

Call for Proposal for External Evaluation

Project Name: Promoting human rights of marginalized groups in Bangladesh through Brattyajan Resource Centre

Implementing organization: Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)

Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Evaluation

1. Introduction: This external evaluation has been initiated to evaluate a three-year project (officially launched on 1 December 2021), “Promoting human rights of marginalized groups in Bangladesh through Brattyajan Resource Centre” implemented by the Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD). The project addresses the issues of select marginalized and excluded people of Bangladesh. These select marginalized and excluded communities include Adivasis, tea workers, sex workers, transgender (TG), Harijan or sweeper, Rishi or cobbler (Harijan and Rishi identify themselves as Dalit as well), Jaladas (literal meaning is water slaves for fishermen in Chattogram and Cox’s Bazar coasts), Kaiputra or Kawra (pig rearing community), Bede (gypsies), Bihari, and different other groups.

The strategic actions under the project include: building and sharing knowledge resources through participatory research with communities, articulating community agendas, working closely with mainstream media, equipping and empowering communities with information and capacity building, increasing understanding of social security of the marginalized and excluded communities and building connections among the actors and organizations taking interest in empowering the excluded and marginalized communities.

Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD), the legal holder of the project is a non-profit Bangladeshi organization established in 1993 and working for human rights and environmental justice through research, training, dialogue, awareness raising and advocacy. SEHD works closely with the indigenous, marginalized, excluded and vulnerable communities.

In the areas of human rights, SEHD stands unique in building knowledge and creating awareness with regard to socially excluded and disadvantaged communities mentioned above.

SEHD has been particularly addressing the social, economic and cultural rights of these communities who are denied of their rightful place in society. SEHD, since its establishment, has carried out its work through action-oriented research, investigation and diverse publications and by offering skill sharing and capacity building training on

the subjects and areas it works in. Its targets of capacity building activities have been journalists, academic communities, human rights defenders, community leaders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs).

SEHD, for the last three decades, has established synergies between human rights and environment and has demonstrated how important it is for human rights and environmental organizations to create pathways for work, focused and result-oriented. SEHD stands unique with the knowledge resources (books, monographs, reports, documentary films, etc.) it has developed and shared with a wide range of targets and users show its unique strategies and actions. With knowledge resources in hand, SEHD has been impactful in many areas in influencing policies and practices which contribute to well-being of the final beneficiaries of the project.

2. The evaluation: This project has a long background. The legal holder and implementor of the project has been working in the field of environment and human rights with particular attention to the Adivasis or ethnic communities and select marginalized communities mentioned above. The outputs from the past projects supported by different donors include but are not limited to: more than one hundred publications and documentary films; strategies of investigation and bottom up research; communication and network with communities and an array of other actors including state agencies.

Significant knowledge resources (outputs), networks, communication, and interactions among different actors have also been developed during the past two years of the current project.

However, the organization has gone through difficult political periods and yet it has been able to carry out its research and other actions in critical areas. Its knowledge outputs (books, monographs, investigative reports, documentary films) have become significant texts in circulation locally and globally leading to impacts in many front.

The principal goal of the evaluation is to assess the significance of the project actions, the country context (political and social) and the rationale of its continuity.

The evaluation report is primarily for use by SEHD, its partners and donors. The results will be used for learning purposes as well as inputs into strategic decision making.

3. Objectives of the Evaluation

- a. To assess the rationale of the project actions addressing the marginalization and exclusion challenges in Bangladesh and the country context (social and political).
- b. To assess the relevance and value that the project and its outputs add to the discussion on issues concerning the select marginalized and excluded communities of Bangladesh.
- c. To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the project, its outputs and the human resources involved.
- d. To assess the sustainability challenges of the project actions, mechanism to establish Brattyajan Resource Centre (BRC) as a national entity and its relationship with SEHD.
- e. To frame recommendations for the project implementors and partners on how they perform better for achieving results.

4. Scope of the Evaluation (key issues)

4.i. Background of the project: The three-year project, starting on December 1, 2021 has been designed in the long background of SEHD's innovative ideas in work with the excluded and marginalized communities. What is unique of SEHD it is not donor driven, although it has survived with support from donors (for some details see the project brochure and SEHD profile)

4.ii. Country contexts (framework conditions for civil society, economy, politics, education and bureaucracy in Bangladesh)

The current economic outlook, political and social contexts are quite interesting and challenging for the country. Bangladesh has indeed shown impressive development under the current government that has been ruling the country for four terms in a row. The Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2022 shows that poverty and extreme poverty in the country have come down to 18.7% and 5.6% respectively in 2022 from 24.3% and 12.9% in 2016. However, there are concerns regarding political practices in the country. An independent reflection on political and social contexts of the project actions will be of great importance. The evaluators take into consideration not just the current project period but also a decade before this project had started.

