



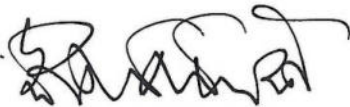

Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

### PROJECT DOCUMENT

Upon request from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) will provide technical assistance for the following Project:

<b>Project Title:</b>	Technical Assistance to the Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security project (RAINS-TA)
<b>Project Symbol:</b>	GCP/BGD/094/GAF

Upon signature of this project document by duly authorized representatives of both parties, the project will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Exchange of Letters between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and FAO signed between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and FAO on 15 February 1977 and 22 November 1976 respectively, and the UNDAF/UNDSCEF signed between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the United Nations on 21 November 2021; and/or, as applicable: the Revised Standard Agreement on Technical Assistance between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and a number of UN organizations, including FAO, signed on 31 July 1972 as well as the project description and management arrangements described herein.

On behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh:	On behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations:
	
Name: <b>Md. Shahriar Kader Siddiky</b> Secretary Economic Relations Division Ministry of Finance Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	Name: Arnoud Hameleers
Title: Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance	Title: FAO Representative <i>ad interim</i> in Bangladesh
Date: 07.12.2023	Date: 07.12.2023

<b>Project Title:</b>	Technical Assistance to the Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security project (RAINS-TA)
<b>Project symbol:</b>	GCP/BGD/094/GAF
<b>Recipient Country:</b>	Bangladesh
<b>Implementing agency:</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
<b>Sponsoring Ministry:</b>	Ministry of Agriculture, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
<b>Executing Agency(ies):</b>	Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Ministry of Agriculture
<b>Collaborating Agency(ies):</b>	Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM), Ministry of Agriculture
<b>Expected EOD (Starting Date):</b>	07 December 2023
<b>Expected NTE (End Date):</b>	30 June 2026
<b>Contribution to FAO's Strategic Framework:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAO Medium Term Plan 2022-2025 Better Life 2: inclusive rural transformation Better Production 4: Small-Scale Producers' Equitable Access to Resources. Better Life 1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment.</li> <li>• FAO Bangladesh Country Programming Framework 2022-2026. Outcome #1: By 2026, a sustainable rural and urban food systems approach brings about an economic transformation with increased and equitable opportunities for decent jobs and livelihoods to all.</li> <li>• Bangladesh 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (8FYP). 4.3.3 Strategies for Crop Sub-Sector- To ensure Food Security and Nutrition- Adopt and implement food production plans to meet the needs of nutritious, safe and demand-driven foods.</li> <li>• SDG target(s): No poverty, especially 1.4 - equal rights to economic resources and basic services; Zero hunger, especially 2.3 - agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers; and Gender equality: 5.a women equal rights to economic resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental and Social Risk Classification</b>	low risk <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moderate risk high risk
<b>Gender Marker</b>	G0 G1 G2a <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> G2b
<b>Total Budget:</b>	USD 4 000 000
<b>Executive Summary</b>	
<p>The objective of this project is to provide Technical Assistance (TA) to strengthen the capacity of implementing agencies, especially Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM), to successfully implement the Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security Project (RAINS) and reach expected RAINS results.</p> <p>The RAINS project will be implemented under overall supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). Technical assistance and capacity building will be targeted at specific areas that will benefit from strengthening among government project implementation partners. The TA activities will concentrate on: a) background studies and assessments and guidelines development; b) training of trainers' activities and follow-up coaching; and c) assisting the development of a benefit Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) system. The project is a major component of the 'SACP' project of Ministry of Agriculture.</p> <p>In terms of background studies, the project will contribute to the RAINS initial value chain analysis and identification of integrated farming models, and an institutional assessment of DAE capacity to support</p>	



rural institutions. The project will also develop guidelines on nutrition, homestead gardens and post-harvest handling, primary processing and storage.

Regarding Training of Trainers (ToT) and small business development the aim is to strengthen DAE's technical and managerial capacity, especially within its front-line extension officers, as well as selected women and youth groups. The following activities are planned:

Under Component 1, Nutrition-Sensitive Agricultural Production:

- Participatory Rural Appraisal for frontline extension workers who will be responsible for farmer group mobilization;
- Training of Farmer Business Facilitators to support the development of their Producer Organizations;
- Improving family nutrition through homestead gardens for DAE staff and female lead farmers; and
- Training of master trainers on the market-led Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS) methodology.

