

Terms of Reference

Empowerment Program Coordinator for 5 Impact Evaluation Districts

1. Background

The Department of Samurdhi Development (DSD) within the Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment is implementing an Empowerment Program pilot, with World Bank financing, across 12 districts, targeting over 10,000 Aswesuma beneficiaries with a package of livelihood support that aims to improve people's wellbeing and resilience. This package includes: 1) family development plan and support; 2) psychosocial counselling; 3) business and soft-skills training; 4) business grant to kickstart a self-employment activity, and 5) continuous coaching and mentoring, as well as monitoring throughout the entire pilot duration. Beneficiaries will also be encouraged to create savings groups within the village and connect to Samurdhi Banks as needed.

In 5 of the 12 districts, the Empowerment Program pilot will embed a rigorous impact evaluation, namely in: 1) Galle; 2) Gampaha; 3) Hambantota; 4) Matara; and, 5) Puttalam. The evaluation will follow the randomized control trial (RCT) method, assessing the impact of the standard interventions of the Program as well as test the impact of a new curriculum on gender and household cooperation, and a separate new curriculum on climate adaptation intervention. The impact evaluation will require significant coordination, ground and follow-up work.

The purpose of this position is to provide management oversight and coordination of the implementation of Empowerment Program in the 5 impact evaluation districts of Galle, Gampaha, Hambantota, Matara, and Puttalam districts, under the direction of the Project Management Team within the DSD. The Empowerment Program Coordinator will support both the Project Management Team and the World Bank at the central level, as well as advise and coordinate with district-based field staff in the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of all Empowerment Program activities in these districts, including the implementation of the data collection. The role focuses on providing high quality technical and implementation support that is impactful at field level.

2. Responsibilities and Tasks

A. Technical Support to Empowerment Program

- Support the Program Management Team at the DSD, the World Bank and research consultants in refining the Empowerment Program and impact evaluation strategies and approaches on the ground in the five districts.

- Coordinate and increase the capacity of frontline delivery staff (e.g., the Samurdhi Development Officers) to understand and implement the Empowerment Program through field visits, trainings, and ongoing communication.
- Continuously assess the quality of program delivery and propose adjustments when needed.

B. Empowerment Program Coordination

- Coordinate annual and quarterly work-plans with the Project Management Team, monitor progress towards targets as per agreed timeframes, and regularly help the Team adjust targets, strategies, resources and delegation of responsibilities as needed to ensure smooth implementation.
- Ensure compliance with the design and agreed-upon features of the impact evaluation and support the Project Management Team in identifying key challenges and ways to resolve them.
- Support the Project Management Team during the World Bank's implementation support missions and follow-up on recommendations applicable to the program in the five districts.

C. Program monitoring, evaluation, learning and communication

- Coordinate with other Project Management Team members, researchers and vendors to ensure compliance with Empowerment Program RCT protocol. This includes ensuring program staff are delivering activities as defined by the protocols and agreed-upon arrangements, coordinating with the Project Management Team on the flow of beneficiaries, the various impact evaluation activities and proactively anticipating and escalating any issues.
- Monitor data for tracking program performance in the five districts, and decision making through regular program review meetings.
- Work with the M&E consultant to proactively identify ways in which to improve program monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment activities.
- Support learning from the Empowerment Program is regularly documented for internal and external audiences through high quality reporting, learning briefs, presentations, and other short articles
- Identify appropriate technical coordination meetings and attend these as requested
- Ensure communication of key program milestones to necessary stakeholders

3. Qualifications

- A minimum of a graduate degree (Bachelor's) in social science or development studies. A post graduate degree such as master's or PhD in these relevant fields is a plus.
- A minimum of 4 years of experience in fields related to supporting the poor and vulnerable, or livelihoods or agriculture or relevant fields - at national or international organizations, government or non-government.
- A proven track record of program management, including managing staff, work plans, and budget.
- Experience in partnership building, including collaboration with a range of government and non-government organization.
- Experience in monitoring and evaluation, including the collection and use of routine data to influence project activities. Experience in implementing research initiatives is a plus.
- Experience in mainstreaming gender and equality issues within program design and management. A demonstrated understanding and knowledge of inequality and climate-smart agriculture is a plus.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Excellent planning skills and a focus on delivering results.
- Fluency in Sinhala, with working proficiency in English – written and spoken. Tamil is a plus.

4. Contacts/Key Relationships

The consultant will report to the Project Director/Deputy Project Director within the Project Management Team.