

Terms of Reference: Endline evaluation for Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) project

1) Summary

ActionAid is seeking a consultant(s) (or consultancy team or firm) with a strong women's rights focus, to conduct a multi-country project endline evaluation across three countries. The Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) project is a five-year initiative (2016-2020) supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands under the Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW) 2 funding mechanism. The project aims to increase the income of 21,000 women in Ghana, Rwanda and Bangladesh and their ability to control their income, through practicing agroecology, better access to markets and reducing, recognising and redistributing Unpaid Care Work. The project also seeks to address issues related to violence against women and girls through interlinkages with the project focus areas.

The endline evaluation will be carried out in all three countries, to assess the outcomes, impact and to document lessons learned. The evaluation should take a participatory and feminist approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather information from primary respondents including project participants, duty bearers, partners, project staff, key informants and other related sources of data. The evaluation will triangulate the collected quantitative and qualitative data with the project existing data generated through project monitoring, time diaries, annual reports, baseline and the mid-term evaluation. The evaluation will also incorporate programme results from Pakistan, where the project operated from 2016-2018, drawing on existing project reports and case studies.

This Terms of Reference sets out the scope and details of the work to be undertaken.

2) Background

ActionAid's vision for women's economic empowerment is of a world in which women have equal access to and control over resources and opportunities including skills development and market information and live in a social, cultural and political environment in which women have control over their time, access to income-generating opportunities and control over that income. Across all societies this vision is far from realised due to a combination of interlinked social, economic and political factors.

Deep seated views of women as caregivers, and men as 'breadwinners', continue to perpetuate the discrimination of women, restricting women's mobility and thus limiting their participation in society and the economy. This is often compounded by a lack of policies and poor implementation at local, national and international levels.

Evidence suggests that economic empowerment cannot be achieved without first addressing women's unequal workload, which reinforces gender inequalities by impinging upon education, restricting opportunities for paid work, putting women at greater risk for gender-based violence and limiting women's participation in decision-making spaces that affect them. Our long-term objective is to increase the economic empowerment of women in Ghana, Rwanda and Bangladesh and contribute to gender equality.

The root cause of violence against women lies in the unequal power relations between women and men, which ensure male dominance over women and are a feature of all societies. Violence itself, and the threat of violence, is a central factor in perpetuating women's position of economic, social and political subordination, marginalisation and inequality and as such must be addressed within programmes seeking to increase women's economic participation. Violence or threat of violence, along with women's unpaid care work restricts women's movement, thus keeping women in the household. The POWER project provides women with the opportunity and safe space to address issues of violence, as well as providing women with information regarding support services and working with community members to raise awareness and denounce violence against women.

These issues are mapped out in the POWER project theory of change, which leads the project to focus on the following four interlinked outcome areas with a strong intention to address the intersections of these issues;

1. The empowerment of women at household and community level, raising awareness of and claiming their rights;
2. The recognition, redistribution and reduction of Unpaid Care Work which keeps women in the private sphere;
3. The increase of women's access to productive resources, markets and knowledge of sustainable practices through Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA), which will ensure women continue to have a livelihood in the longer term, and;
4. Effecting policy and institutional change to provide an enabling environment that supports women's economic empowerment in 2019, the project team also clarified an additional outcome area: "Respect for women's rights, changes to gender roles and norms, and more positive expressions of masculinity contribute to preventing violence against women and girls".

3) Evaluation purpose

Women's economic rights is a priority for ActionAid. ActionAid's strategy and all our work is based on our Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and the understanding that unequal power relations deny people, particularly women, their rights leaving them poor and excluded. Their poverty is structural and only by helping to shift power relations can poor and marginalised women begin to exercise their rights. The POWER project falls under the international strategic priorities on women's economic empowerment; resilient livelihoods and secure climate justice, as detailed in Action for Global Justice¹. It also contributes to the policy influence element of ActionAid's 'Women's economic empowerment in the changing world'².

The evaluation should build upon the project baseline, Mid Term Review and monitoring data, providing an opportunity for more in-depth analysis and understanding of why certain intended or unintended outcomes are/are not occurring. Moreover, this evaluation will provide the opportunity for accountability towards the project stakeholders, as well as important learning for the project teams and partners.

The main objectives of the evaluation are:

- I. To assess how and in what ways the project contributed to the immediate changes in policies, practices, ideas and attitudes, and if there have been any negative or unexpected effects.

