

Neeranchal National Watershed Project
Terms of Reference for Grievance Redress Consultant for
Development of Grievance Redress Mechanism

Background

The Department of Land Resources (DoLR) Government of India is currently preparing the World Bank supported Neeranchal National Watershed Development Project. Neeranchal is expected to positively influence the IWMP outcomes through technical and financial support for better delivery and impacts through improved planning approaches, capacity building, coordination and convergence, and supportive research and development. The main objectives of the IWMP are to restore the ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing degraded natural resources such as soil, vegetative cover and water. The outcomes are prevention of soil run-off, regeneration of natural vegetation, rain water harvesting and recharging of the ground water table. This enables multi-cropping and the introduction of diverse agro-based activities, which help to provide sustainable livelihoods to the people residing in the watershed area. In addition, there is a Scheme of Technology Development, Extension and Training (TDET) is also being implemented to promote development of cost effective and proven technologies to support watershed management.

Whereas, Neeranchal is not expected to invest in field based investments and is likely to provide technical capacity building support, it is expected to positively influence the outcomes of IWMP through addressing its shortcomings that would also include environment and social related challenges of watershed programs. It is therefore, critical to closely look at the current state of affairs in the watershed sector and identify potential environmental and social issues, assess the effectiveness of the ongoing watershed programs including the IWMP, especially their outcome focus and impact on people's lives and productivity, and identify the key challenges in sustaining the investments made on watersheds. Issues related to environmental and social sustainability of these investments also need to be considered.

Project Description

The preliminary **Project Development Objective** is: *Neeranchal aims to increase incomes through enhanced agricultural production and improve sustainability of natural resources through better watershed management among the people living in selected micro-watersheds in eight States, by adding value to IWMP programs through institutional reform, capacity building, the development and application of best practices, and convergence with other Government projects.*

Project Components

There are four proposed project components:

1) Institutional Reform and Capacity Building, in DoLR and across all states

The component would be delivered across all states and strengthen the capability of key national watershed institutions, particularly the DoLR and NRAA to more effectively plan, coordinate, deliver, and monitor integrated watershed programs; undertake relevant policy and economic analyses; develop national watershed strategies; and report on national progress. Specialized training would also be provided to State Level Nodal Agencies (SLNAs), other designated watershed implementing agencies, village level extension agents, community institutions, Gram Panchayat members, watershed committees, and farmers around improved watershed management practices.

2) State IWMP Support and Post Project Sustainability in Focal States

In the proposed eight focal states, the component would provide intensive support for improved IWMP operations and convergence/integration with other relevant sectors and schemes. The component would strengthen the lead nodal agency responsible for integrated watershed management; pilot integrated catchment assessment and planning processes; develop comprehensive digital databases for improved and integrated watershed management planning; develop strong internal M&E tools, including MIS in the state nodal agency; pilot community-based monitoring and documentation; and support incremental costs of state PMUs related to project implementation.

3) National Innovation Support

The component would support: applied research studies across key thematic areas including integrated landscape management and agricultural intensification, climate smart agriculture and agriculture value chains; applying best practices and tools for basic and advanced hydrological assessment; better demand-driven technology transfer; strengthening the institutional arrangements for coordinating and delivering longer-term needs-based research identification, technology transfer, research quality assurance, and dissemination of rainfed agriculture and watershed management research.

4) Project Management/Implementation Support.

This component would support the operation of a national Project Management Unit (PMU) in DoLR; a comprehensive communication program; 3rd party M&E support directly tied to project activities, including baseline surveys, input and output monitoring, process monitoring, impact assessments, acquisition of necessary remote sensing images, and case studies to guide project implementation.

The project would concentrate on providing specific technical support activities, goods and incremental costs and would generally not finance major physical works. The Neeranchal investments in technical assistance would complement IWMP and its own investments in watershed planning, physical works for soil and water conservation, and alternative livelihoods through ongoing operations. Component 1 in Neeranchal addresses capacity building at central, state and local levels in addition to what IWMP already delivers. Component 2 potentially focuses on issues that have not been considered at scale in most ongoing watershed programs

and as such it may be necessary to ensure that their anticipated environmental and social impacts are included and also addressed. Component 3 is largely supporting research, development and technology transfer to support IWMP delivery, farmers, and other stakeholders. Given the technical assistance focus of the project, as at this stage it does not entail Bank direct investments on the ground (such as, water and soil conservation works, constructing check dams, erosion prevention structures etc.), there may be only minor environmental and/or social safeguards issues to be mitigated. At the same time, the project is designed to improve the capacity of DoLR and watershed institutions in participating states to better address safeguards in their IWMP.

Project Location

The project would predominantly focus on selected sites in dryland areas in eight states: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. The states present a wide range of physical characteristics ranging from hilly terrain and forested highlands of central India on one hand to drier landscapes of the western India as well as four states with fairly long coastlines. The eight states also vary in terms of agro-climatic and/or agro-ecological zones with widely varying temperature and rainfall profiles. Broadly, all the states have small and marginal farmers with small sized farmlands facing the challenges of climatic variations with current low levels of resilience to climate change.

Objective and Scope of the Assignment

An effective grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is required to provide pathways for stakeholders to raise issues about project implementation and performance that are linked to governance and anti-corruption measures.

