

Terms of References (ToR) for Conducting Research on the Impact of Climate Change on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Bangladesh

Introduction:

Climate change is increasingly recognized not only as an environmental and economic challenge, but also as a major driver of social inequality. Bangladesh, one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world, the impacts of extreme weather events—such as floods, cyclones, river erosion, drought and salinity intrusion—are already disrupting livelihoods, displacing communities and placing increased pressure on scarce resources. These climatic stresses disproportionately affect women and girls, who face pre-existing gender inequalities and socio-economic marginalization. In disaster-prone contexts like Bangladesh, the combination of environmental shocks and existing gender inequalities increases their exposure to various forms of violence.

ActionAid is a global movement working to advance human rights and end poverty, believing that everyone has the power to create change for themselves, their families, and their communities. Operating in over 45 countries, ActionAid reaches more than 15 million people through a bottom-up approach to decision-making. In Bangladesh, ActionAid is committed to protecting women’s rights and eliminating gender-based violence in vulnerable communities. Women, girls, persons with disabilities, and children are among the most affected during natural disasters, facing heightened risks and challenges. Many lack the awareness and knowledge needed to respond effectively or build resilience. To address these challenges, it is essential to empower women and girls with the knowledge and skills to anticipate, cope with, and recover from climate shocks while strengthening their resilience against GBV risks.

ActionAid Bangladesh is implementing the project **“Enhancing Climate Resilience for Women and Girls by Strengthening Coping, Adaptive, and Transformative Capacities to Address Climate-Induced GBV Risks and Ensure Access to Multi-Sectoral GBV Response Services in High-Risk Disaster-Prone Districts of Bangladesh.”** This initiative aims to mitigate climate-induced GBV by strengthening life-skills and ensuring access to essential services for the most vulnerable women and girls through Women-Led Community Centers (WLCCs) in disaster-prone areas.

Result Outcome of the Project:

By 2026, more women, girls and sexual minorities benefit from an environment in which they are empowered to exercise their rights, agency and decision-making power over all aspects of their lives towards a life are free from all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful norms and practices.

Title of the assignment:

Conduct Research on Research on Climate Change’s Impact on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Bangladesh

Rationale:

Climate Change impact Women, Men, Girls, Boys, Children of all ages differently. Due to pre-existing gender inequalities, women, children, persons with disabilities, and members of the LGBTIQ community are often the most adversely affected people in disasters. For women living in disaster prone area, Violence is more even pervasive. 74 percent of women experience IPV in their lifetime, compared than 68 percent non-disaster region. Any effort to address gender-based violence must also consider the impact of climate crisis.

Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and salinity intrusion threaten agriculture, food security, and livelihoods, while frequent floods, droughts, and storms increase women’s household burdens. Displacement, loss of shelter and income, and weakened protection systems expose women and girls to domestic violence, child marriage, and sexual assault. Climate-induced stress also reinforces harmful gender norms, driving negative coping strategies that heighten women’s risks.

Objective of the Assignment:

The research will generate targeted evidence on the causal linkages between climate change-induced stressors (both rapid-onset disasters and slow-onset processes) and the increased risk, incidence, and patterns of gender-based violence against women and transgender individuals in Bangladesh, in order to inform the design of integrated climate resilience and GBV prevention and response programs.

To achieve the research objectives, the study should aim to answer the following questions:

1. Map the specific pathways and mechanisms (economic, social, environmental) through which climate change stressors contribute to various forms of GBV (intimate partner violence, sexual violence, trafficking, and psychological abuse) in selected climate vulnerable locations.
2. Investigate how climate-induced displacement, migration, and changing demographic pressures (e.g., in urban slums or char areas) alter community structures and power dynamics, creating new or heightened risks of GBV.
3. Document the coping mechanisms, resilience strategies, and leadership of women, girls, and transgender individuals in the face of climate adversity, and highlight community-led best practices and innovative solutions for integrated GBV-climate action.

Scope of Work

Geographic Scope

There is critical lack of sufficient data connecting climate change impacts and GBV in Bangladesh. While there is some evidence on the effect of GBV in the immediate aftermath of disasters, the evidence gap is apparent in the case of the long-term repercussions of climate change and its effect on GBV. Climate change experiences faced by both urban and rural populations vary by climate hotspots resulting in different sets of challenges and push factors for each context.

Therefore, the research should aim to address the critical scarcity of data rooted in specific climate-context and analyze the disaster profile and its short and long-term influence on GBV within that context. The study will explore the interlinkages between climate change and GBV, identify specific forms of violence exacerbated by climate-induced disasters, and assess the responses of families, communities, and state institutions. It will also highlight best practices and lessons learned, including experiences from Women-Led Community Centers (WLCCs).

Methodology

Research should be undertaken using qualitative methods. The research design must adopt a feminist and participatory approach, actively engaging the voices of women and girls within the target context, alongside other relevant stakeholders within the community. By centering the voices and perspectives of survivors and communities, the research will be able to generate more relevant, ethical, and impactful evidence on the causality of climate change and GBV. Narrative and/or ethnographic tools should be integrated alongside other participatory tools for in-depth exploration and documentation of women and girl's lived experiences and perspectives. In addition, the application of intersectional analysis framework will be critical to ensure research is designed to effectively capture GBV as it is influenced by the existing systems of oppression and social identities unique to the specific research context, what role climate change stressors play within that context to effect GBV. The research process should be follow ActionAid feminist research principle's and will follow the research process include informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of survivors, providing referrals to support services, and preventing re-traumatization of participants.

The scope of this research also involves conducting comprehensive secondary data analysis to explore the established intersections between GBV and climate change. Existing datasets, including research papers, sectoral reports, climate vulnerability assessments, statistics and studies, should be systematically reviewed and analyzed.

