmers, with a specific focus on women, disabled people and ethnic minorities.

Output 1: Smallholder-led CSOs are effective, well-run, financially sustainable and able to contribute to LA policy development and implementation.

Output 2: LAs and local government bodies develop an inclusive enabling environment through sustained collaboration with smallholder-led CSOs.

Output 3: Smallholder-led CSOs work in partnership with LAs to ensure socio-economic policies and practices respond to needs of marginalized groups (women, disabled people, ethnic minorities)

Output 4: Smallholder-led CSOs work in partnership with LAs to ensure entitlements related to sustainable agricultural practice reach the target populations

The beneficiaries of the project are 24,426 small and marginal farming households (farmers with landholdings less than 1 hectare) across the five selected districts of Bangladesh. Of the 24,426 small and marginal farmers, 13,077 will be women (53%), 2,621 will be from ethnic minorities (10.7%) and 1,456 will be disabled people (6%). The project targets local authorities and public officials at both Upazila and Union levels.

Project location: This project is working in 19 upazilas of 5 districts of 3 project regions-

▪ **North East region**

- Mymensingh - 5 upazilas: Mymensingh Sadar, Gouripur, Phulpur, Haluaghat, Dhobaura
- Sherpur - 4 upazilas: Sherpur Sadar, Nakla, Jhenaigati, Sreebordi

▪ **North region**

- Gaibandha - 5 upazilas: Gaibandha Sadar, Fulchhori, Saghata, Sundorganj, Gobindaganj
- Kurigram - 2 upazilas: Rowmari, Razibpur

▪ **South region**

- Satkhira - 3 upazilas: Satkhira Sadar, Assasuni, Tala

2. Organizational overview:

Traidcraft Exchange is a British Charity have been working in Bangladesh since 2005. Traidcraft Exchange bring people together, to fight injustice in trade. Over the last 16 years, Traidcraft has worked directly with vulnerable and socially excluded rural households: developing democratically-run village-based groups and associations and nurturing their links to duty-bearers and private sector players. Traidcraft Exchange exists to do two things:

- To support people to harness the benefits of trade
- To fight against injustice in global trade

Christian Aid is an international humanitarian organization which started working in Bangladesh in 1972 after the Liberation War. Today it works in some of the most disaster affected districts of the country with the most vulnerable people to improve the quality of their lives. It uses integrated approaches to disaster risk management, climate change, resilient livelihoods, emergency preparedness and response, inclusive market development, gender and social equity and human rights. It continues to develop the social enterprise skills of underprivileged people, increasing their power in the market and ensuring their access to and control over productive resources.

Solidarités International (SI) is a non-profit and humanitarian organization founded in 1980 and working in areas of conflict and natural disasters. Its main aim is to provide quick and effective support for people in life-threatening situations by meeting their vital needs: water, sanitation, food security and shelter.

Rural Development Sangstha (RDS) is an NGO established in 1998 based in Sherpur, Bangladesh. It is being carried out since its inception its activities within the area of developing vulnerable group, specially landless and small farmers' family, agriculture, health, sanitation, hygiene, water supply and food security, women development, renewable energy sector, micro finance, child & adult education, climate change adaptation, disaster management, local resource mobilization, skill development through 40 Branches located at Sherpur, Jamalpur, Tangail, Dinajpur, Kurigram, Pabna, Khulna and Mymensingh district in Bangladesh.

Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK) started its journey in 1985 as a community led NGO with the efforts of a group of dedicated social activists through organizing the disadvantaged poor people living in the remote areas especially in the river islands of Gaibandha district in Bangladesh with the purpose to establish a poverty free equitable society. Presently it is working in ten north-western districts of the country i.e Gaibandha, Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Dinajpur, Panchagarh, Bogra, Joypurhat, Kustia and Cox's Bazar.

Shushilan, a Bengali name signifying endeavours for a better future, is a national NGO set up in 1991. The organization came into being in the face of degradation of socio-ecological resources in the southwest coastal region with specific mission to redress the declining natural resource base, livelihoods and food security of the people. Shushilan is a local agro-ecology, wetland resource management and right based NGO working for ensuring livelihood security of the resource poor community.

