

North East Rural Livelihoods Project

Thematic Study on Social Inclusion and Empowerment – Terms of Reference

I. Background

NERLP is a World Bank funded rural poverty reduction project of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER). The project seeks to empower rural poor and improve livelihoods of about three lakh households in 1645 villages (58 blocks) across eleven districts of four project states, namely, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. The districts are Aizawl and Lunglei in Mizoram, Peren and Tuensang in Nagaland, South, and West Districts in Sikkim and West Tripura, Khowai, Sipahijala, Unokoti and North Tripura

The objective of the project is *“to improve rural livelihoods especially that of women, unemployed youth and the most disadvantaged, in four North Eastern States”*. It aims at improving communities’ access to credit and other financial services by forming more than 26,000 SHGs and 1200 VOs, sustainably increasing incomes of the poor by forming 500 producer groups/producer organizations, improving natural resource management by local communities and converging with government programs by forming 1,645 Community Development Groups (CDGs), addressing unemployment by skilling 20,000 youth, and engaging in fruitful partnerships with expert organizations to focus on cluster development through value chains development and natural resource management.

II. Project Components

The project has five components, namely, social empowerment, economic empowerment, partnership development and project management. The project components focus on improving livelihoods of the most disadvantaged people in the targeted areas by building community based organizations and developing partnership with Government and other institutions for knowledge, skill, credit, insurance, extension and market.

- **Social Empowerment:** This initiative seeks to empower rural communities by creating sustainable community institutions; improving inclusiveness and ensuring equity in social, gender and environment.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Increase livelihoods through diversification of income and employment opportunities by supporting SHG and SHG Federation with investment support; supporting Community Development Group for Community Development Plan; supporting Producer Organization for business activities based on value chain and supporting youth for skill development training and placement.
- **Partnership Development:** Development of partnership with various service providers including technical support institutions, public and private sector organizations, financial institutions, etc., with the aim of dovetailing further resources required for the success of the project.
- **Project Management:** This component includes governance, implementation, coordination, learning and quality enhancement efforts.
- **Livelihood Model & Value Chain Developments:** demonstration of successful livelihood models, value chain development in both farm sector and non-farm sector.

The thematic study is intended to focus on the components: Social Empowerment. Within the component on Social Empowerment, the study will focus on investment support to SHG and SHG Federations, Community Development Groups and Producer Organizations. The study is expected to capture the efficacy and impact of the project interventions on empowerment, inclusion and gender dimensions, derive lessons and suggest measures towards sustainability.

III. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to get an in-depth understanding of the (i) core inclusion strategies undertaken by the project for each component; (ii) implementation details of these strategies including insights and experiences; (iii) major intended and unintended outcomes on inclusion and empowerment; and (iv) key lessons for design and implementation of social inclusion and social empowerment strategies.

IV. Scope of the Study

The study should capture the following aspects:

1. Inclusion Strategies

- What has been the process of defining and identifying the poor and marginalized in each village?
- What are the strategies undertaken for social mobilization to include SCs, STs and other vulnerable groups in the SHGs? How inclusive has the targeting been?
- How have the CDPs been selected? Are they being designed appropriately to ensure they benefit the poorest wards and cover the intended 70% of the population?
- How are the poor, STs and marginalized included in the selection of livelihoods clusters?
- What are the strategies to select young boys and girls in the skill training programme?
- What are levels of participation of women and other vulnerable and marginalized groups (SC non-poor, Poor, Poorest of Poor, ST, women, landless families, families whose heads are women, peoples working with backward professions etc.) in the project interventions.

2. Implementation Experiences

- What are the major causes of exclusion of certain groups?
- What are the challenges faced by the project in inclusion of certain pockets of vulnerable population?
- What are the innovative practices undertaken by the project team to include the marginalized and vulnerable population.
- What constraints that are being experienced in selection of villages in respect to formation of livelihoods clusters and identification of CDPs?
- How is inclusion of marginal and landless farmers assured in irrigation related CDPs like check dams, canals etc.?
- Are livelihood clusters being dominated by those having assets holdings, thereby excluding POP and marginalized farmers?
- Are the poor and marginalized been elected as office holders in the SHGs and Federations and other community institutions?

- Are existing norms adequate to address the ability to repay loans taken by the poor families?
- Are there any kind of exclusion of the poor and marginalized in their access to credit from the federation?
- Is existing training of federations on social inclusion and social action, adequate?
- What is the awareness levels relating to project, schemes as well as functions and division of roles and responsibilities in SHGs, federation?
- What have been the major constraints in skill training and placement of youth from the community?
- How are grievances raised and settled at the community level? Are there any documentation system of the grievances raised and any escalation process?