¹ https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/strategy_2028_lr.pdf

² https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/publications/actionaid_double_jeopardy_decent_work_violence_against_women.pdf

- II. In particular to assess the effectiveness and impact of the expected outcomes and the indicators in the project logframe:
 - a. By the end of 2020, 19,500 rural women are organised, able to demand their rights as farmers and carers and have greater influence in their households and communities
 - b. 2. By the end of 2020, women’s unpaid care work is more highly valued within households, communities and government, more evenly distributed within households, and hours spent by women on unpaid care work is reduced, resulting in more free time for women to engage in social, economic and political activities.
 3. By the end of 2020, respect for women’s rights, changes to gender roles and norms, and more positive expressions of masculinity contribute to preventing violence against women and girls.
 - c. By the end of 2020, 21,000 rural women have more secure and sustainable access to markets and productive resources leading to increased income.
 - d. Greater visibility of intersections of agroecology, women’s unpaid care work and women’s economic participation leads to changes in policy and practice by sub-national, national, regional and international stakeholders by 2020.
- III. To evaluate the POWER project against selected OECD-DAC criteria: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm> <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf>
- IV. To provide recommendations that will help local project partners and communities to continue the project activities and policy influencing.
- V. To engage and involve local project partners throughout the evaluation process to build their evaluation capacities and strengthen ownership of the findings and recommendations to continue delivering for their communities when the project ends.
- VI. To document lessons learned and best practices of the intervention, including in formats that are highly accessible to project participants and partners

4) Intended users

The evaluation is expected to draw on a ‘utilisation-focused³’ approach. The primary and secondary intended users include:

- a. **ActionAid and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** to understand more about the project progress and the changes the project created on the lives of the participants (what, how and why). And to learn from the project interventions and best practices.
- b. **Project local partners:** to build their capacities in the evaluation process and to advance ownership of the findings and recommendations to continue delivering for the local communities when the project ends.
- c. **Project participants:** to ensure they have a voice in understanding more about the impact the project created on their lives and to facilitate learning and input on the locally owned approaches the project tested and used to address on issues that prevent achieving women’s economic rights and justice.
- d. **ActionAid and peer organisations globally:** to use the findings of the evaluation to improve the quality of women’s economic empowerment interventions across the world, by using them to inform programme policy and research around alternative economic systems that better work for women.

5) Evaluation questions

³ See more details on this in the methodology section

In line with the objectives of this ToR and to fulfil the purpose of this evaluation, the following specific questions should be addressed. These evaluation questions are expected to be addressed across all the outcomes of the project. The consultant/s will develop further questions under each evaluation question to address specifics and details of the project outcomes.

1. To what extent has the project achieved its objectives and results?
2. To what extent has the project achieved holistic (or interconnected) and enduring changes in systems and norms in support of women's rights? (evaluators are expected to assess the interlinkages and intersectionality between the five project outcomes)
3. To what extent has the project been relevant to economic, social, political and environmental needs and circumstances of project participants and local contexts? (Whether the theory of change of the project is still appropriate given changed circumstances)
4. To what extent is the project strengthening the capacities of partner organisations to advance women's rights and gender equality?
5. To what extent is the project sustainable, and how could partners and communities sustain the outcomes of the project in future?
6. To what extent does the project represent good value for money, considering all four VFM 'Es' (Equality, Effectives, Economy, Efficiency)
7. What are the project's best practices and learning across outcomes?

6) Methodology

This is not definitive methodology for the evaluation rather a starting point for the applicants to build on and propose more innovative, participatory, feminist and utilization focused methods that fully respond to the terms of reference. We suggest the consultants facilitate the evaluation in such a way that best meets the needs of the real identified users and engages them throughout the process from the start of the evaluation to the end. This will allow them to explain how they intend to use the evaluation findings (or process) before any key decisions are made, such as designing the evaluation method, finalizing the evaluation questions and adopting data collection methodologies. For proposals against this ToR we have included some notes from our women's groups in Ghana on how they would like to see the evaluation designed and used, further inputs can be gathered during the inception stage of the evaluation with the relevant consultants. ActionAid will work with the consultants to ensure that the project participants and other mentioned intended users are engaged through the process.

The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) analytical framework was adapted for the project baseline; however, this created a limitation in that the baseline didn't collect quantitative data directly against the project indicators. We would be keen to explore ways the WEAI framework could be used to some extent (perhaps a subset of it) but with the focus being more on qualitative exploration of change in the project. Any quantitative analysis is expected to directly correspond to the project's expected outcomes.

Therefore, we expect this evaluation to use both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data for the evaluation. Although, the baseline didn't collect quantitative values directly against the project indicators, the WEAI framework generated quantitative values against its domains which are related to the project indicators. Hence, we suggest the evaluators to triangulate the WEAI data, the project monitoring data and the endline quantitative data to measure the project progress. Ethical protocols and appropriate approaches to issues such as violence must be followed in the methodology.

We envisioned that consultants would travel to spend time in Ghana, Rwanda and Bangladesh and conduct face-to-face interviews with the project teams, partners, duty bearers at different levels, stakeholders, project participants and representatives of related institutions with support from members of the project team and partners. However, given the global situation with regards to

Coronavirus we would like prospective consultants to share different scenario-based options for how this could be approached depending on how the situation plays out. This could include a range of approaches and we are open to exploring options and to provide ActionAid support to logistics, local consultancy and other needs.