3. Objective of the Final Evaluation:

This end of project evaluation should be designed to assess the project against its own stated goals and objectives and to derive learning for Traidcraft Exchange and its project partners. The overall objective of the final evaluation is to assess the outputs and outcomes of the project with particular emphasis on the OECD-DAC criteria; relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the interventions.

The overall objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Determine how much change has happened with regard to the project outcome indicators
- Assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the interventions of the project, strategies and implementation process as well.
- Identify impact, whether it will be sustained and ways to sustain it. Therefore, assess whether the project made the right interventions/facilitations looking at relevance, output, impact and sustainability with respect to planned Outcomes.
- Assess if the project organizational structure, management, planning and implementation process were effective and efficient.
- Draw key lessons learned to contribute to the organisational learning of Traidcraft and its partners
- Make recommendations for further development of similar project and/or provide guidance for similar projects in the future
- Present the key findings of the evaluation at the dissemination workshop, support the discussions, and integrate key points into the final report.
- Assess how key cross-cutting issues, relevant to the context were considered during the project design and implementation.
- Determine strengths and weaknesses of project management and support structures

Specific Objectives

- How much progress has the project made to date from the baseline? (The final evaluation must follow the baseline process such that an appropriate analysis and comparison can be conducted on the data collected and generated.) Determine the extent to which the broader context (political, security, environmental, social, and financial) has impacted upon the project's progress?
- How well the intervention logic and implementation strategies (Overall approach of the project) are working in terms of delivering the project outputs?
- How well will the project interventions and benefits sustain?
- To assess the ability of their associations for negotiating with local government and local authorities for better services and support.
- What are the major constraints faced and overcome in accomplishing the expected Project outcomes/ results?
- How is the quality of the partnership with both "International" and "local" partners?
- How well did the project management arrangements work and how did it develop over time?
- How well did the financial management systems work?
- How were the beneficiaries involved, how effective was this and what have been the benefits of or difficulties with this involvement?
- How well the project could formalize relationships with LAs and LGs and what is the effectiveness of these partnerships?
- Were the risks properly identified and well managed?
- How well is the project monitoring system working?
- What are the learning points for the project team?
- To what extent has the project contributed to rights awareness, whose rights and what impact has there been?
- How well did the project relate to the country's poverty reduction plans?
- Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) did the project contribute to?
- How did the project actively promote gender equality and inclusion?
- What was the impact on marginalized groups (women, ethnic and disabled)?

In addition to this, the PMT would like the consultant to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the project through finding answers to the following queries

- Project design (historical background) – how the idea was born / developed – needs/capacities studies at the design stage / continuity with past projects (if any) and alignment with Traidcraft's strategic priorities & internal programmes.
- Rationale behind the choice of partners
- Rationale behind the focus of target regions and beneficiary groups
- How did the team study the needs/capacities and are adapting their approach to various beneficiary groups? Any substantial changes in the intervention logic to date because of any contextual or beneficiary adaptation?
- Rationale behind division of work within the partners
- Rationale behind capacity building component
- How does the team balance between regional specificities and centralized / uniform approach?
- Roles of Beneficiary Advisory Committee (BACs) and whether they fulfilled it to date? How it is contributing in strengthening monitoring system of the project?
- Consortium partners' view of the quality of other partners' work / reporting / what was the most problematic in the project coordination with partners and what worked well? And in the project overall what was the most problematic and what has been working well? (need to know from both sides, TX and the local partners)
- How is the quality of the partnership? How is the coordination and cooperation between partners?
- Is the planned budget or overall resources sufficient as for now? Was the original budget enough?
- To assess the extent to which value for money has been achieved in the implementation of project activities.
- Impact of COVID on project implementation and changes made to accommodate the rising situation.
- Coordination or awareness of other NGOs/ INGOs or other development projects on similar issues or in similar regions?
- Budget utilization per key heads – Current status of spending per key heads (the latest consolidated expenditure information available) + where are the most significant underspending or overspending and why?
- How effective the MEAL framework has been to track progress? Was it updated regularly?
- Update the LFA. Progress against all indicators. All the achievements against target needs to be backed with real examples / cases/ stories.