3. *Outcomes*

- In what ways have the poor and the marginalized benefitted from the project's design features?
- Has there been a decrease in indebtedness among the poor members of the SHGs.
- Have the poor and marginalized assumed leadership positions in SHGs, VOs and other community-based organisations?
- Has the project helped in improving women's self-respect within the family and community?

4. *Lessons Learnt and Best Practices*

- What have been the major lessons learnt in terms of mobilization of the poor and the marginalized sections of the community?
- What are the innovations that the project had to implement to include the poor and the marginalized?
- Document at least four or five good practices at social cluster level as case studies. These case studies should capture how the POP continue to benefit from services after ownership is handed off to the community

V. **Approach and Methodology**

The Consultant will review secondary data as well as collect primary data.

Secondary data shall include the following:

- Review existing reports (PAD, Social Assessment and IPPF) and other guidelines issued from time to time relating to inclusion, SHG formation etc.
- Review database used for tracking of POP/Poor, and SC/ST households with SPMUs.

Primary data will be collected from selected blocks in all four states. An analysis of the MIS data should be done before selecting the sites. Some of the criteria for selection of blocks would include:

- Near and remote locations within the project state.
- Districts with mixed ST and non ST populations
- Presence of rich and PoP beneficiaries to study the latter's inclusion
- Different kinds of CDPs and Livelihoods clusters.

The consultant shall meet the project officials, PFT partners and members of the community. S/he will conduct FGDs with members of SHGs, VOs and PGs, interviews with individual beneficiaries, CRPs and other village level workers, members of youth who have received training and project personnel at RPMU and DPMUs. The consultant shall in consultation with RPMU and the World Bank devise tools i.e. a qualitative questionnaire and consultation checklist for collecting data (mainly qualitative) from different stakeholders during field visits.

S/he will tabulate findings, analyse results and prepare a draft report and make a presentation to the Project Officials and the World Bank for their comments and finalise the report.

As this study is being undertaken in parallel with other thematic studies, the consultant would be expected to draw upon & provide necessary information from /to these other studies.

VI. Qualifications and Level of Experience of Team

- 2 seniors and 1-2 junior consultants

Consultant	Number	Skills Required	Qualifications	Time (Man Months)
Senior technical specialist	2	<p>10+ years' experience working in the field of livelihoods and social development</p> <p>Should be familiar with the functioning of community institutions in livelihoods projects</p> <p>Prior experience with similar studies particularly in the North East</p> <p>Local language skills</p> <p>Prefer working experience in these states before</p> <p>Excellent analysis and writing skills</p>	<p>Master degree in economics, rural management, social sciences or related field</p>	3 months each
Junior Technical Specialist	2	<p>4 years of work experience minimum</p> <p>Experience in similar community-driven livelihood studies</p>	<p>PG degree in social sciences or related field</p>	2 month each

		Excellent documentation and social analysis skills		
		Local language skills		

VII. Duration of Study and Schedule of Deliverables

Consultant shall: a) prepare a draft report, b) prepare a short half hour presentation on the key findings of the study and suggestions at a workshop organized for this purpose at RPMU Guwahati and attended by SPMUs of all four project states and; c) revise the draft report based on observations and comments received at this workshop and finalize the report. Duration shall be for about 3 months including time for all site visits and report preparation.

The consultant is required to deliver the following key outputs against the timelines indicated:

	Output	Timeline
1.	Inception report including review of secondary data and details of sample, questionnaires, and proposed schedule of field visits	End of 2 nd week from contract date
2.	Draft report	End of 10 th week from contract date
3.	Presentation based on the draft report	End of 12 th week from contract date
4.	Final report	End of 13 th week from contract date

VIII. Services Provided to the Consultant

RPMU, Guwahati and respective state level SPMUs shall provide:

- Project documents – Project Appraisal Document, Social Assessment and Tribal Development Framework; latest available data on SHGs; other guidelines issued from time to time; and any specific study undertaken by RPMU or SPMU on issues of exclusion.
- Logistical support through respective DPMU as necessary to undertake and complete the assignment

IX. Data and Information Collected

All data and information collected as part of the study will be the property of NERLP and no portion of it can be used for any purpose other than the purpose of the intended study. The consultant shall transfer all data and information collected (electronic or otherwise) to NERLP, on completion of the study.

Interested candidates may submit your's CV to this email id (pm.procurement.nerlp@gmail.com) on or before 9th Aug, 2018.