

Terms of Reference for Research

Women's Transformative Leadership in Disaster Preparedness and Response in Bangladesh

[3rd July, 2022]

[Guidance is in italics and should be deleted in the actual ToR. For further advice please refer to the Oxfam research guideline on [Writing Terms of Reference for Research](#).]

Keywords: *[List no more than six. These can refer to issue/topic, geographic location, methods, analytical approach.]*

Women transformative leadership, Preparedness & Response

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

[Briefly outline the purpose of the research, including how it will address gender issues; describe the broader project/program(me)/campaign into which the research fits, and explain its current relevance.]

Bangladesh is often considered as one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. The World Risk Report ranks Bangladesh in the 13th position among countries most susceptible to extreme climate conditions and socioeconomic vulnerabilities¹. Approximately 80% of its 164.3 million population is highly prone to disasters. Being a disaster-prone country, floods, cyclones, tidal surges, riverbank erosions and tornadoes are very common in Bangladesh.

Oxfam in Bangladesh together with its local partners—WAVE Foundation, JAGO NARI, and SKS Foundation—are implementing a disaster risk reduction project in three districts of Bangladesh (Gaibandha, Barisal, and Barguna) namely “Strengthening Community Preparedness, Rapid Response and Recovery in Asia Project,” a three-year project focusing on capacity development, disaster risk reduction (DRR), asset protection, and learning and knowledge sharing. The project aims to ensure that communities affected by recurrent disasters in highly vulnerable areas in Asia have enhanced capacities for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, and are better equipped to co-lead on relief efforts in collaboration with local authorities, with the overall aim of reducing vulnerability and suffering among disaster-prone communities.

One of the major components of the project is to engage women in the disaster preparedness and response planning and implementation process. Most of the women in our project areas face multiple forms of discrimination and usually have no control over resources and lack decision-making power at the household and community level. Women have limited access to the markets, transport, credit, and financial services with limited opportunities to learn new skills and opportunities for earning income. This is also true for disaster management planning and implementation, with women and girls highly vulnerable to the impacts of disasters, lack of access to key services and life opportunities, lack of information and education and participation in the local level humanitarian and disaster risk reduction planning and implementation process.

¹ Behlert, B., Diekjost, R., Felgentreff, C., Manandhar, T., Mucke, P. Pries, L., Radtke, K. & Weller, D. (2020). WorldRiskReport 2020. Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft. Berlin. Retrieved from: <https://weltrisikobericht.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/WorldRiskReport-2020.pdf>.

Since Oxfam in Bangladesh has decades of experience in implementing disaster preparedness, response, and recovery programmes in vulnerable communities and engaged women in the disaster preparedness and response process. Oxfam and partners recently implemented three projects (Empowering Local and National 35 Humanitarian Actors (ELNHA), Empower Youth for Work (EYW), and the Resilience through Economic Empowerment, Climate Adaptation, Leadership and Learning (REECALL-2021)) and developed innovative model and approaches which includes women saving systems, feminist leadership in DRR, women in local humanitarian leadership, women engagement in disaster preparedness and preparedness planning/implementation, and engagement of women in livelihoods activities while strengthening linkages with markets and private sector. These innovative and successful DRR approaches are appreciated by the Government and other organizations have been convinced to replicate them in the disaster preparedness and response process. For example, the national organizations namely RDRS, SKS, Pollishree etc. have adopted foodbank and fodder bank preparedness interventions.

The project is required to investigate and capture knowledge and learning on to what extent the targeted community-based transformative feminist leadership approaches (Women-led CBO, DRR group, Women wash platform etc) are playing a role in effectively reducing of climate vulnerability of their communities through preparedness and taking early action initiatives. In this regard, Oxfam is planning to carry out research by a suitable institution/agency/consultant. The study will help us to identify the enabling and hindering factors and the way forward to make community-based gender-transformative resilient development programming to promote disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response intervention. The proposed research will consider ethical issues in an effective manner aligned with the intersectional feminist lens. The study is planned to be started in the first week of September 2022. The duration of the proposed study is from 5th September 2022 to 20th November 2022.

2. AUDIENCE AND USE

[Specify the audience(s) for the research and for the work that it will generate. How will the findings be used?]

The audiences of the study findings will be the government, sectoral organizations, researchers, academia, students and interns, relevant professionals, communities, and Asian countries to learn about different approaches to the role of women in disaster preparedness and response process. The research will generate knowledge and use findings to re-strategize project interventions and invest in the most vulnerable and off-the-radar communities to increase their resilience.

