

Resilience, Entrepreneurship, and Livelihood Improvement (RELI) Project
Terms of Reference for
Hiring a Consulting Firm for Technical Audit and Impact Assessment
Contract no. S-10 (RELIP)

1. Background

The Social Development Foundation (SDF) is an autonomous 'not-for-profit' organization, established by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) in 2000 to promote community-based initiatives designed to serve the needs of the poorest and the most vulnerable, particularly women and youths. SDF's mandate is to contribute to the overall agenda of poverty alleviation in Bangladesh through empowering the poor and financing their development activities employing a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach that focuses on community organization, capacity building, and principles of participation, empowerment and downward accountability. The vision of the SDF program is to focus on building and strengthening of inclusive and participatory institutions of the poor and improving their livelihoods. The Resilience, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Improvement Project (RELIP) came into effect from October, 2021 with a budget of US\$340 million for 5 (five) years. **The Project Development Objective (PDO)** is 'to improve livelihoods of the poor and extreme poor, enhance their resilience and support rural entrepreneurship in project areas'.

2. Project Components:

The Resilience, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Improvement Project (RELIP) consists of four components: (A) Community Institutions and Livelihood Developments; (B) Business Development and Institutional Strengthening; (C) Project Management, Monitoring and Learning, and Component (D) Contingent Emergency Response Component.

Component A: Community Institutions and Livelihood Development.

Sub-component A.1: Development and Strengthening of Community Institutions

Support the mobilization, development and strengthening of selected community organizations to support the beneficiaries thorough (i) setting up of cluster-level offices to support the facilitation and mobilization of village-level institutions; and (ii) provision of technical support to establish and build capacity of such village-level institutions.

Sub-component A.2: Financing of Community Plans

Support, through the provision of Sub-Grants, the financing of community plans from the Village Development Fund for the following activities: (i) to establish and build the capacity of the community groups and institutions; (ii) to provide Cash Transfers to the poor and vulnerable; (iii) to provide Sub-Loans for income generating activities; and (iv) to carry out prioritized small-scale climate-resilient infrastructure.

Sub-component A.3: Health and Nutrition Support

Support through the provision of Sub-Grants to Health and Nutrition Support Committees (HNSCs), the carrying out of behavior change campaigns to improve health and nutrition outcomes through the following activities : (i) to promote infant and child feeding practices complemented with maternal allowances; (ii) raise awareness of the spread of infectious, vector-borne, and water-borne diseases; (iii) strengthen links between communities and government and nongovernment health providers; (iv) raise awareness of gender-based violence; and (v) encourage crop-diversification, complemented with seed distribution.

Component B: Business Development and Institutional Strengthening.

Sub-component B.1: Development and Strengthening of Second-tier Institutions

Support, through the provision of Sub-Grants, the creation and operation of second-tier institutions being the RELI Cluster Community Societies (RCCSs) and the RELI District Community Societies (RDCSs), each at the cluster level and at the district level respectively, to support the networking and aggregation of the village-level community institutions created under Component 1 of this Project.

Sub-component B.2: Commercial Agriculture and Rural Entrepreneurship (CARE)

Support the growth of the rural economy through (i) facilitation of the formation and development of producer groups and provision of capacity building support and technical assistance; (ii) creation of market linkages (backward and forward) for these producer groups and rural entrepreneurs and establish partnerships with value-chain actors and local government including with e-commerce; (iii) product promotion through participation in trade fairs; and (iv) provision of Matching Grants from the CARE Fund.

Sub-component B.3: Employment Generation Support

Support employment generation through (i) provision of technical support and skill development training for unemployed or underemployed youth³⁶ and jobless migrant or immigrant returnees to acquire marketable skills and access to employment opportunities; and (ii) provision of Stipends for deserving students.

Component C: Project Management, Monitoring, and Learning.

Provision of support to carry out Project management, monitoring, and learning of the Project, including provision of Operating Costs.

Component D: Contingent Emergency Response

Provision of immediate response to an Eligible Crisis or Emergency, as needed.