Under Component 2, Market linkage and off-farm diversification:

- ToT on post-harvest technologies and operations (handling, grading, primary processing, packaging and storage) for reducing post-harvest losses and increased marketability, for DAM and DAE staff;
- Training and support to small agriculture related pilot enterprises dealing with simple food processing and agriculture related machinery services; and
- training and support to basic machinery rental and repair businesses.

Under Component 3, Policies, Management and Coordination:

Building on the already designed and tested M&E system of the Smallholder Agriculture Competitiveness Project (SACP), provide training of project directorate and agency staff on data collection, analysis and reporting.

In addition, the project will facilitate farmer-research-extension-private sector round tables and value chain roundtables / buyer-seller meetings. The project is consistent with the government's Eighth Five Year Plan, the Bangladesh Delta Plan – 2100 and the Agricultural and Rural Credit Policy, among other policies. The project will directly contribute to the SDGs 1.4; 2.3; and 5.a and the FAO Country Programming Framework 2022-2026, Output 1.5 Equitable access to productive resources, efficient services, and markets for resilient food systems.

The TA input is foreseen to have a duration of three and a half years, with a total direct outreach of 2 280 people trained or otherwise directly supported, of which at least 40 percent female.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)-TA experts and team members will share an office with the respective International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoBD) funded project office.

*Overall objective of the project:*

To build the sector's resilience to shocks by supporting households in vulnerable climatic zones to improve nutrition status and increase income through diversified climate and nutrition sensitive production systems and improved off- farm opportunities along value chains.

*Specific objectives of the project:*

- To improve capacity of DAE and other implementing partners for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Production
- To enhance capacity of DAM and other implementing partners for Market linkage and off-farm diversification
- To promote capacity of PMU for implementation of policies, management and coordination RAINS PMU

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## ACRONYMS

8FYP	Eighth Five Year Plan
ACCESS	Accelerating Economic and Social Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers through Strong Producers' Organizations
BADC	Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation
BARC	Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council
BARI	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
CPF	Country Programming Framework
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DAM	Department of Agricultural Marketing
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAO-TA	FAO Technical Assistance
FBF	Farmer Business Facilitator
FFS	Farmer Field and Business School
FG	Farmer group
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GoBD	Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IAPP	Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MMI-BD	Missing Middle Initiative in Bangladesh
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
PD	Project Director
PMU	Project Management Unit
PO	Producer Organization
PRA	Participatory Rapid Appraisal
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RAINS	Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security Project
RAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
SAAO	Sub-Assistant Agricultural Officer
SACP	Smallholder Agriculture Competitiveness Project
SBKS	Sara Bangla Krishak Society
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TA	Technical Assistance
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
ToT	Training of Trainers



## SECTION 1 – RELEVANCE

### 1.1 Alignment and Strategic Fit

#### 1.1.1 Alignment to FAO's Strategic Framework

The project will mainly contribute to the Programme Priority Area **Better Life 2** Inclusive rural transformation (BL2).

In addition, the project will also contribute to Better Production: Small-Scale Producers' Equitable Access to Resources (BP4) as well as to BETTER LIFE: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment (BL1) and Scaling-up investment (BL7).

The project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goals:

1. No poverty, especially 1.4 - equal rights to economic resources and basic services.
2. Zero hunger, especially 2.3 - agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers.
5. Gender equality: 5.a women equal rights to economic resources.