The research report will be published and launched in Bangladesh to share findings with different stakeholders and the Oxfam Asia region through webinars and online platforms. Oxfam Bangladesh will share this research with partners, donors, and UN agencies to recognize women's role in different disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response programme. The research will be shared within the Oxfam confederation particularly with the resilience programme teams to learn best practices and improve their disaster preparedness and humanitarian response.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

[Concisely state the principal objectives of the research itself. What thesis or working hypothesis does it address, and what gaps in knowledge and evidence? What is the theory of change of the research and how will it have impact? How will this take account of gender?]

Women plays an important role in building disaster preparedness at local level. There are many examples in Oxfam Bangladesh where women demonstrated leadership in their communities towards disaster resilience. To collect more evidence and examples from different disaster

preparedness and resilience projects, Oxfam Bangladesh will conduct research with an objective to understanding how the targeted community-based feminist women's leadership/ have contributed in effectively in reducing the climate vulnerability of their communities.

Along with that, the research will also contribute to understanding and knowledge of the links between Gender Transformation and Resilient Development in community led inclusive DRR plans and humanitarian response at grassroots level and to analyze their contribution, challenges and priority needs to improve preparedness and response. More specific objectives include:

- To collect evidence, learning and critical reflection and – based on the evidence gathered – initiating changes in practice (Under ACT programme) through testing and reiterating the learning process.
- To investigate and capture knowledge and learning² on to what extent the targeted transformative feminist leadership approaches³ are playing a role effectively in reducing of climate vulnerability of their communities through preparedness and taking early action initiatives
- To identify and understand better the systemic constraints, enabling factors and support/actions needed to promote women's transformative leadership in DRR
- To explore and document new learning and evidence, and best practices on women's transformative leadership for inclusive DRR and provide insights to improve gender transformative DRR and humanitarian practices in program design, implementation, program quality, and resilient development outcomes.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

[These questions flow from the objectives and are the main ones that you want the research to answer. If possible, aim for no more than three main questions and if necessary break them down into sub-questions. Integrate gender issues into the questions as appropriate.]

- How are women currently engaged in DRR initiatives and programmes across different levels – community, local, national levels? What leadership roles do they take? How does community-based gender-transformative resilient development programming foster transformative feminist leadership in Bangladesh (specifically Gaibandha, Barisal, and Barguna)?
- Analyze how feminist approaches are effective in reducing climate variability. Show how community-based gender-transformative outcomes lead to resilience development in DRR in Bangladesh.
- What does women's transformative leadership look like in practice (e.g., projects in the context of DRR)? What evidence do you have to demonstrate how transformative women's leadership is central to an effective and sustainable humanitarian response, specifically in DRR?
- How COVID-19 has impacted women participating in disaster preparedness and response in Bangladesh;

² To measure the transformative feminist leadership approach to reducing climate vulnerabilities qualitative method will be considered by applying the gender inequality index, RCA tools and factors analysis aligned with the gender theory of change and resilient framework.

³ Women-led CBOs, DRR groups, and foodbank groups participate, represent and provide strategic decisions in CRA, RRAP and the preparedness process

- Do current disaster preparedness and humanitarian response policies at government creates enabling environment for women to participate and take decision to build their resilience?
- What are the enabling conditions (such as government policies) that allow for women's participation and leadership in DRR? To what extent do community women leaders influence disaster management?
- What are the systemic constraints or barriers to women's participation and leadership (into the individual, household, community and society, inc. discriminatory laws and social norms)? What are opportunities to overcome these barriers or to advance women's transformative leadership?
- What resources, support, and investments are needed to develop/build, strengthen and sustain women's capacities, voice, collective action, influencing and decision-making power for transformative leadership in DRR?

5. FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

[What is the conceptual framework of the research and what assumptions does it make? Is it sufficiently gendered? Does it follow a tried and tested analytical approach? Is it different from previous research on this topic or innovative in some way?]

The study will follow Oxfam Gender at Work framework, Resilient Development Framework as well as Feminist local humanitarian leadership (FLHL) and Gender justice Approaches for mapping conceptual framework/the Theory of change of this research. Transformative Feminist Leadership is Oxfam's approach and strategy for social justice that challenges and transforms power relations and structures in all their different manifestations into an enabling environment for the leadership potential of individuals.

Oxfam in Bangladesh implemented three projects which focused on building women's humanitarian leadership, capacity development on disaster preparedness and response, inclusive disaster preparedness and response planning, and economic and social empowerment. These projects engaged women in different project activities to improve disaster preparedness and response planning and implementation process. Based on these three projects, Oxfam will conduct research in 12 communities to evaluate the role of women leadership in disaster preparedness and humanitarian context.

