

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Project Title	Development of National Service Standards and Guidelines for Climate-Resilient Rural Water Supply and Capacitating Partners on Climate Finance
Hiring Organization	Practical Action Consulting Bangladesh Limited
Title	Research Associate
No. of Position	2
Location	Dhaka with frequent field visit
Duration	May 2026–September 2026 (5 Months, 5 days in a week)
Relationships	Need to work with Programme and Business Development Team
Travel	Field visits (including qualitative and quantitative data collection)
Monthly Salary	BDT 40,588 - 60,882 (inclusive of all applicable VAT and Taxes)

1. Background

Practical Action Consulting Bangladesh Limited (PAC) is a specialised consultancy wing of Practical Action in Bangladesh, focused on advancing sustainable solutions across key sectors, including agriculture, climate and resilience, waste management, clean energy, and participatory market systems. With a strong commitment to inclusive development and evidence-based policy support, PAC applies its technical expertise to address complex challenges in both rural and urban contexts.

To strengthen its agriculture and agribusiness portfolio, PAC requires specialised technical expertise in agricultural value chain analysis, agribusiness development, and participatory market systems development (PMSD). This consultancy will provide hands-on technical inputs to assess crop, livestock, dairy, fisheries, and agro-processing value chains; identify production, market, and service-delivery constraints; and design practical, scalable agribusiness and market-led interventions. The consultant will apply established tools for value chain mapping, market assessment, institutional development, business planning, and capacity building, ensuring that programme designs and proposals are technically sound, commercially viable, and grounded in field realities across agricultural and rural market contexts.

2. Scope of Work of the Assignment

2.1. Literature Review and Desk Research

- Conduct systematic desk reviews of existing national and international standards, guidelines, policies, and frameworks related to climate-resilient rural water supply and WASH services in Bangladesh.
- Review and synthesize key national reference documents including the NAP, NDC 3.0, Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, National Policy for WASH 2025, WASH Sector Development Plan (SDP), Sector Investment Plan (SIP), and DPHE technical protocols.

Big change starts small

- Review international and global WASH climate-resilience frameworks from UNICEF, GWP, WHO, Sphere, and the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Climate Action Task Team, identifying relevant benchmarks and adaptation gaps for Bangladesh.
- Compile and synthesize literature on climate finance mechanisms, including traditional and innovative instruments such as green bonds, blended finance, carbon markets, and guarantee models, with relevance to the WASH sector.
- Identify gaps in existing standards and guidelines and propose evidence-based recommendations to fill them, drawing on national expertise and international best practices.

2.2. Standards and Guidelines Development Support

- Assist in drafting and structuring the National Service Standards for Climate-Resilient Rural Water Supply, ensuring alignment with both national policies and international frameworks, including slow- and fast-onset climate change impacts.
- Help develop practical checklists to make guidelines operational for government use at central and subnational levels (district and upazila).
- Assist in incorporating cross-cutting themes including gender, disability, social inclusion, environmental and social safeguards (ESS), and accountability to affected populations (AAP).
- Ensure coherence of draft documents with principles from the UNICEF-GWP WASH Climate Resilient Development Framework and the global set of climate-resilient WASH indicators (JMP/GLAAS).

2.3. Primary Data Collection and Analysis

- Support design and deployment of qualitative data collection tools, including Key Informant Interview (KII) guides and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) protocols, for consultations with subnational government stakeholders and community actors.
- Conduct field visits to climate-affected districts to facilitate FGDs and KIIs, ensuring quality, ethical standards, and community sensitivity in data collection.
- Compile, clean, organize, and manage datasets generated through field research, stakeholder consultations, and secondary literature.
- Analyze qualitative data using NVivo, Atlas.ti, or similar software; support quantitative analysis where applicable using Excel, STATA, SPSS, or R.
- Synthesize findings from primary and secondary data to contribute to the drafting of standards, guidelines, and training materials.

2.4. Stakeholder Consultation and Coordination Support

- Assist in organizing and documenting sector consultations at national level with WASH and climate experts from I/NGOs, academia, government ministries (MoLGRD&C, MoEFCC, Ministry of Finance), and UNICEF WASH Section.
- Support coordination with and engagement of the Technical Working Committee formed by MoLGRD&C throughout the project development lifecycle.
- Prepare consultation materials including background notes, agenda, discussion guides, and participant lists for all technical and stakeholder meetings.

Big change starts small

- Record and produce accurate meeting minutes within two (2) business days of each meeting, and distribute to relevant stakeholders as directed.
- Assist in managing communication and scheduling with ministry officials, DPHE focal points, UNICEF, consortium partners, and external experts.

2.5. Report Preparation and Progress Documentation

- Assist in preparing and formatting progress presentations for the technical working group committee across the project timeline.
- Maintain a well-organized project documentation system encompassing field notes, KII and FGD transcripts, reference materials, data files, and project correspondence.
- Track deliverable timelines and flag risks or delays proactively to the Team Lead / Project Manager.