#### 1.1.2 Alignment to Country Programming Framework (CPF)

##### 1.1.2.1 Contribution to Country Outcome

FAO's Country Programming Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh for the period 2022 – 2026 supports the Government's priority to transform its agrifood system, including through digital agriculture, One Health approaches and climate smart agriculture. Robust rural institutions are the key drivers of this transformation. The CPF is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) Bangladesh 2022-2026. The project approach is closely aligned with many of the government's priorities, as follows:

**Vision 2041** and the associated **Perspective Plan 2041** (PP2041) provide impetus to the development goals in Bangladesh and outline the roadmap to end absolute poverty, achieve zero hunger, gender equality, reduce inequalities, climate actions, enabling Bangladesh to graduate into higher-middle-income status by 2031. The **Eighth Five Year Plan** (8FYP) from July 2020 to June 2025 is the first implementation plan of Vision 2041. The project themes are consistent with this plan, which puts livelihood restoration from the COVID-19 pandemic and resilience to disaster and climate change as its top priority. The plan also focuses on inclusiveness, including the productive participation of women in agricultural employment and youth development. In addition, the plan aims to improve the critical institutions necessary to lead the economy to upper middle-income status.

The project has selected three climate hotspots in accordance with the recommendation of the **Bangladesh Delta Plan – 2100** and will contribute towards its investment plan for institutionalization, women empowerment, and climate resilient livelihoods. The project is aligned with the **Bangladesh Climate-Smart Agriculture Investment Plan 2019** for creating climate-resilient agri-livelihood development in the selected climatic hotspots.

The project is consistent with the **Food Safety Act of 2013**, the **Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2020**, and the **Agricultural Extension Policy-2020**, the **Good Agricultural Practice Policy-2020**, and the **Agricultural Policy-2018**, in regard to forming and strengthening farmers groups, empowering women, climate induced risk mitigation, value chain development. Furthermore, the project will build on the **E-Government Master Plan for Digital Bangladesh 2019**, which specifies that information and communication technology (ICT) services will be extended to the union level.

The project is also aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Bangladesh 2022-2026**, specifically: Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic

Development; Strategic Priority 3: Sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Environment; and Strategic Priority 5: Gender Equality

#### 1.1.2.2 Contribution to CPF Output(s)

The RAINS contributes mainly to FAO Country Outcome 1: By 2026, more people in Bangladesh, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized from all gender and social groups, and those from lagging districts benefit from sustainable livelihood and decent work opportunities resulting from responsible, inclusive, sustainable, green, and equitable economic development.

Through its support to strengthen implementing agencies' capacities in participatory market-led extension approaches and to work closely with and provide and demand driven services to farmers and their organizations, the FAO-TA to the RAINS Project will mainly contribute to **CPF Output 1.5: Equitable access to productive resources, efficient services, and markets for resilient food systems.**

#### 1.1.3 Expected Results

##### 1.1.3.1 Impact

The RAINS project's impact to which the FAO-TA will contribute, is expressed in the project's goal "to contribute to the public investment priority of achieving food and nutrition security resilience to environmental and economic shocks", and the project's development objective "to build the sector's resilience to shocks by supporting households in vulnerable climatic zones to improve nutrition status and increase income through diversified climate and nutrition sensitive production systems and improved off-farm opportunities along value chains".<sup>1</sup>

##### **Overall objective of the project:**

To build the sector's resilience to shocks by supporting households in vulnerable climatic zones to improve nutrition status and increase income through diversified climate and nutrition sensitive production systems and improved off-farm opportunities along value chains.

##### **Specific objectives of the project:**

- To improve capacity of DAE and other implementing partners for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Production
- To enhance capacity of DAM and other implementing partners for Market linkage and off-farm diversification
- To promote capacity of PMU for implementation of policies, management and coordination RAINS PMU

##### 1.1.3.2 Outcome

The specific outcome that the FAO-TA will work to achieve is: "The capacity of implementing agencies has been strengthened to successfully implement the Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security Project (RAINS) and reach expected RAINS' results". Technical assistance and capacity building will be targeted at specific areas that will benefit from strengthening among government project implementation partners. TA activities will concentrate on: (a) training-of-trainers activities and follow-up coaching; (b) assisting the development of a benefit monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system; and (c) support for background studies. FAO-TA input is foreseen to cover the whole project period.

This Outcome will be achieved through the following expected Outputs.