The main concept of the research is to investigate and capture learning, evidence, and good practice, of women leaders' role in community-led inclusive DRR plans and humanitarian response at grassroots level and analyze their contribution, challenges and priority needs to improve preparedness and response. Therefore, participation of vulnerable communities and women in disaster preparedness and response planning will provide them opportunities to identify their best practices, needs and priorities. Based on the objectives of the research, the research the research design will follow two steps.

The action research will review existing resources available on disaster risk reduction at national level from secondary sources. It will also review existing project proposals, half/annual reports, study reports, case studies, review PCVA, etc. from Oxfam. Following that, the research will finalize data collection tools, collect additional data from targeted three districts and analyze it for

producing a research report. The study will analyze enabling and hindering factors on gender transformation in DRR and humanitarian response by applying appropriate tools.

TLWR – transformative leadership on women’s rights is Oxfam’s approach to promoting women’s leadership⁴. **Gender justice** (focusing on women’s rights and empowerment, achieving gender inequality) as the overarching framework that underpins Oxfam’s programmes across development, humanitarian and advocacy.

Feminist local humanitarian leadership (FLHL) – women, girls and other diverse non-binary gender identities experience heightened vulnerability in emergencies, but often their knowledge, skills, and agency are not recognized or valued, and their gender-specific needs are not adequately addressed. Supporting women’s organizations (WOs) and women leaders to play key leadership roles in humanitarian preparedness and response settings are crucial, specifically in supporting their strength and voice and helping them to access the spaces they need. These are the overarching goal of the local humanitarian leadership (LHL) agenda⁵.

Resilient Development Framework: Oxfam has a Resilient Development Framework which talks about transformative resilience capacity by keeping gender justice at the center. The research will use Oxfam’s framework to assess women’s leadership in disaster preparedness and response.

The participatory approach is about making sure the research engages with and builds competence, confidence, and ownership among different levels of key stakeholders including field, sub-national, national, and international levels. The commissioned study will be led by the consultant/ academic institution where designated Oxfam staff and local partners in selected programmes will be a part of the designing, planning, execution of the research.. Building the community of practice among project participants is critical for institutional change and learning across the project. The project participants and stakeholders will participate in research planning, and implementation and validation of research findings will be particularly emphasized. Happy to see that local partners will be a part of the design and execution of the research, I think that is critical to it being a feminist piece of work.

6. GENDER

[Explain and justify how gender will be treated in the research. Consider how transformative you want your approach to be. Most research falls somewhere on a scale that runs from gender aware, to gender transformative, though we sometimes run the risk of falling into the trap of gender blind research by failing to acknowledge or question gender issues. See the Oxfam research guideline on [Integrating Gender in Research Planning](#).]

The research will particularly be focused on gender. In Bangladesh, women are demonstrating their transformative leadership in preparedness and response in targeted remote and off-the-radar communities along with different challenges. The research will not only be an analysis of their role and contribution but also explore barriers and opportunities. The findings will provide the opportunity to Oxfam and partners for generating knowledge around gender transformative leadership and demonstrate it with other ACT implementing countries in order to inform and improve their preparedness towards natural disasters.

Most of the people in our research areas include a high proportion of marginalized groups, including smallholders, fisherfolk, women-headed households and labourer. Within these groups, particularly

⁴ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/transformative-leadership-womens-rights-oxfam-guide>

⁵ <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/women-leading-locally-exploring-womens-leadership-in-humanitarian-action-in-ban-620937/>

women face multiple forms of discrimination and usually have no control over resources and lack decision-making power at the household and community level. Women have limited access to the markets, transport, credit, and financial services with limited opportunities to learn new skills and opportunities for earning income. This is also true for disaster management planning and implementation, with women and girls highly vulnerable to the impacts of disasters, lack of access to key services and life opportunities, lack of information and education and participation in the local level humanitarian and disaster risk reduction planning and implementation process.

The research methodology includes separate interviews with women, to understand their challenges, barriers and opportunities in disaster management and its impact on them (to collect information based on research questions). The data will be disaggregated by gender, and research will highlight the role women in disaster preparedness and response process. The recommendation of the research will also promote women transformative leadership in resilience programme. The research will consider a consultant/researcher that has experience in gender-based research and feminist research.

7. RESEARCH METHODS

[What are the different ways in which data will be collected? List the proposed research methods, including qualitative, quantitative, participatory, and audio-visual methods as appropriate. Indicate whether and how these will be gendered. State also where research will be undertaken, or whether it is desk-based. For advice on different methods, see the [Oxfam Research Guidelines](#).]