3. Project Basic Information (Beneficiaries and Coverage):

Target project beneficiaries are the poor and extreme poor in the poorest districts (zillas) and sub-units of districts (upazilas) of Bangladesh. The RELI project is aimed to cover 744,600 direct beneficiaries (489,600 RELI Project beneficiaries and 255,000 COVID-19 affected NJLIP beneficiaries), of which 90 percent are women. The project is being implemented in 3,200 villages in 20 districts throughout the country. Out of the 20 districts covered by the RELI project, 12 districts have received prior support from SIPP-II or NJLIP: Barishal, Chandpur, Dinajpur, Khulna, Kurigram, Mymensingh, Naogaon, Nilphamari, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Rangpur and Sherpur. The 8 new districts are Chapainawabganj, Chattogram, Jhenaidah, Kishoreganj,

Lakshmipur, Lalmonirhat, Magura, and Netrokona. The table below shows the details of total villages covered under clusters and respective districts.

Regional arrangement for implementation of RELI Project:

Sl. No.	Regions	Districts	Upazilas	No. of Upazilas	No. of villages	Total villages	No. of Clusters
1	JASHORE	Magura	1. Magura sadar	3	75	200	8
			2.Mohammadpur		75		
			3. Shalikha		50		
		Khulna	1.Daulatpur	3	25	125	5
			2. Paikgachha		50		
			3. Phultala		50		
		Jhenaidaha	1. Harinakunda	3	50	175	7
			2.Jhenaidaha Sader		75		
			3. Shailkupa		50		
		Chapai Nawabganj	1. Nachole	3	50	150	6
			2.Nababganj Sader		50		
			3. Shibganj		50		
		Naogaon	1.Naogaon Sader	3	50	150	6
			2. Niamatpur		50		
			3. Porsha		50		
Sub-Total				15	800		32
2	RANGPUR	Dinajpur	1. Biral	5	25	150	6
			2. Bochaganj		50		
			3. Birganj		25		
			4. Parbotipur		25		
			5. Khansama		25		
		Kurigram	1. Bhurungamari	3	25	100	4
			2.Kurigram Sader		25		
			3. Ulipur		50		
		Rangpur	1. Gangachara	3	50	100	4
			2. Kaunia		25		
			3. Pirgachha		25		
		Nilphamari	1. Dimla	3	50	125	5
			2. Domar		25		
			3.Nilphamari Sader		50		
		Lalmonirhat	1. Hatibandha	3	50	150	6
			2. Patgram		50		
			3.Lalmonirhat Sader		50		
Sub-Total				17	625		25

3	MYMENSINGH	Mymensingh	1. Dhobaura	3	50	150	6
			2. Gauripur		50		
			3. Haluaghat		50		
		Kishoreganj	1. Austagram	4	50	200	8
			2. Itna		50		
			3.Kishoreganj Sader		50		
			4 Mithamain		50		
		Netrokona	1. Durgapur	4	50	200	8
			2. Khaliajuri		50		
			3. Madan		50		
			4. Mohanganj		50		
		Sherpur	1. Jhenaigati	4	50	175	7
			2. Nakla		25		
			3. Nalitabari		75		
			4. Sreebardi		25		
		Sub-Total				15	725
4	CUMILLA	Chattagram	1. Anowara	3	50	175	7
			2. Banshkhali		75		
			3. Boalkhali		50		
		Chandpur	1. Kachua	3	50	125	5
			2. Uttar Matlab		50		
			3. Shahrasti		25		
		Lakshmipur	1. Kamalnagar	3	75	200	8
			2. Roypur		75		
			3. Ramgati		50		
Sub-Total				9	500	20	
5	BARISHAL	Barishal	1. Agailjhara	4	50	225	9
			2. Babuganj		75		
			3. Gaurnadi		50		
			4. Hijla		50		
		Patuakhali	1. Dashmina	4	75	200	8
			2. Kala para		50		
			3. Galachipa		25		
			4. Mirzaganj		50		
		Pirojpur	1. Kawkhali	4	25	125	5
			2. Pirojpur Sader		50		
			3. Bhandaria		25		
			4. Zianagar		25		
Sub-Total				12	550	22	
Total		20		68	3,200	128	

4. Assignment Background

SDF plans to engage a consulting firm to carry out technical and environmental audits and evaluate the impacts of community infrastructure and livelihood sub-projects implemented under RELIP. The assignment will emphasize the verification of design and construction quality, adherence to environmental safeguards, appropriateness of materials, cost-effectiveness, and financial reporting, while also assessing the socio-economic and environmental outcomes of these interventions.