Due to the importance of the perspectives of the project partners for this evaluation we expect that the consultants to involve them in the entire evaluation process, to support their evaluation capacities and learning, and to increase the ownership of the findings and recommendations so they can continue delivering for the community when the project ends.

The methodology for the evaluation will also need to draw on desk research of documents from all three countries to understand the project and its specifics and to assess progress against the evaluation questions. The sources for desk research include the project proposal, theory of change, log-frame, M&E frame work, quarterly reports, annual reports, case studies, mid-term evaluation, baseline, policy briefs, research and other documentation, such as reports produced by country teams, video documentaries, communiqués, etc. The project collects monitoring data against the project indicators, and this should be used to triangulate data collected in the evaluation. The project has also collected time diary data which captures the amount of time the respondent spent on different activities in the last 24 hours. Time diary data for the first year has undergone detailed feminist analysis by a research partner and findings from this (along with any analysis already completed for the data of the subsequent years) should feed into this evaluation.

The same data collection methodology will be used in all three countries. However, this may need to be contextualised for each country and space will need to be given to country specific variations, constraints and specific requirements, supported by local project staff and partners.

7) Sampling

The consultant(s) will determine the appropriate sample size in consultation with the Project Management Team (PMT), POWER project country teams, partners and taking into consideration size of the project participants and stakeholders.

8) Expected outputs

- A detailed inception report outlining the final agreed methodology, sampling, ethical considerations and workplan
- Three country-level evaluation reports and combined evaluation report for the primary use of ActionAid and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 1-3 outputs in a format of the evaluators' choice for the primary use of the partners and project participants.
- All raw data files including quantitative output and syntax files, qualitative transcripts etc.
- All reports will be produced in English.
- Conduct country level one day validation workshop on the evaluation findings with the key project participants and relevant stakeholders
- Conduct learning circle/webinar for some intended report users on the findings of the evaluation.
- Summary of evaluation findings against each outcome.

9) Expected timeline

The evaluation is expected to take approximately 90 days, including development of the inception report and tools, data collection, any travel, analysis, validation, report writing and submission of final products, starting May 2020. The consultant(s) is expected to present a detailed activity plan and timeline as part of the inception report.

10) Governance and coordination

The selected consultant/s will be contracted by and report to the Project Management Team, and the POWER project MEL Coordinator will be the focal point for regular communication between all stakeholders. He will also provide technical advice on research approaches and ensuring deliverables meet agreed quality standards and grant requirements.

The Project Management Team (PMT), Project countries teams, ActionAid UK and ActionAid International related technical advisors will review the evaluation deliverables to assure the quality of the work.

Opportunities for the involvement of partner organisations in each country, and of women directly involved in the project, will need to be explored. As a minimum it is suggested that each country convene a group of women involved in the project to act as a reference group to provide feedback to and from specific issues (i.e. on the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, evaluation protocols, feedback on draft reports etc.). ActionAid countries will be responsible for this arrangement.

Support provided by ActionAid will involve: introductory briefings with the consultant(s); security briefings in advance of any travel and on arrival, and on-going security support; logistical support arranging visas and booking accommodation as required; providing contact details and introductions to key stakeholders; and mobilising community members to be involved in the evaluation.

The final products of the evaluation will be approved by AAUK's Deputy Director of International Development Policy and Practice for publication and payment release.

11) Budget

Please send a detailed budget including all expenses and taxes that may apply along with the technical application. There is also budget available for dissemination and utilisation of the evaluation, and we would welcome proposals that include innovative post-evaluation activities that support the dissemination, internal learning and utilisation from this evaluation.

12) Selection Criteria

ActionAid is seeking proposals from individuals or teams with the following skills and experience:

- i. Demonstrable experience working on women's rights and gender equality programmes, particularly relating to women's economic empowerment;
- ii. Technical expertise in women's rights, particularly related to women's economic empowerment, unpaid care work and violence against women, ideally alongside knowledge of sustainable rural livelihoods and agroecology;
- iii. Geographic knowledge of at least some of the project countries;
- iv. Experience in conducting feminist evaluations or research.
- v. Previous experience working with communities conducting action research and/or using participatory approaches;
- vi. Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to ethical issues in research/evaluations;
- vii. Experience in managing and coordinating evaluation/research exercises, including with or through country-based partners, delivering agreed outputs on time and on budget;
- viii. Ability to write high quality, clear, concise reports in English.
- ix. Experience in creating evaluation outputs that are accessible to project participants and partners
- x. Selected consultant(s) will be expected to sign and abide by ActionAid values and key policies (including Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy, Child Protection Policy etc.).