4. Audience for the Final Evaluation:

The findings of this independent evaluation will be shared with project partners (both international and local partner organizations), project staff and participants, project associates, project funders and other relevant actors and stakeholders in the industry.

5. Evaluation Issues and Key Questions

The fundamental questions that this evaluation should address are:

- What difference did this project make, to whom and how?
- What worked well, for whom, in what circumstances, at what time and why?
- Did anything happen that wasn't expected to happen?
- If you were to run this project again, what might you do differently?
- Is the project on track to meet its desired outcomes?
- Is the project demonstrating value for money?

To ensure appropriateness of the final evaluation report, the research framework that is designed by Independent Evaluator should respond to the guidelines.

6. Final Evaluation Process and Methodology:

The evaluator(s) are encouraged to apply a mixed-methods approach, drawing on a wide range of evidence sources to assess the project's contribution to higher level outcomes and impact. This would combine qualitative data to provide an explanation of 'why' and 'how' the project has achieved the type and scale of results that are quantitatively observed. This final evaluation should be conducted in a participatory manner to bring the multiple perspectives from key stakeholders in assessing the current situation of the target beneficiaries and the context within which the project is located. All data relating to individual beneficiaries should be disaggregated by gender, ethnic minority status, and disability. For the purposes of gender, ethnic minority and disability disaggregation, the Washington Group Short set of Questions should be used. The Evaluator is suggested to also include contingency plan with innovative approaches to accommodate with the current Covid situation.

A Project Monitoring & Evaluation Group will be there to both inform and support the evaluator in final evaluation processes. This will comprise key project staff from Traidcraft and its partner in country, as well as key staff from Traidcraft's UK office. The consultant is requested to develop and share data collection tools and get them approved by the evaluation group and the whole methodology should be detailed out in the report.

7. Output and deliverables:

The main deliverables include:

- An inception report (maximum five pages) outlining the approach/methodology and execution programme/timetable. This report shall be submitted for review and approval by the monitoring and evaluation group after the signature of the contract before commencement of the work.
- Workshop to share draft Data collection tools for review and approval.
- Triangulation of survey data collected with real case stories, and doing analysis accordingly to report based on log frame indicators.
- Raw data file (after initial cleaning preferably in excel format) as collected by the data collection tools.
- The Draft survey report. The draft report will be initially submitted to Traidcraft for comment and review (Traidcraft will then consult with the Project Evaluation Group). Any changes necessary will be made by the evaluator to produce the final report. Traidcraft and its partners are interested to preserve the objectivity of the evaluator but reserve the right to ensure the Evaluation report is of the quality expected.
- Update Risk Management Matrix and the project log frame matrix.
- The evaluator will present the final report at a dissemination workshop, where project partners, beneficiaries and participating organisations will be present. The findings will be discussed & reviewed and final report will reflect the findings acquired in the workshop.
- A concise power point presentation of the final evaluation report which will first be presented in the dissemination workshop and then finalized after feedback has been sought and report has been updated accordingly.
- The final report which shall be submitted within **five days** after the finding sharing and validation workshop.

All documents, papers and data produced during the final evaluation are to be treated as the property of Traidcraft and its partners and are restricted for public use. The contracted agency/consultant will submit all original documents, materials and data to the contracting organization.

8. Roles and Responsibilities:

8.1 Consultant's Responsibility:

The Consultant will be the "Team Leader" of the final evaluation team. The role of the "Team Leader" will be:

- Undertake the assignment as outlined in the ToR.
- Complete the tasks in the ToR in the allocated time.
- Update Traidcraft and project partners on a regular basis concerning progress.

