



Terms of Reference (ToR)

for preparing a report on best practices and challenges in policy implementation

under the project

“Environmental Human Rights for a Just Transition: Strengthened Local CSOs Transforming Climate Hotspots into Resilient Communities” (short: ENGAGE)

NDICI CSO/2024/461-667

1. Background and rationale

NETZ Partnership for Development and Justice (short: NETZ) is a non-governmental charitable organisation registered in Germany and Bangladesh. Since its inception in 1989, NETZ, in cooperation with its local partners, has been advocating for the self-determination of the people of Bangladesh in areas such as climate-resilient livelihoods, inclusive quality education and equal human rights. The organisation places a specific emphasis on promoting and protecting the rights of marginalised groups while addressing the structural causes of poverty and injustice.

Under the project “Environmental Human Rights for a Just Transition: Strengthened Local CSOs Transforming Climate Hotspots into Resilient Communities” (short: ENGAGE; NDICI CSO/2024/461-667) NETZ is seeking to hire two researchers for preparing two separate reports on best practices and challenges in policy implementation. The project is co-funded by the European Union.

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) to independently contribute to sustainable development, human rights, democracy and good governance in Bangladesh. The specific objective is to empower CSOs – particularly those led by women, youth and indigenous peoples – to advocate for a healthy, safe environment and a low-carbon, climate-resilient society. The project directly targets over 92,000 individuals across six climate-vulnerable districts in Bangladesh.

2. Objectives of the assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to generate evidence-based insights and contribute to policy learning. The researchers will be engaged to document, analyse and compile best practices and challenges related to policy implementation. These reports will be shared through regional and national policy dialogues as well as submitted to relevant ministries to address gaps in policy implementation.

The primary objective of this assignment is to review and analyse monitoring reports of CSOs, their experiences, document lessons learnt, best practices and identify challenges associated with policy implementation. All of this will be used to produce concise evidence-based reports – i.e., one report per researcher – with actionable recommendations.

3. Scope of work

3.1 Geographic coverage and timeframe.

The research work shall cover selected working districts of the local partner NGOs of NETZ in the Rajshahi and Khulna region. For this purpose, the researchers shall visit one working district each, i.e. Bagerhat and Rajshahi.

The report is expected to be completed within 20 working days, including 17 days of field work in the working area of the above-mentioned project. The final report shall be submitted to NETZ by no later than 10th December 2026.

3.2 Mandatory report structure and guiding questions

The report shall be prepared in English and by using the template reporting format provided by NETZ, which depicts the formal report structure provided below (see chapter 5 as well in this regard). The researchers are free to include new sub-chapters under the main chapter structure provided in the reporting template by NETZ, if needed, to improve the report's structure. The overall length of the main part of the report shall be maximum 12 pages.

Report structure

Chapter	Topic	Pages*	Remark
	Cover page (including pictures from the field level work)		This part is not counted for overall maximum length of 12 pages for the report
	Table of contents		
	List of abbreviations		
1.	Purpose and objectives	0.5	
2.	Methodology	0.5	
3.	Main characteristics of visited working areas	1	This section should be a very concise and brief depiction of the situation in the working areas; no national level references are required. It should focus on impacts of climate-induced HRV and environmental degradation on women, poor people, youth and minorities.
4.	Best practices including challenges and learnings	5	This section should focus on local ownership, context specific solution, sustainability, community empowerment and agency, inclusion, evidence and replicability.
5.	Challenges in policy implementation	2	This section should focus on highlighting policy implementation gaps, especially on local and regional level.
6.	Actionable recommendations	2	Recommendations for improvement of enforcement of before mentioned laws and acts.
7.	Conclusion	1	
	Annex		

**Please note: The mentioned page numbers for the individual chapters provide an indication how much priority should be given to which chapter.*

3.3 Methodology

There will be one researcher for one district to conduct the above-mentioned research. The methodology shall include at least the following and shall be discussed with and agreed by NETZ before start of the assignment:

- Coordination with NETZ and the partner NGOs at the beginning of the assignment and continuously brief them as and when needed throughout the research. Debriefing sessions shall be organised by the researcher with staff of the visited partner NGOs and with NETZ after the last working area visit to share and to discuss findings.

- b) Conducting a desk review of relevant policies (such as RTI Act, Environmental Conservation Rules 2023, Protection and Conservation of Fish Act 1950 and Jolmohal Policy 2009), implementation reports, case stories, environmental human rights violation reports by CSOs and other literature.
- c) Conducting key informant interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and consultations with relevant stakeholders, where required.
- d) Identifying and documenting examples of environmental human rights violations caused by economic development activities.
- e) Identifying and documenting successful best practices including challenges and learnings on topics such as cooperation between CSOs and local authorities, environment-friendly low-carbon alternatives, gender-sensitive disaster preparedness etc.
- f) Developing a framework for categorising best practices and policy implementation challenges.
- g) Preparation of a comprehensive draft report which will be shared with NETZ for feedback. The feedback and suggestions shall be reflected during the finalisation of the reports by the respective researcher.
- h) Presenting key findings in a regional/national level policy dialogue, if requested.

A detailed working plan will be submitted by the respective researchers to NETZ for approval. For this purpose, NETZ will as well seek feedback and suggestions from the partner NGOs as well.