The consulting firm will conduct field assessments in different regions where construction of GS office buildings and other climate-resilient sub-projects have already been completed. This will include a review of project documents and financial records, consultations with key stakeholders, such as Gram Samiti (GS), Producer Groups, and community members, and an analysis of the environmental and socio-economic dimensions of the completed sub-projects. Through this initiative, SDF aims to generate evidence-based findings that will not only verify compliance with technical, financial, and environmental standards but also provide actionable insights to strengthen ongoing implementation and guide the design of future project activities.

5. Objective of the Consultancy

The objective of this consultancy is to carry out technical and environmental audits of both infrastructure and livelihood development sub-projects, and to evaluate the socio-economic impacts of rural infrastructure implemented since the inception of these sub-projects. These are as follows:

- To review documents and records relating to infrastructure and livelihood development, environmental safeguard, procurement, accounts, and financial reporting that meet the obligations of the Gram Samiti (GS).
- To assess socio-economic impacts of sub-projects (infrastructure and livelihood development) in a qualitative manner based on FGDs and KIs.
- To assess environmental impacts and benefits from the completed community infrastructure and livelihood development sub-projects (IGAs).
- To conduct interviews/interact with GS, SPC, Producer group members, RG members, and SAC regarding their views and perceptions related to sub-project planning and implementation, operations and maintenance works, usefulness, etc.
- To verify the implemented infrastructure by the environmental soundness and concerned design, drawing, specification, bill of quantity, cost effectiveness, etc, for infrastructure development sub-projects.
- To verify the implemented livelihood activities, especially the on-farm IGAs by environmental issues like compost & Vermi compost making, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) biosecurity, etc.
- To verify the quality of materials being used, labor days generated through infrastructure development sub-project works, etc., following the engineering analysis.

- To verify the expenditure following the bill vouchers of construction materials, labor days, transportation, etc.
- To identify constraints associated with the mitigation measures and effective functioning of O&M activities of completed climate-resilient infrastructure sub-projects;
- To identify, assess, and audit measures and standards used in the detailed design, construction, and operation of the developments and determine whether the environmental impacts were reduced to acceptable levels;
- To identify and describe elements of community and environment likely to be affected by the developed sub-projects and likely to cause productive impacts, including natural and man-made environment;
- To identify and quantify emission sources and determine the significance of impacts on sensitive receivers and potential affected users;
- To identify, describe, and quantify any potential landscape and visual impacts and evaluate the significance of impacts on completed sub-projects;

6. Scope of Work

In view of the overall project objectives, SDF intends to hire a Consultancy Firm to carry out a technical audit and socio-economic assessment of ongoing and completed community infrastructure sub-projects in the project areas focusing particularly on design and construction consistency, environmental (both for infrastructure and livelihood development), economic and financial soundness of community sub-projects and outcomes.

The consulting firm will carry out a technical audit and assess the economic impact of ongoing and completed community infrastructure works—such as GS office buildings, roads, culverts, deep tube-wells, solar street lights, and drains—across various project villages within different clusters. At least 75 villages under RELIP, located in different SDF project areas where GS office building and others sub-projects have been implemented as per the approved plan, will be visited. The consulting firm will randomly select villages where the GS office and other sub-projects have been completed, in order to collect data from both a technical audit perspective and an economic analysis.

7. Major Tasks of the firm

In order to conduct the assignment, the consulting firm will undertake the following major tasks:

- Technical review of infrastructure in selected villages constructed under RELIP.
- Assess environmental safeguards considered in the infrastructure.
- Assess compliance with SDF guidelines and policies.
- Economic analysis to measure the success of the projects.
- Environmental analysis of the livelihood activities undertaken by the RG members.

- Assess the environmental awareness of the RG members regarding the implementation of different on-farm activities at the village level.
- [Ensure the authenticity of data coming out from the survey.](#)
- Assess and confirm the extent to which all masons engaged in the execution of infrastructure works have formally endorsed and signed the Code of Conduct (CoC).
- Assess whether the Code of Conduct (CoC) is being duly observed during the construction works.

8. Inputs and support from SDF

SDF will provide project information and relevant documents i.e., Community Operational Manual (COM), reports related to community infrastructure works, livelihoods, internal audit, Appraisal & Monitoring Team, and Process Monitoring Agency (PMA) will be provided. SDF will make arrangements to offer orientation programs for the consulting firm.