An effective GRM will rest on six key principles:

- Fairness. Grievances are treated confidentially, assessed impartially, and handled transparently.
- Objectiveness and independence. Operates independently of all interested parties to guarantee fair, objective, and impartial treatment to each case.
- Simplicity and accessibility. Procedures to file grievances and seek action are simple enough that project beneficiaries can easily understand them.
- Responsiveness and efficiency. Designed to be responsive to the needs of all complainants.
- Speed and proportionality. All grievances, simple or complex, are addressed and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Participatory and social inclusion. Project-affected people—community members, members of vulnerable groups, project implementers, civil society, and the media—are encouraged to bring grievances and comments to the attention of project authorities

Description of Key Tasks

Task 1. Survey existing formal and informal GRMs in project implementing agencies.

Indian states currently have formal governmental grievance redress systems with responsibility for grievance redress and resolution, but these differ across states in terms of their design and operational effectiveness. At the community level, there are informal institutions (Gram Panchayat leaders, village elders, etc.) that are already dealing with grievance redress issues. The consultants will evaluate the scope of these systems, and identify the potential to build on them while integrating them into the project's integrated GRM from communities to states, and to DoLR.

Task 2. Estimate users and resources required to operate a GRM. The consultant will estimate the number of citizens that are likely to use the GRM and assess the resources—human, financial, and technological—that are available (and may be required) for the GRM to function effectively within the project. Accordingly, the consultant will determine the GRM's scope and scale and identify resource gaps.

Task 3. Develop standard operating procedures. The consultant will develop operating procedures, guidelines, and flowcharts detailing how the grievance redress process will unfold within the project's operating structures, more broadly within the IWMP system, and how it will be monitored and reported on. The consultant will help integrate the grievance redress processes into the project's operational plan/manual as well as compile stand-alone publications to be distributed to project staff and GRM users. The consultant will also recommend how a GRM could be better integrated into IWMP field manuals and Common Guidelines. The consultant will recommend how the key implementing agencies can most effectively manage the proposed system, for example an assigned individual staff member, a small unit, etc.

Task 4. Design approaches for the client to publicize the GRM system. The consultant will work with the client to develop a grievance redress policy that clearly states that management embraces grievance reports and views them as opportunities for improvement. The policy should identify guiding principles; define the scope and types of grievances to be addressed; set out a user-friendly procedure for lodging grievances; outline a grievance redress structure; describe performance standards; and spell out internal and external grievance review mechanisms.

Task 5. Identify staff/units in project implementing agencies to manage the GRM system.

Staff in charge of grievance redress should be skilled and professional. Based on the consultant's recommendations, project management will identify staff and assign them responsibility for handling grievances. The consultant will design a training plan to teach staff (and community members, if applicable) how to handle grievances and why the GRM is important to the project's success. This training material will include information about interacting with beneficiaries about grievances, the organization's customer service standards, and internal policies and procedures in relation to grievance redress.

KEY DELIVERABLES, PROPOSED MILESTONES, AND REPORTING

It is expected that the assignment will require up to 30 days of professional time, including 15 days in project states. The estimated cost would be:

| Consultancy Description | Person-Days | Rate/Day (INR) | Total Fees (Lakh) | Field Travel (Days) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Grievance Redress System | 30 | 8,000 | 2.40 | 15 |

The Individual Consultants would be paid on the basis of actual working days as per work plan for the individual consultant or changes thereof approved by DoLR. Further, for field visits, the individual Consultant would be eligible for receiving reimbursement of First AC Train fare/ Apex Air fare (economy class) by Air India; reimbursement for boarding and lodging up to Rs. 3000/- per day as per actual; and reimbursement of local travel charges up to Rs. 500/- per day.

Key Deliverables and Milestones

All documents will be delivered in hard copy (x 3) as well as in electronic form on CD-ROM (x3) no later than 30 days after the scheduled end of the activity, or as indicated for specific cases or in specific terms of reference. It is expected that a draft report will be provided to the DoLR no later than 60 days from signing of the contract.

Facilities to be provided by Client:

The client will facilitate access to key information available with various government agencies. They will also facilitate client access to relevant staff in various agencies, facilitate visits, and organize stakeholder workshops for carrying out of this assignment. They will also facilitate making copies of the reports and their distribution. They will also provide feedback on the outputs in a reasonable timeframe (maximum of two weeks after presentation).

Reporting and supervision arrangements

The consultant will report to the DoLR Project Director in Delhi.

Desired Qualifications and Experience of the Consultant

Education

- Minimum Master's degree from a recognized post-secondary institution in sociology, anthropology, systems design, project monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Experience

- At least 10 years of experience in respective technical areas cited in the scope of work, with a minimum of five years of experience in India, preferably including areas such as monitoring and evaluation, social assessment, etc.
- Demonstrated experience of designing and/or managing similar systems in India

SELECTION CRITERIA OF CONSULTANT

The successful Individual Consultant will be chosen based on the following criteria.

Selection criteria

| Sl. No. | Evaluation Criteria | Maximum marks |
|----------------|---|----------------------|
| Part A | Evaluation Criteria for Short- listing of Applications | |
| a) | Qualification | 20 |
| i) | Additional Academic Qualification beyond the minimum required | 10 |
| ii) | Any Additional Professional Qualification beyond the minimum required | 10 |
| | | |
| b) | Experience (relevant expertise justifying adequacy for the assignment) | 60 |
| i) | Year-wise tasks completed in last three years of similar nature | 15 |
| ii) | Experience of working with Government of India and various State Governments | 10 |
| iii) | Experience of working with World Bank | 20 |
| iv) | Works currently in hand | 5 |
| v) | Experience of working for any similar programme of Government of India with Multilateral Bodies | 10 |
| | | |
| Part-B | Interview - Assessment of Capability of candidate for the assignment through Interview | 20 |
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| | Total | 100 |