8.2 Project Evaluation Team's responsibilities

The Project Evaluation Group is comprised of _

- Shahed Ferdous, Country Director & Project Director (TXBD)
- Mamata Dash, Impact and Learning Lead, TX UK
- Representative from Christian Aid (CA)
- Representative from Solidarites International (SI)
- Nabila Nusrat, Head of Programme (TXBD)
- Project Coordinator, KHAMATAYAN Project

The main functions of this group are:

- To ensure that the evaluator has access to and has consulted all relevant information sources and documents.
- To validate the evaluation framework, questions, tools and methodology
- To discuss and comment on deliverables delivered by the evaluator at each stage of the process.
- To assist in feedback on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

8.3 Provision of logistical and other support

For any day to day queries and logistical support the evaluator should contact to Project Coordinator at Traidcraft Exchange Bangladesh Country Office. The Coordinator will be responsible for informing stakeholders of any interviews or focus groups, and for providing the contacts of people to be interviewed, dates of visit and itinerary with the help of partners.

9. Time frame:

Activity	Deadlines
Closing date for receipt of proposals	5 August 2021
Interviews for selection	20 August 2021
Meeting to discuss detailed terms of reference and contract	25 August 2021
Workshop on reviewing the tools	10 September 2021
Starting the data collection	20 September 2021
First draft of evaluation report to Traidcraft	15 November 2021
Feedback and comments from all International Partners	01 December 2021
Findings sharing and validation workshop	17 December 2021
Final evaluation report to Traidcraft incorporating all feedback	23 December 2021

10. Budget and Mode of payment

The consultant should develop a budget for completing the assignment as outlined in this TOR by clearly allocating expenses and daily rate.

- 50% of the total fee will be paid on signing the contract
- 50% of the amount will be paid upon completion of the final evaluation and after the submission of the final report.
- The payment would be made in crossed cheque by the name of the consultant.

11. Application Process:

The Independent Evaluator should be a suitably-qualified and experienced consultant or consulting firm. The consultant profile should include:

- An evaluation specialist with a minimum of ten years' experience in programme/project evaluation in an international development context. Often a mixed approach that incorporates the technical skills of an evaluation specialist but includes some inputs from a sector specialist is most effective;
- Experience of results-based monitoring and evaluation;
- Ability to design and plan the evaluation approaches and research methodologies, including quantitative and qualitative research methods. Where feasible and proportionate, the person or team should include skills and expertise required to design, plan and conduct impact evaluation.
- Relevant subject matter knowledge and experience such as education sector, gender, non-state actors and economic growth to ensure the evaluation design and research methods are as relevant and meaningful as possible given the aims and objectives of the project and the context in which it is being delivered;

- Ability to manage a potentially large-scale and complex evaluation and research process, including interpreting baseline data and conducting a final evaluation;
- Ability to design, manage and implement primary research in potentially challenging project environments. This may include the design of surveys, in-depth interviews, focus group and other research;
- Design and manage data and information systems capable of handling large datasets for monitoring and evaluation purposes; and
- Consideration of the extent to which the evaluator or evaluation team has appropriate country knowledge/experience. This includes language proficiency to conduct the research required or that resources be made available (e.g. translator or social gatekeeper) to enable the research to proceed smoothly.
- Details of the team who will work on the contract with individual CVs that describes their relevant experience in relation to this contract. These may be attached as appendices to the EOI.

Applications should be sent to: TX_Bangladesh@traidcraft.org copied to Nabila Nusrat at Nabila.Nusrat@traidcraft.org.

NB: The deadline for applications is 5 August, 2021.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

12. General terms and condition

Traidcraft Exchange and partners reserve the right to accept or reject any proposal without giving any verbal and/or written rationale;

- All reports and documents prepared during the assignment will be treated as the property of Traidcraft Exchange and its partners
- The reports/documents or any part, therefore, cannot be sold, used and reproduced in any manner without prior written approval of Traidcraft Exchange

Traidcraft Exchange and its partners reserve the right to monitor the quality and progress of the work during the assignment.