

## EOI for Lead Consultant on Assessing the Resilience of the Local Rice Market System in Disaster-Prone Barguna District, Bangladesh

### 1. BACKGROUND

Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to natural hazards due to its low-lying terrain, proximity to the Bay of Bengal, and extensive river systems. Over the past three decades, the country has experienced more than 200 disasters, with storms and floods being the most frequent, while climate change exacerbates risks through sea-level rise, riverbank erosion, soil salinization, and extreme weather events. Although disaster management frameworks such as the NPDMS, Disaster Management Act 2012, and the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) exist, gaps in coordination, capacity, and local capacity, and implementation limit effective preparedness, response, and recovery. Rice, as the staple food and a primary source of income for smallholders and marginal farmers, plays a central role in food security, income stability, and recovery following shocks, making its market system critical in disaster-prone areas.

Barguna district, located in the disaster-prone coastal belt of southern Bangladesh, is frequently affected by cyclones, tidal surges, waterlogging, and saline intrusion. These hazards disrupt agricultural production as well as the functioning of local markets, which is the backbone of livelihoods for many smallholder farmers. Despite being rice-surplus, farmers often face weak market linkages, inadequate storage and processing facilities, dependence on middlemen, and limited access to timely market information. These challenges tend to intensify during and after disasters, when farmers experience reduced bargaining power and are more likely to engage in distress sales.

Jagonari and Oxfam is planning to commission a study the local rice market system in Barguna district. The study will examine how the rice market functions under normal conditions and how it is affected during disaster and post-disaster periods, including availability, pricing, market linkages, and vulnerabilities across key market actors. The findings will support Oxfam and its partners in making informed decisions on market-based and resilience-oriented programming, including identifying realistic entry points for strengthening the local rice market system.

### 2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of this assignment is to generate actionable, evidence-based insights on the functioning and resilience of the local rice market system in Barguna district, to inform future market-based, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and livelihood resilience programming.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

1. **Map and analyze the rice market system and value chain**  
Map the rice market chain from input supply, production, milling, trading to retail, and identify key actors, roles, and relationships.
2. **Assess market dynamics, pricing, and performance**  
Examine demand–supply dynamics, seasonal variations, and the distribution of prices, costs, and margins among actors under normal and disaster conditions.

3. **Identify constraints, power dynamics, and policy issues**  
Analyze key bottlenecks, inefficiencies, market access barriers, and systemic challenges affecting farmers and other actors.
4. **Examine resilience and disaster impacts on market systems**  
Assess how disasters disrupt market functioning and how different actors respond and adapt.
5. **Assess inclusion, capacity needs, and identify actionable interventions**  
Evaluate gender and social inclusion, identify capacity gaps, and propose practical interventions to strengthen market resilience and performance.

The analysis will give balanced attention to both existing challenges and practical entry points that could be explored in future market-based and resilience-oriented programming.

### 3. KEY LEARNING QUESTION

The study is expected to answer the following key learning questions:

1. How does the local rice market system in Barguna function under normal conditions, and how does this change during and after disaster events?
2. Where do disaster-related disruptions have the greatest impact on farmers' access to markets and prices?
3. Who are the key actors in the rice market chain, and what are their functions and contributions under both normal and disaster conditions? How can their roles be strengthened to improve market performance during disasters?
4. How are prices and margins distributed among different market actors, and how does this distribution shift during shock periods?
5. What coping strategies do farmers and other market actors use during market disruptions, and what are their limitations?
6. How do gender and social factors influence market participation, decision-making, and benefit-sharing within the rice market system?
7. What practical and realistic entry points exist for strengthening the local rice market system to support disaster risk reduction and livelihood resilience?
8. What are the main policy and structural constraints affecting the rice market in normal and disaster conditions, and what measures can be taken to address them?
9. What skills and capacities do market actors need, and what methods or interventions can be designed to develop the capacities specially to enhance performance during disasters?

### 4. METHODOLOGY

The study will adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to ensure data triangulation and enhance the validity of findings. Data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. The study will be conducted by an external consultant, with technical and logistical support from Jagonari and Oxfam. The consultant team will consist of one Lead Consultant and one Research Associate (details of the team composition are provided in Section 7).

**The proposed study consists of three phases.**

The **first phase** involves developing tools and methodology of the study by reviewing relevant secondary data. During the consultant onboarding phase, the consultant will propose an appropriate research methodology, including a conceptual framework; methodological approach; respondent analysis, study area and sampling strategy; sample size determination; data collection methods; data quality assurance mechanisms; data processing and analysis plan; ethical considerations; study limitations; and a strategy for stakeholder engagement and uptake of research findings. A sense-making session will be convened to adopt expert opinions regarding the research and to gather additional insights to inform the data collection process. The session will also serve as a platform to review and validate the proposed research methodology, tools, and overall approach.

The **second phase** will involve primary data collection and analysis using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative data will be collected from smallholders and marginal rice farmers through a structured questionnaire. Qualitative data will be collected using appropriate methods, including In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and case studies. These tools will be applied with a range of stakeholders, including local traders, rice millers, wholesalers, and retailers operating in local markets, as well as representatives from relevant government line departments, Oxfam staff, and other key stakeholders.