4. Process

The following table summarises the different main phases of the assignment and will be concretised in cooperation with the selected researchers.

No.	Evaluation phase
1	Planning meeting with staff members of NETZ in Dhaka
2	Review of respective documents
3	Field level work focussing on FGDs, KII, case stories, review monitoring data
4	Preliminary dissemination (debriefing) of findings with NETZ staff members in Dhaka after the completion of field level work
5	Draft report preparation by the researchers based on report template provided by NETZ and submission to NETZ for feedback
6	Final report preparation by the researchers, including feedback and suggestions of NETZ and the partner NGOs
7	Submission of final reports by researchers to NETZ
8	If requested, prepare and share the findings/results in regional/national dialogue events.

5. Outputs and deliverables

The researcher will prepare a report in English (consistently written in whether British English or American English). The report shall be prepared using the reporting template provided by NETZ (including the report structure provided in chapter 3.3) and will have a maximum length of 12 pages (only content counted); additional documents should be included in the Annex of the report.

6. Required profile of the researchers

For researchers, strong academic/research experience, demonstrated interest in environmental human rights violations and the ability to undertake field-based research may be considered in lieu of extensive professional experience. The assignment is specifically for junior researchers seeking to further develop professional research experience.

Required qualifications for the researchers:

- Must hold a completed Master's degree (preferably in social science and environmental science) with a research thesis/dissertation.
- Preference is given to postgraduate students and researchers with up to three years of professional research experience.
- Proven experience in conducting research/monograph.

- Excellent written English and strong analytical skills.
- Sound theoretical and practical knowledge of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.
- Relevant work experience as a volunteer/researcher on issues related to climate-induced HRV, environmental degradation, human rights and climate change in Bangladesh; experience with conflict-sensitive approaches is an asset.
- Willingness to travel and stay at the working areas for information collection and in-depth research
- Must be independent of NETZ and its partner NGOs, i.e., not affiliated with the organisations or its staff.

7. Tentative timetable

The research work comprises 20 working days in the working district including travelling. The researchers will start working from 25 October 2026 and shall submit her/his comprehensive draft report until 30 November 2026. The final report, which incorporates the feedback provided by NETZ, will be submitted by the researcher latest 10th December 2026. The partner NGOs will provide logistical support during the field visits. The detailed schedule for the research work will be finalised in cooperation with the selected researcher based on the following overview.

Overview for detailed research assignment schedule and quantity structure per researcher*

No.	Activity	Date	No. of day/s	Responsible
1	Preliminary meeting and discussions	25 October 2026	0.5 day	NETZ staff
2	Planning, setting methodology and incorporating feedback of NETZ	By 28 October 2026	0.5 day	Researcher & NETZ
4	Travelling to selected working districts and return back	31 October and return 16 November 2026	2 days	Researcher
5	Field level work, review relevant project document and preparing draft report	01-15 November 2026	15 days	Researcher
6	Discuss findings of the field level work with NETZ in Dhaka	19 November 2026	0.5 day	Researcher & NETZ
8	Finalising the report incorporating feedback provided by NETZ and submission of the final report to NETZ	By 10 December 2026	1.5 day	Researcher
	Total		20 days	

*This will be adjusted as per need and finalised together with the selected researcher.

8. Management of the research

The following persons will be involved in the overall management of the assignment:

Name (Position, NGO)	Responsibilities
Programme Manager, NETZ	Overall coordination with the researchers and partner NGOs; providing required project documents to researchers; organisational support for researchers to plan field visit to the working districts; providing feedback on draft research reports (incl. feedback coming from partner NGOs); all contract-related issues; planning regarding potential official restrictions, e.g., concerning travelling (if situation demands).
Project Coordinators of partner NGOs	Coordination and planning of working district visits by researchers; ensuring participation of staff members and other stakeholders during FGDs and additional interviews (if required), debriefing etc.; if needed, providing feedback on draft research reports via NETZ.

9. General conditions

- An individual financial contract will be signed after acceptance of this ToR with each of selected researchers.

- As the specific assignment requires direct dealing with the target group and partner NGOs, NETZ expects to have a friendly and respectful environment throughout the study.
- The assigned researchers must agree with the Gender Policy, Code of Conduct to Prevent Sexual Harassment and the Child Protection Policy of NETZ when signing the contract. During the assignment, the mentioned safeguarding measures of the policies are complied with. The aforementioned documents can be accessed here: www.bangladesch.org/en/protection-and-grievance-redress/.
- The NETZ management reserves the right to disagree with any incomplete report and consequently NETZ may retain the last rate of remuneration.
- NETZ reserves the right to amend this contract at any time according to the necessity of the project given prior communication.
- Each of the researcher will receive the remuneration in two instalments: 40% upon signing the financial agreement, another 60% after the acceptance of the final report by NETZ in terms of fulfilling all required elements as laid out in the ToR. Tax will be deducted at source upon government rules.
- The contract may be terminated if the specific researcher is found non-compliant to the terms and conditions of the ToR.
- NETZ will provide food, accommodation and transportation during field visit at actual expenditure basis after submission of the bills.
- NETZ and the partner NGOs will have the copyright of all results and documents elaborated under this assignment. Any publication also in extracts including using this assignment as work reference needs prior written approval of NETZ.

10. Signatures