2.6. Capacity Building Support

- Provide content development and logistical support for in-person capacity building sessions on national standards and guidelines, targeting approximately 120 key sectoral partners (government officials, I/NGOs, practitioners).
- Assist in designing training materials, presentations, handouts, and checklists for sessions on standards/guidelines capacity building and climate finance.
- Support the design and facilitation of climate finance training sessions, including interactive elements such as proposal-writing exercises, case studies on blended finance models, and group work on climate change problems.
- Coordinate logistics (venue, participant invitations, materials preparation, documentation) for all training workshops and the final validation workshop.
- Contribute to preparation of the training report to be shared with LGD, PSB, and UNICEF, including session summaries, participant lists, and key takeaways.

2.7. Knowledge Management and Deliverable Support

- Support drafting, formatting, and professional editing of all project deliverables, including the standards document, guidelines (with checklists), training materials, and final training report.
- Ensure all deliverables meet the quality, accessibility, and presentation standards required by UNICEF and the MoLGRD&C Technical Working Committee.
- Assist in preparing presentation materials for the Water and Sanitation Forum (national level) for final review and approval of the standards and guidelines.
- Contribute to knowledge products such as policy briefs, one-pagers, or summaries as required by the team lead or UNICEF.
- Assist the team in preparing project outputs for potential publication or dissemination through sector platforms.

2.8. Monitoring, Administration, and Coordination

- Coordinate day-to-day project activities across consortium partners (PAC Bangladesh, ITN-BUET, Foresight Advisory), ensuring smooth information flow and task alignment.
- Assist the Team Lead / Assignment Co-ordinator in tracking project timelines, deliverables, and payment milestones across the four project phases as per the deliverables and payment schedule.

Big change starts small

- Handle necessary administrative paperwork and documentation needed for project validation, reporting, and quality control as required by PAC Bangladesh.
- Support broader administrative tasks for PAC as assigned, including business development support, profile building, and organizational reporting.

3. Deliverables

The consultant is expected to deliver the following:

- Available summary status based on literature review.
- Completed clean data, edit, analytical table/graphs.
- Prepare detailed research outputs, including reports, presentations, and policy briefs, based on findings.
- Conducted qualitative assessments such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), Case Stories and MSC (Most Significant Change).
- Assisted in preparing concept note, grant proposals, EOI, ToR, etc to secure funding and provide updates to stakeholders.
- Organized and facilitated stakeholder meetings, workshops, and consultations at local and national levels.
- Maintained communication and networking relationships with government organizations (GO), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Private sector stakeholders and ensure proper documentation.
- Developed communication and profile building materials.
- Performed monitoring visits and prepared reports.
- Performed administrative works in consultation with relevant departments/teams for project purpose.
- Ensure additional support as requested by the organization.

4. Methodology

The consultant will adopt a collaborative and evidence-based approach, beginning with a review of relevant policies, sector studies, and donor guidelines to inform proposal design. Consultations with PAC teams and targeted stakeholders will help identify priorities and refine intervention strategies. Using these insights, the consultant will support co-creation of proposal concepts, technical narratives, work plans, and results frameworks. Drafts will be iteratively refined based on feedback to ensure clarity, alignment, and quality. Throughout the assignment, the consultant will provide brief progress updates and document key decisions to maintain coordination and transparency.

5. Reporting and Supervision

- **Reporting Line:** The consultant will report directly to Samir Muhammad Korban and respective assignment lead.
- **Communication:** The consultant will provide regular updates via email, virtual meetings, and in-person sessions as required.
- **Approval:** Deliverables will be reviewed and approved by Samir Muhammad Korban.

6. Timeframe

The agreement will be effective from May 2026 to September 2026. The consultant may be requested to provide additional task-based support, for which the scope of work and required

Big change starts small

number of working days will be mutually agreed beforehand to ensure clarity and ease of payment processing. Based on the intensity and duration of each assignment, the consultant may be given contracts for multiple tasks.

7. Ethical Considerations

The consultant is expected to adhere to PAC's ethical guidelines, always maintaining confidentiality and professionalism.

8. Financial Arrangement

The Consultant will be paid based on the deliverables which will be defined in the contract. Payment will be made based on the number of days worked, upon submission of an invoice, agreed deliverables, and a timesheet by the consultant.

9. Organisational Policies, Safeguarding and Code of Conduct

- Ensure that the role is delivered in compliance with organisational policies on Safeguarding, Diversity and Dignity at work and the Code of Conduct.
- Responsible for gender responsive behaviour in all actions and decisions.
- Ensure non-discriminative behaviour based on gender, age, sex, race, ethnic background, culture, disability, nationality, religion and marital status.
- Be sensitive and adaptable to gender and social inclusion.

10. Organisational Core Values

- Ensure that you are **People Centred**, striving to create an equal, fair, accessible, dignified and respectful environment for everyone we work with – from colleagues and communities, to supporters, suppliers and stakeholders.
- Ensure you are **Impact Driven**, existing to make a positive difference, so everything we do is driven by our energy to create lasting value for the people and communities we serve.
- Ensure you are **Transparent** and trustworthy, acting with integrity, honesty, and strong ethics, building mutual trust with everyone we work with to achieve the highest standards.
- Ensure you are **Innovative**, and champion learning, curiosity and fresh thinking, bringing local knowledge to create global impact.
- Ensure you are a **Resilient** changemaker working for sustainable development, meeting challenges head-on, and evolving through the lessons learnt.

Big change starts small