

Terms of Reference

Empowerment Program Monitoring & Evaluation Expert

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

2. Assignment objective

The Project Management Team within the DSD that is overseeing the design and implementation of the World Bank-financed districts of the Empowerment Program is hiring an expert to support the monitoring and evaluation activities. The role includes providing high quality technical and implementation support that is impactful at field level.

3. Responsibilities and Tasks

The consultant/expert will support the Project Management Team in conducting all relevant monitoring activities of the Empowerment Program implementation in the 12 districts. This includes the following:

- **Assist in developing and maintaining a comprehensive M&E plan** that is aligned with the government and World Bank requirements, and captures the key interim input and output indicators, various outcome indicators and ways to verify them. To do so, the consultant will review the requirements of the World Bank financing

agreement, project appraisal document, operations manual and other relevant documents.

- **Create the necessary weekly, bi-weekly, monthly and quarterly monitoring templates related to Empowerment Program interventions.** This includes, of instance, attendance of beneficiaries in various training sessions, district and local-level staff meetings, the distribution of the business grant to beneficiaries...etc.
- **Coordinate with central- and district-level staff to periodically gather data and information** related to the implementation of the Empowerment Program interventions and compile them in the agreed-upon templates in a timely manner, synthesizing key indicators.
- **Track progress of program activities and implementation in terms of inputs, outputs, outcomes** and various other indicators, highlighting challenges and issues, especially delays in implementation and missing information, and working with the Project Management Team to investigate the reasons behind these challenges and options to resolve them.
- **Conduct regular field visits and assessment** to verify reported program and highlight the challenges in achieving progress within agreed-upon timeframes.
- **Oversee the collection** of relevant quantitative and qualitative data/information as needed.
- **Prepare period progress reports** and support the Project Management Team during the World Bank technical and implementation support missions to produce the monitoring and evaluation reports that are agreed upon, highlighting achievements and challenges.
- **Document key lessons learned and best practices** periodically and communicate them to the Project Management Team.
- **Provide guidance and capacity-building** support to government staff, both at the central and district levels to understand and be able to implement M&E activities and processes.
- **Facilitate the integration of M&E findings into program decision-making.**

4. Qualifications

- A minimum of a graduate degree (Bachelor's) in social science, development studies, public policy. Additional certifications in project management or monitoring and evaluation are a plus.

- A minimum of 5 years of experience in fields related to supporting project/program implementation - with national or international organizations, government or non-government.
- Experience in monitoring and evaluation activities, frameworks, methodologies. Experience with relevant monitoring software tools are a plus.
- Strong analytical skills with proficiency in data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Excellent planning skills and a focus on delivering results.
- Strong proficiency in Microsoft Excel.
- Ability to work effectively in a team environment and independently manage multiple tasks.
- Knowledge of the socio-economic context in Sri Lanka and experience working on programs funded by the World Bank is a plus.
- Fluency in Sinhala, with working proficiency in English – written and spoken. Tamil is a plus.

5. Contacts/Key Relationships

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