

Terms of Reference (ToR)

For Consultancy Services on Farmer-led Value Chain Development

- **Project Title:** Farmer-led Value Chain Development for Food Security and Livelihood (FLVCD)
- **Implementing Organization:** MATI, Bangladesh
- **Supporting Partner:** MISEREOR, Germany
- **Project & Service Period:** March 1, 2026, to February 28, 2028
- **Role Focus:** Peoples-led Approach (PLD) / Farmer-led Development (FLD)

1. Background and Context

Founded in 1997, MATI is a grassroots non-governmental organization dedicated to poverty alleviation in the Greater Mymensingh districts of Bangladesh. The organization empowers disadvantaged communities through holistic programs bridging economic empowerment, human rights, and climate resilience, ultimately reaching approximately 35,000 people with a dedicated team of 97 staff members.

Currently, MATI is implementing the FLVCD project to address acute food insecurity, structural exploitation by middlemen, and the environmental impacts of conventional agriculture. The project targets roughly 3,800 direct beneficiaries—50% of whom are women—focusing on smallholder, marginal, landless farming households, and indigenous communities in the Mymensingh and Sherpur districts.

The core objectives of the project include:

- Organizing farmers into self-help producer groups to build organic cultivation skills and capacity.
- Establishing a farmer-led value chain and an IFOAM-accredited Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) to secure better market access and profitable pricing.
- Conserving indigenous crop varieties and supporting the seed multiplication efforts of farmer-breeder Mr. Centu Hajong to regain local seed sovereignty.

2. Objectives of the Consultancy

MATI seeks to hire a competent consultant to support project staff and target communities in implementing a “Peoples-led Approach (PLD)”. The specific objectives of this assignment are:

- To provide technical and backup support to the project team in farmer-led development initiatives, monitoring, coaching, and training.
- To assist Mr. Centu Hajong and the broader farmer community in conserving 23 crop varieties, over 300 germplasm accessions, and at least 10 endangered crop species.
- To develop a community-led enterprise that ensures the sustainability of rice-based production systems through strengthened farmer-led rice breeding.
- To systematically characterize at least three widely accepted rice varieties developed by Mr. Centu Hajong, helping to maintain varietal purity, ensure seed quality, and facilitate legal recognition.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for the following key activities:

- **Training and Skill Development:** Facilitate formal and hands-on training courses on the Farmer-led Development (FLD) Approach, Farmer-led Entrepreneurship, Value Chain Development, and Cooperative-led Enterprise Development for both MATI staff and target communities.
- **Community Enterprise Development:** Visit Mr. Centu Hajong's village to facilitate meetings and guide the farming community in developing a farmer cooperative-led enterprise using the FLD approach.
- **Varietal Characterization and Performance Trials:** Select three of the 25 promising rice varieties already developed by Mr. Centu Hajong for formal characterization and field trials. The consultant must visit the trial plots throughout the growing seasons to provide technical support for data collection, analysis, documentation, and reporting.
- **Rice Breeding and Germplasm Conservation:** Provide continuous technical expertise to enhance Mr. Centu Hajong's ongoing rice breeding work and support the conservation of his rice germplasms.
- **Field Visits and Farmer Reflection:** Conduct individual home and farm visits to identify, understand, and document local innovations and best farming practices, such as ideal cropping patterns and low external input usage. Focus should be placed on marginalized farmers to document their unique cost-reduction experiments for broader exchange.

4. Duration and Timeframe

- The assignment requires exactly 15 working days per project year, scheduled in approximately three different working slots.
- The exact distribution of working days will be determined through mutual discussion between the consultant and MATI representatives to meet practical project needs.

- All annual consultancy work must be strictly completed between June and December of every project year.

5. Required Qualifications, Skills, and Experience

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Agriculture, with a strong preference for specialization in Genetics and Plant Breeding (specifically rice breeding).
- Demonstrated and proven expertise in farmer-led rice breeding and the broader farmer-led development approach.
- A minimum of 5 years of practical experience executing farmer-led plant breeding initiatives within a reputed organization.

6. Financial and Logistical Arrangements

- **Fees and Payment:** The consultant or consultancy firm will receive a fixed fee for a maximum of 15 days of work per year, disbursed after deducting applicable VAT and Tax. Payments will be issued upon the successful completion of each designated slot of working days.
- **Logistics:** MATI will arrange and fund necessary vehicles, food, and accommodation for the consultant during field visits and related activities. MATI will independently arrange and finance all logistics for the target group training sessions from a separate budget head. Logistics specifically required for consultancy services at Mr. Centu Hajong's rice breeding field will be covered directly under this consultancy budget.

7. Application Process

Interested consultants or firms with expertise in PLD/FLA must submit their application materials via courier service or email by **11th of July 2026 at the latest**. Submissions must include a brief technical and financial proposal, detailed resumes, a cover letter outlining relevant skills and experiences, and proposed consultancy fees excluding VAT and Tax.

Submission Details:

- **Attention:** Md. Rafiqul Islam Chowdhury, Head of Finance and Admin
- **Address:** 67/1, S.A Sarker Road, Sankipara, Mymensingh-2200
- **Email:** matibangladesh@hotmail.com
- For any urgent clarifications regarding this ToR, please call 01718288986 (Md. Shahidul Islam, Director-MATI).