The proposed research will employ qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. Data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Exploratory and inquiry research approaches will be considered in this study to investigate learning and adaptation, good practice, enabling and hindering factors and the way forward. The proposed research approach will consist of three phases. The first phase is developing Theories of Change (ToCs)/conceptual frameworks based on secondary data (project proposals, half/annual reports, study reports, case study, review PCVA, DRR policies/plans like Standing order on disaster, Disaster management framework, etc.), analyzing existing evidence and making sense collectively ensuring participation of the community and relevant stakeholders of this analysis. The findings are being linked to the ToCs/conceptual framework to understand how the body of evidence supports the various causal chains (or not) and is validated through collective sensemaking.

The second phase will involve gathering data and information through primary data collection, testing contribution and further collective sense-making. The primary data will be collected from different stakeholders like women leaders, partners, CSOs, partners, CBO members, DMC members, food, and fodder bank management committee etc using appropriate tools like Key informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussion (FGD), In-depth Interview (IDI), Case Studies, meeting, sense-making workshop/data validation workshop etc. Based on the first draft of the report, the consultant will provide a detailed presentation to Oxfam and partners to seek their input before finalizing the report.

The third phase will engage with a wide range of stakeholders including the community through knowledge dissemination workshops, webinars as well as publications.

This assignment also hopes to use feminist research methodology, which espoused empowering and co-creation processes and not just to simply extract/collect information from participants. It will take an intersectional approach recognizing the diversity of experiences of women and other identities; makes a deliberate effort to make visible and shift power imbalances; amplifies women's voices and

other marginalized groups/identities/sectors; looks at opportunities to foster and/or strengthen movements or collective action; and ensure safe and caring spaces.

8. KEY SOURCES

[If relevant, list important sources and people that the researcher(s) should consult]

The consultant will use different sources which include Oxfam's different project proposal, plan, best practice documentation, guidelines, and study report. Government disaster management policies, plans, reports, research/data and websites; published NGO documents & websites (including research institutions; academic literature etc. could be sourced for this assignment.

- Different primary and secondary sources:

The research will compile existing literature on women's leadership and DRR including.

1. different policies and plan at national and local level
2. reports, articles, and case studies from local and international organizations
3. Academic papers and other research materials.
4. Training modules; and
5. Materials from CSOs and networks

- Coordination:

The research will also coordinate with different organizations to access material and information.

1. Oxfam Bangladesh Country Teams, and other regional and global offices
2. Oxfam Local Partners
3. Communities, CMCs and other community level structure and CBSs
4. Disaster management institutions and offices
5. Civil society organizations active in women's leadership/DRR
6. Academia involved in relevant research

Also, the consultant will conduct interview/focus group discussions with different community groups, partners (list would be finalized along with Oxfam), including Oxfam staff on DRR projects in Barguna, Barishal & Gaibandha of Bangladesh.

9. RESEARCH PRODUCTS

[Specify the research products, such as the style and length of written reports and/or audio-visual outputs]

The required output of consultancy will be as follows:

Deliverable	Format	Length	Detail
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Inception report	MS Word	As per need	An inception report including details methodologies (study area selection, sampling, data collection methods, data quality assurance, data processing & analysis, workplan etc.), data calculation methods, reporting outline and time table shall be submitted for review and approval by five (5) days after signing of the contract and before commencement of the study
Workplan	MS Word	As per need	A detail work plan (under inception report) describing how the consultant will implement the action research within the research framework and timeframe outlined by Oxfam & SKS.
Data Collection Tools (English and Bengali)	MS Word	As per need	Both draft and final versions. The draft tools to be shared with SKS & Oxfam for feedback. These must also be tested in the field beforehand. The tools will be finalized based on feedback and pre-test findings.
Draft Research Report	MS Word	Not exceeding 40 pages (excluding annex)	The expected structure of the report will be shared by the consultant/consulting firm
Final Narrative Report	MS Word and PDF	Not exceeding 40 pages (excluding annex)	Based on the feedback to draft report and during validation the report should be finalized. It should be in English.
A policy brief	MS Word (both Bengali and English)	As per need	Will be decided later.
Case study with photo	MS word	2-3 case studies	Will be decided during inception meeting
Data sets		Final version of data set	Soft copy of qualitative transcript

The research report will be produced based on the Oxfam specific format and guidelines which will be shared with the selected individual/firm after the hiring.