9. Outputs/ Deliverables:

The consulting firm is responsible to submit the deliverables/reports as mentioned below:

Sl. No	Deliverables/ reports	Time after the effectiveness of the contract
1.	Submission of Inception report, including methodology of technical audit and impact assessment, proposed tools, sampling & data collection strategy etc., and work plan as part of Inception report.	10 days
2.	Recruitment and training enumerators, field testing, revisions and printing questionnaires, Checklist for FGD and sampling design.	30 days
3.	Field Survey	60 days
4.	Submit the draft report, including data analyses and compilation of all districts.	90 days
5.	Submission of the final technical audit and impact assessment report incorporating feedback from SDF	120days
Total		120 days

10. Ownership of data and the consultant's outputs

This assignment is funded by SDF and therefore shall be the owners of the assignment output. The consultant will have no right of claim ownership of data or any output delivered under this consultancy once completed. Any reports/ outputs produced as a part of this assignment shall be deemed to be the property of SDF and the consultant will not have any claims and will not use or reproduce the contents of the above documents without the permission of SDF.

11. Procurement Method

The firm will be hired on the basis of Consultant Qualification Selection (CQS) method, following the World Bank guidelines for selection and employment of consultants.

12. Payment Schedule

The payment schedule will be aligned with specific deliverables as outlined below:

No.	Deliverables	Deadline	Percent of Payment
1	Submission of Inception report including methodology of technical audit and impact assessment, proposed tools, sampling & data collection strategy etc. and work plan as part of inception report.	10 days after the effectiveness of the contract	20%
2	Report on Sampling, Enumerators Recruitment and Training, Field Testing, and Filed Operation Plans including Survey Instruments	30 days after the effectiveness of the contract	40%
3	Submit the draft report, including data analyses and compilation of all districts.	90 days after the effectiveness of the contract	20%
4	Submission of the final technical audit and impact assessment report	120 days after the effectiveness of the contract	20%

13. Requirements/ Qualifications

The consultant (firm) should have a proven track record of at least five years' experience in conducting **Technical and Environmental Audit and Impact Assessment of Climate-resilient Infrastructure**. Familiarity with rural infrastructure, community development, and participatory methodology are desirable. The firm should have a team of specialists who are well conversant with the sampling technique and have a strong and proven orientation towards applied research in rural community and poverty.

14. Team composition

The experience and qualifications of the following experts associated with the aspiring consultant/agency will be evaluated for the purpose of awarding the consultancy. The study would compose of the team members given below:

Team leader-1: The Team Leader should have a Bachelor / Master's degree in Civil Engineering or an equivalent field, preferably with a Ph.D., and possess at least 12 years of experience in rural development engineering, including assessing the impacts of infrastructure and their environmental aspects. The team

leader must have a strong and proven track record in evaluating the technical consistency, economic and financial viability, implementation capacity, and beneficiary participation of social development projects, as well as the ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with rural communities.

Environmental Specialist-1: S/he should have a Master's in Environmental Science with at least 10 years working experience in conducting field research, impact evaluation, and having adequate analytical skills in rural infrastructure and livelihood strategy and improvement.

The **Enumerators/Supervisors** should have a Bachelor's / Master's degree in Civil Engineering or Environmental Science. S/he should have at least 2 years' experience in data collection.

The concern specialist will prepare a report and will submit it to the Team leader. The Team Leader will accordingly compile and finalize that report.

15. Quality control

- i. The field supervisors will check all completed questionnaires and will conduct a minimum 30% spot-check in order to verify accuracy. The survey manager and field supervisors will randomly check interviewers and accompany them on some interviews.
- ii. The consultant will also formulate a monitoring team, for carrying out sample validation of the forms filled by the supervisors.
- iii. The SDF will conduct random verification of certain proportion of sample through telephone call/field visits to check the authenticity of data coming out from the survey.
- iv. The SDF will monitor the progress of the work and provide technical assistance, guidance, suggestions, and feedbacks to the consultant throughout the survey implementation period.

16. Confidentiality and data ownership

The Consultant will protect the confidentiality of individuals participating in the audit and assessment at all stages. All data is confidential and the property of SDF. Its sole purpose is for research on the business environment and is not for commercial use. No data or other information from this study will be released to third parties without the written approval of SDF.

The consultant will hand over all data and information to SDF and will not destroy any information or material at the end of the assessment. The names of participating households and business entities will not be released to any other party for any reason.

17. Duration of the assignment:

The assignment is for a period of four (4) months.