The **third phase** will involve data analysis, validation, report preparation, dissemination and uptake engagement plan.

## **5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLE FROM CONSULTANT**

The consultant is expected to deliver the following outputs within the agreed timeline:

### **1. Inception Report**

A brief inception report outlining the proposed methodology, sampling approach, finalized data collection tools, a data management plan, and a risk mitigation matrix

### **2. Draft Study Report**

A draft report presenting:

- An overview of the local rice market system in Barguna district;
- Key findings from quantitative and qualitative analysis;
- Key market actors defining their roles and contributions.
- Analysis of market functioning under normal and disaster/post-disaster conditions;
- Key constraints, risks, and opportunities across the market chain;
- Consideration of gender and social dynamics affecting market participation and benefits.

### **3. Validation Workshop and Summary Note**

Facilitation of a stakeholder validation session to present preliminary findings and gather feedback, along with a short summary note capturing key discussion points and agreed clarifications.

### **4. Final Study Report**

A revised and final report including a section on Learning and Adaptive Management Recommendations.

### **5. Data and Tools Package**

Clean datasets, data collection tools, and relevant annexes submitted in accessible formats to support transparency, learning, and future use.

## 6. TIMELINE AND DURATION

The total duration of the assignment will be approximately four months from the date of contract signing, taking into account the need for real-time data collection before and after a disaster. The proposed time allocation is indicative and may be further refined during the inception phase.

- **Desk review, Inception report and tools:** ~15 working days
- **Field data collection:** ~30 working days
- **Data analysis and draft reporting:** ~15 working days
- **Validation, finalization, and submission of deliverables:** ~15 working days

A detailed workplan and timeline, aligned with the agreed methodology and deliverables, will be submitted by the consultant as part of the inception report and finalized in consultation with the commissioning organization.

## 7. TEAM COMPOSITION AND QUALIFICATION

The assignment will be carried out by a **multidisciplinary team** with complementary expertise in market systems, disaster risk reduction, and field-based data collection. The expected team composition includes the following roles:

### ▪ **Lead Researcher / Team Leader**

The Lead Researcher will be responsible for overall study design, analysis, and reporting. S/he should have at least **five (5) years of relevant experience** in agricultural value chains, market systems analysis, or rural livelihoods, with demonstrated experience in leading similar studies. Familiarity with disaster-prone contexts and local markets in Bangladesh will be an advantage.

### ▪ **Research Associate (JAGO NARI will hire separately)**

The Research Associate will support primary data collection activities, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, and will prepare interview and discussion transcripts. The Research Associate will receive support from JAGO NARI Project staff in conducting questionnaire surveys. S/he should possess both practical and theoretical knowledge of research design and data collection methods, including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), case studies, and surveys. S/he should also have strong report-writing skills, including the ability to prepare accurate transcripts and to analyze and interpret quantitative and qualitative data.

## 8. HUMAN RESOURC STRUCTURE FOR LOCAL RICE MARKET STUDY

JAGO NARI is initiating a comprehensive study on the local rice market chain in Barguna District to strengthen market systems with a Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) lens, as outlined in the approved Terms of Reference (ToR).

To conduct the study, JAGO NARI is planning to recruit two consultants: one Research Associate (Barguna-based) and one Lead Researcher (Consultant, remote, with field visit support if required), adopting a hybrid human resource modality. The rationale for this approach includes ensuring strong local engagement and contextual understanding, maintaining continuous field presence for quality data collection, facilitating close coordination with community stakeholders, achieving cost-effectiveness due to limited financial resources, and strengthening internal monitoring and ownership of the research process. Both professionals will work closely with JAGO NARI management and Oxfam technical advisors and will report directly to the Director – Research, Monitoring & Evaluation (RME), JAGO NARI.

**The Research Associate will be recruited by JAGO NARI Authority, will provide necessary support to the Lead Researcher/Lead consultant and the honorarium and other related costs of the Research Associate will be provided by JAGO NARI separately.**

## 9. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested individuals/organizations are invited to submit:

- A brief technical proposal outlining the approach and tools
- A Transparent, realistic, and competitive financial proposal
- Portfolio of similar past assignments
- CVs of lead consultant.
- TAX Return Certificate/Acknowledgement copy of Tax Return submission.
- Trade License (for consultancy firm, not for individual consultant)
- VAT Certificate (for consultancy firm, not for individual consultant)

## 10. SELECTION CRITERIA (CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS)

When using this weighted scoring method, the award of the contract should be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

a) Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and

b) Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria.

- Relevant experience – 40%
- Proposed methodology – 30%
- Quality of past work – 20%
- Financial competitiveness – 10%

## 11. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST SUBMISSION ADDRESS & MODALITY

The consultants/consultancy firm will submit a proposal along with other documents according to the Terms of Reference (ToR) to: [procurement@jagonari.org](mailto:procurement@jagonari.org) by **21 April 2026** mentioning subject line as *“Submission of EOI as a Lead Consultant.*

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