The research must adhere to the UNFPA Guidelines on GBV Research and the WHO Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Researching GBV. This includes rigorous informed consent procedures, a Do No Harm approach, safety protocols for researchers and participants, and a clear referral pathway for survivors

requesting support.

To strengthen the validity and reliability of qualitative insights, data triangulation approach will be applied. Blended approach by combining various qualitative methods (key informant interviews, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, narrative story telling etc.) will allow for cross-verification of information and themes and identification of patterns in evidence generated. The evidence gathered will also be cross-referenced with the analysis of data from secondary sources for additional validation, supporting the identification of trends, context-specific issues, and data gaps.

The expectation is that through a complex research design and rigorous methodology, the research will be able to generate detailed information that not only confirms the causal linkage between climate change and GBV, but also offer a nuanced understanding of the underlying factors and dynamics of this nexus for the chosen context in order to be able to inform the design of actionable responses to address GBV.

WLCC staff will be trained in participatory research methods, equipping them to act as data collectors, facilitators, and documenters while strengthening their institutional capacity. They will engage in analysis and reflection workshops to contextualize findings, co-lead community validation processes, and support dissemination of results in accessible formats.

The Consultant/Consulting Firm is expected to develop and propose a full research design adapted for quality, rigor, and alignment with objectives. ActionAid will work with the selected Consultant/Consulting Firm to finalize and approve the research design alongside the proposed workplan, budget, and timeline.

Major Deliverables:

The Consultant/Consulting Firm is expected to produce the following deliverables. The set of deliverables are sequential and subject to AAB review/consultation and approval prior to working on the next set.

1. Research Plan

- a. Detailed research outline including methodology/ies, approach, data collection tools and frameworks.
- b. Data collection plan, budget, and research timeline.
- c. Outline of secondary research and data sources.

2. Tools and Operational Plan

- a. Data collection tools (structured questionnaires, participatory tools, guidelines and templates for narrative/ethnographic information/data, etc.)
- b. Field plan.

3. Data and Draft Report

- a. Raw and Cleaned Data: All raw as well as cleaned data sets including any data files (e.g. Excel, SPSS), qualitative data transcripts, audio/video recordings, completed consent forms, and signed participants lists.
- b. Draft research report

4. Final Submission

- a. Final Research Report.
- b. PowerPoint Presentation on key findings and recommendations.

5. Present findings and recommendations at relevant events organized by AAB for dissemination.

Timeline:

This Consultancy work is expected to be completed within 3 months of launching the assignment.

Activity	Duration / Working days
1. Consultation hiring	2 nd May 2026
2. Consultant onboard	13 th May 2026
3. Inception meeting with consultant	17 th May 2026

4. Finalizing tools for consultations/interviews by incorporating feedback	19 th May 2026
5. Share Research Plan	21 st May 2026
6. Share tools and operational plan	23 rd May, 2026
7. Data and Draft report	11 th June, 2026
8. Sharing feedback on the deliverables	17 th June, 2026
9. Sharing final deliverables	23 rd June 2026
10. Present findings and recommendations at relevant events organized by AAB for dissemination.	Based on Event

Qualifications

The consultant/team is expected to have experience and relevant credentials in:

- Excellent technical knowledge of the development context in Bangladesh
- Minimum of 7 years' proven experience in conducting similar research or assignments.
- Preferably at least 10 years of professional experience with NGOs, INGOs, or UN agencies.
- Significant professional background in conducting quantitative & qualitative reviews using participatory tools.
- Strong understanding and experience particularly in relation to climate change and gender-based violence.
- Experience in developing participatory research tools, and ensuring the quality of data collection
- Excellent analytical, interpersonal, communication, and reporting skills.
- Strong ability to work within deadlines and deliver quality outputs.
- Commitment to feminist research principles
- A solid academic background with a master's or PhD in Disaster Management, Environmental Studies, Development Studies, Gender Studies, or another relevant field.

Candidates are required to submit their team's CVs along with a technical and financial proposal. It will be a condition of the contract that CVs of all individuals engaging in the assignment is submitted. The work plan must clearly outline which individual will actively lead and deliver on each component of the assignment. Senior consultant/team leader will be responsible for the successful and timely delivery of each component of the assignment.

Evaluation criteria:

Evaluative criteria	Weight distribution
Understanding of the assignment	10%
Appropriateness of the Methodology	25%
Sample of previous similar works	20%
Expertise of the consultant/consulting firm in the relevant areas of study	10%
Qualification of Key Personnel /Team composition	10%
Financial proposal	25%

Note: ActionAid Bangladesh reserves all rights to accept or reject any proposal or cancel this circular without giving any verbal or written rationale and whatsoever more happen in any context.

Budget:

500000 BDT

Duration:

June 2026 – July 2026

Ownership: ActionAid Bangladesh would have the ownership on the whole document and will use the data for purpose of research academy publication and others.

Reference and intellectual Property: All written work must be authorized to the current sources copyright of all information in findings and others final report will remain with ActionAid Bangladesh

Plan for disseminations: The consultant team will be responsible for disseminating the findings to the key stakeholders, including ActionAid staff. ActionAid Bangladesh will organize the dissemination workshop.

Ethical Considerations: The research/study will make clear to all participating stakeholders that they are under no obligation to participate in the study. All participants will be assured there will be no negative consequences if they choose not to participate. Research/study will obtain informed consent from the participants.

Submission of proposal: ActionAid Bangladesh invites proposal from management consulting firm/agency/organization/ individual consultant.

Deadline for Proposal Submission: 23 May 2026

- Please click below the link to submit your proposal

Link: <https://jobs.actionaidbd.org/consultancy>

Disclaimer: ActionAid Bangladesh reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications without assigning any reason thereof