- xi. Selected consultant(s) will also be expected to make a commitment to the work the evaluation period.

13) How to apply

We invite interested individuals, groups or firms to submit the following application documents:

- i. Copy of CV of the consultant(s) who will undertake the research and evaluation (maximum 4 sides of A4 each);
- ii. A maximum 10 sides of A4 expression of interest that addresses the above ToR;
- iii. A proposed activities schedule/work plan with tentative time frame;
- iv. Financial proposal detailing consultant(s) itemized fees, data collection and administrative costs
- v. One recent example of similar evaluation report written by the applicant (if joint authored to include a description of the role of the named consultant in the report);
- vi. Contact details of two independent referees

Please send your applications, or any questions, to: khadar.ahmed@actionaid.org copying in christina.kwangari@actionaid.org latest on **15th May 2020.**

14) POWER project links

For further information about the POWER project see the below links

- i. <http://powerproject.actionaid.org/>
- ii. <http://d-portal.org/q.html?aid=GB-CHC-274467-GB-XUKDU15001>

Appendix 1: POWER project logframe extract:

Long-term objective: To contribute to the increased economic empowerment of women in Ghana, Rwanda, Bangladesh and Pakistan

Specific objective: 21,000 women in Ghana, Rwanda, Bangladesh and Pakistan have increased income, and ability to control their income, through practicing CRSA and reducing, recognising and redistributing unpaid care work

Indicator 1: Reduction in the amount of time women spend on UCW

Indicator 2: Greater gender equity in household distribution of UCW between men and women

Indicator 3: Proportion of sampled women with increased control of resources and income from practising CRSA and increased access to markets

Outcome Indicators:

Outcomes	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
Outcome 1: By the end of 2020 21,000 rural women are organised and are able to demand their rights as farmers and carers and have greater influence in their households and communities	70% of targeted women report increased skills and confidence demanding their rights and reporting cases of violence by the end of the project
	50% of women report having greater control over resources in their households by the end of the project
	60% of target communities in each country in which a majority of sampled women report greater presence of women on community structures by the end of the project
	25% of women regularly participating in community structures by the end of the project
Outcome 2: By the end of 2020 Women's unpaid care work (UCW) is more highly valued within households, communities and government, more evenly distributed within households and hours spent by women on UCW is reduced, resulting in	70% of duty-bearers, men and women sampled from target communities reporting positive attitudes towards addressing unpaid care work by the end of the project
	30% of sampled target households where women report a positive redistribution of time spent on UCW by the end of the project

more free time for women to engage in social, economic and political activities.	Reduction of at least 15% in the amount of time women spend on unpaid care work between 2016 and 2019.
	30% of sampled women who report having more time to spend on social, economic or political activities by the end of the project
Outcome 3: By the end of 2020, 21,000 rural women have more secure and sustainable access to markets and productive resources leading to increased income	60% of women report increased, more regular access to markets by the end of the project
	50% of women surveyed who report improved yields as a result of using CRSA techniques and agricultural inputs by the end of the project
	30% of sampled women who report an increase in their income by the end of the project
Outcome 4: Greater visibility of intersections of CRSA, women's UCW and women's economic participation leads to changes in policy and practice by sub-national, national, regional and international stakeholders by 2020.	75% of local and national duty bearers surveyed who agree that greater support and investment is needed to reduce UCW by the end of the project
	8 new or revised strategy or policy documents from national, regional or international bodies or bi-lateral donors that address gender inequality facing rural women including disproportionate burden of unpaid care work and its impact on sustainable farming techniques and women's economic empowerment
	Increase in national policy support for interventions that reduces women's unpaid care work as assessed by key external experts in each country, by the end of the project

Appendix 2:

POWER Project Participants’ Inputs on the Evaluation Process

STAKEHOLDER	EXPECTATIONS ON EVALUATION PROCESS	HOW DO THEY WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS?	HOW THEY WANT THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE SHARED WITH THEM
<p>Project Participants (Women’s groups)</p>	<p>The evaluation process should be participatory at community levels, with the representation of project structures.</p> <p>Identify underlying opportunities and challenges that women and other stakeholders could use to sustain the successes of the project.</p> <p>Although evaluation is both qualitative and quantitative, questions should be very open-structured to enable more probing for impacts.</p>	<p>Use some appropriate participatory techniques (Such as REFLECT e.g. access and control maps) tools in the data collection.</p> <p>Engage participants in the planning stage and to agree on dates for interviews etc.</p> <p>A few selected Facilitators/group representatives should be involved in the triangulation of findings.</p> <p>Some Facilitators could support in translation/interpretation.</p>	<p>Copy of report in hard copy and short Audios/videos.</p> <p>Report should be shared in an evidence-based format including pictures.</p> <p>Post-evaluation reflection and dissemination meeting at the community levels to enable holistic learning.</p>