10. TIMETABLE AND GUIDELINE OF THE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The total duration of the assignment will be for 75 days, from 5th September 2022 to 20th November 2022.

The technical proposal should consist of the following sections and the given page limit, along with sample writing of up to 2 pages and a copy of similar work.

Topic	Page Limit (max.)
Technical Proposal	
Cover Page	01 Page
Table of Content	01 Page
Understanding of the study- background, objectives, scope, and key question etc. (avoid copying and pasting directly from the ToR)	02 Pages
Proposed methodology preferably with proper references and maintaining sequence	03-04 Pages
Study plan/work schedule (Gantt chart)	01 page
Experience in leading similar study work (Provide at least 2 examples of similar work, agency, and time of conduction) with 02 references	01 page
Team composition along with its rationale (CV in annexes)	02 pages
Any other relevant information (if required only)	01 page
Financial Proposal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detailed budget ▪ Consultancy days and fees (days should be mentioned for key member of the team) Travel and accommodation ▪ Any other expenditure (please mention nature of expenditure) ▪ Please calculate 15% VAT and 10% Tax with total budget ▪ Total amount 	

11. DOCUMENTATION

[Provide any relevant guidance on the documentation of research. See also Oxfam's [Style Guide for Notes, References, and Bibliographies](#).]

Individual/firm will provide all background information of related to the research and will includes all reference in the report.

12. ETHICS AND RISKS

[State any specific or possible ethical issues that the research raises, as well as any risks that might arise during or as the result of the research. Suggest a process for mitigating any such issues/risks. Refer to guidance and procedures for working with vulnerable women and children where appropriate. For further advice see Oxfam's research guideline on [Undertaking Research with Ethics](#).]

The proposed research project will consider ethical issues in an effective manner aligned with the intersectional feminist lens. As a part of ethical issues, research participants would not be subjected to harm in any way whatsoever. The voluntary participation of respondents will be ensured in the research. Moreover, participants will have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wish to do so. The participants would be informed that the information collected will be used only for this study and not for any other purpose. Further, all participants will categorically state their consent and approval for participating in the discussion and being photographed and the discussion is documented/recorded. Respect for the dignity of research participants will be prioritized. An adequate level of confidentiality of the research data will be ensured. The anonymity of individuals

and organizations participating in the research has to be ensured. Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research would be avoided. Any type of communication about the research would be done with honesty and transparency. And, any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way would be avoided.

13. RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Project Focal of ACT project, SKS Foundation will lead the process with the support from Oxfam Bangladesh project focal to conduct the research.

Researcher(s): *[List internal and external researchers as appropriate. If an external researcher, also list his/her primary affiliation and provide contact information.]*

We don't have any names for consultant for this research. We will advertise these TORs and will recruit external consultant to conduct this research. But we are seeking following essential qualifications and experience to carry out this work.

Required skills and competencies

The Consultant/Consulting firm should have at least the following qualification:

The Consultant should have at least the following qualification:

- The applicant (lead consultant) must be an individual or an institution holding the necessary legal status to work in Bangladesh.
- Master's degree/Ph.D. in social science e.g. Disaster Management/ Economics/Sociology/ Anthropology/ statistic /Business studies / Political Science/Public Administration/ or equivalent fields
- Demonstrated experience, particularly in research, baseline study, Outcome survey, evaluation, impact assessment, and Gender study.
- In addition, one co-researcher must have gender expertise and one person must have research experienced
- Proficiency in Bengali and English, with a focus on presentation/reporting skills
- Good communication and relationship building skills
- Demonstrated experience in conducting data analysis using for example, STATA /SPSS / Excel / NVivo or others.
- Experience of working on feminist approach
- Academia, research institute are encouraged to apply

Client(s): and *[List the internal client(s) for this research; if there is more than one, indicate the primary client.]*

- Oxfam Bangladesh and partner.

Application Procedure:

Interested consultant/team/institutions are requested to submit proposals to Email

ID: director_se@sk-sbd.org. The individual/firm/institution must submit the following documents along with the Technical & Financial Proposal:

- A one-page description of the consultant/institutions.
- One-page statement of the understanding of the assignment.

- CV of the consultants/researchers who will undertake the assignment (female interviewers preferred).
- A list of previous research or evaluation experiences relevant to this assignment.
- Sample research study relevant to this assignment.
- Proposed Methodology.
- Work schedule.
- Budget (including applicable VAT & TAX), including logistic/administrative costs.

14. BUDGET (if applicable)

[Detailed breakdown of consultant fees, travel, field research expenses, etc., as applicable.]

	Expense Description	Amount
1		
2		
3		
4		