4.iii. Major areas of intervention: (a) The key actions under the project: how they have been designed and implemented. (b) Geographic scope: The final beneficiary groups of the project and the targets are spread all over the country with their main concentrations in Dhaka and some other locations in the Northeast, North-centre, Northwest and North-south. The project is administered by the Dhaka office and has two small local offices—

one in Sreemangal, the centre of tea growing areas and one in Modhupur. The evaluators will be required to make field visits to these geographic locations.

4.iv. Relevance of the project: How relevant is the project, its objectives and activities in the present context? What do the targets and stakeholders think about the project and its relevance? What are the activities considered most relevant? How do the targets and stakeholders benefit from the project activities?

4.v. Outputs: The evaluators independently review the project outputs (publications, productions, contacts, networks, etc.)—baseline value and current value; how the outputs are generated and their significance for the targets; and use of the outputs at different level.

4.vi. Achieving objectives and expected results: To what extents are the objectives and results being achieved? What are the strategic and innovative approaches that contribute to the achievement of the objectives and results? Are there unintended effects (positive or negative) of the project actions? How do the project actions contribute to empowering the final beneficiary groups?

4.vii. Efficiency of the legal holder of the project and partners: Do the structure of the legal holder of the project, its partners, project personnel, and volunteers are efficient in planning, implementation and monitoring of the project action? Are changes for improvement necessary? Is a proper time schedule in place for efficient implementation of the project?

4.viii. Sustainability Challenges: (i) Sustainability challenge for SEHD and its challenging activities, (ii) How can a strategy be developed in facing and overcoming these challenges? (iii) Public response to actions of SEHD.

5. Management and mode of operation

- Structure of SEHD and its relations with partners.
- Audit, finances and personnel.
- Planning, monitoring, reporting (narrative and financial) of the project.

6. Methodology and organization of the evaluation

- Briefing of the evaluators along with the project officials who will assist the evaluation team.
- Review and utilization of existing documents—proposal, progress reports, and published materials (books, documentary films, media reports, etc.)—and MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning) systems in place.

- The key stages of the evaluation process include but not limited to: (i) meetings, FGDs, KIIs, consultations with different groups of stakeholders and participation in on-going events (workshops, training, consultation, coordination meeting), if any, during the evaluation with different groups of stakeholders, (ii) interaction over key points or findings with program lead and primary users of the evaluation report (iii) verification of findings (iv) presentation of preliminary findings and validation (v) finalizing the evaluation report and submission.

- **Evaluation Team:** The evaluation team is comprised of two experts. Both evaluators must have a strong professional background in social science and research. They also must be well conversant with social innovativeness, entrepreneurship, work in the areas of human rights, environment, and social exclusion. Journalistic background and interest in communication and media will be an asset but not necessarily required.

- **Timeframe:** A total workdays for each of the evaluators is 24 days. The entire evaluation process is completed by 15 June 2024. The final report is presented to SEHD and donors by 10 June 2024. (Any change regarding timeframe is negotiable). The final schedule will be set by the evaluators in consultation with SEHD officials.

7. The Final Output: Report: The final output is a report [in English], which is expected to be between 25 and 30 pages (excluding annexes). The evaluators will decide among themselves about their roles and contributions to the report. The evaluators may discuss with SEHD officials the structure and elements while preparing the final report.

8. Remuneration and Mode of Payment: The contract will provide details of remuneration and how the payments are made.

9. Contract: A contract will be signed between SEHD and evaluators setting principles and guidelines about confidentiality, ethics and other matters.

10. Rights: SEHD reserves the right to reject or cancel any proposal without showing any reason.

11. Deadline and Submission of Details: Interested individuals are requested to send their proposal including cover letter, CVs, budget, and plan via email to philip.gain@gmail.com & sehd@sehd.org. Please note that the maximum budget for two evaluators is Taka 700,000 including TAX, VAT and travel cost.

Application Deadline: **12 April 2024**