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<sup>1</sup> IFAD, 2022. Project Design Report. Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security (RAINS). 2 October 2022





### 1.1.3.3 Outputs

#### **Output 1: Improved capacity of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) and other implementing partners for RAINS Component 1 (Nutrition-Sensitive Agricultural Production).**

In Component 1, the RAINS project will expand the piloting and evaluation of inclusive, diversified nutrition-sensitive and climate-resilient production models, building on good practices emerging from several programmes and the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) advanced research programmes. The component will also promote participatory extension models working with farmer groups and producer organizations (POs).

#### FAO-TA Activity 1.1 Building capacity to support POs and Farmer Groups

##### 1.1.1 Training of trainers on a Participatory Rural Appraisal approach

The project will engage a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) expert who will work with DAE to develop a Participatory Rural Appraisal Process to engage communities, identify target populations, and in a community-driven process to identify their main challenges and priority project interventions. The approach, training programme and guidance materials will build on training materials and lessons learned from the Smallholder Agriculture Competitiveness Project (SACP). The FAO-TA will train 300 DAE staff (5 per upazila) in the PRA approach and to better consider nutrition, climate and value chain contexts. The training will be gender-centred, adapted from Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS), and also include Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) procedures. After the training, the PRA expert will backstop DAE staff during the PRA process.

##### 1.1.2 Conduct value chain studies and buyer mapping

To enable market and nutrition-oriented production, FAO-TA, in collaboration with a local consulting firm (to be selected and engaged by FAO), will support the project in conducting value chain studies for selected agricultural commodities contributing to improved nutrition and farmers' income. These studies will inform Farmer Groups (FGs) and Producer Organizations (POs) to align their production to market demand and the requirements of traders. First, a broad study of general market developments and production potential in the project districts will be conducted. Then, after pre-selection of high value crops (total 9 crops, 3 crops per agro-ecological zone), detailed value chain studies, including buyer mapping, mapping of existing POs active in these value chains and opportunities for e-commerce and regional branding, will be conducted. The results will be used to fine-tune other project activities, including the formation of clusters and selection of 1 PO per district. The FAO-TA team will support the studies by establishing the terms of reference, backstopping, and reviewing the study reports for quality assurance. The results of this study will also be disseminated through capacity building workshops for DAE staff on agricultural diversification options.

##### 1.1.3 Training of Farmer Business Facilitators FBFs

Building on the successful approach of using Farmer Business Facilitators (FBFs) in the GAFSP pilot Missing Middle Initiative in Bangladesh (MMI-BD) to strengthen producers' organizations and ensure their access to markets, technology, information and finance, FAO-TA will support the project to adopt a similar approach. The FAO-TA will identify, train and work with 14 FBFs along the MMI-BD approach in synergy with the PO-led GAFSP project "Accelerating Economic and Social Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers through Strong Producers' Organizations" (ACCESS). This will include the following steps:

- a) Participatory selection of FBFs: Once the RAINS' project management unit (PMU) has selected the POs, FAO-TA will organize two workshops (one in the north and one in the south) with DAE and DAM extension staff and elected representatives of each PO, discussing and agreeing with them on the project approach to strengthen and support them. The idea and role of farmer business facilitators will be explained, and FBFs' terms of reference and selection criteria will be agreed with the POs in a participatory manner. The POs will be requested to nominate FBFs





from among their members, one FBF per district to reduce travel distances for FBFs and in and will make an effort to enable women to fulfil this role.

- b) Knowledge exchange with Sara Bangla Krishak Society (SBKS<sup>2</sup>). SBKS (the umbrella organization of several POs and lead partner for MMI-BD and ACCESS) officials, members, as well as SBKS Farm Business Facilitators will be invited to showcase their work with POs and to train the newly engaged FBFs and other selected PO representatives.
- c) The FAO-TA project will engage SBKS to enrol the FBFs in the training programme provided to the FBFs of their own POs.
- d) Additional training will be provided as needed to FBFs and other PO representatives on PO governance, bookkeeping and business development. DAE and DAM district and upazila staff will always be invited to these training sessions, both as trainees to observe and learn the participatory training approach as well as resource persons and subject matter specialists.

#### 1.1.4 Mentoring of RAINS Producer organizations

FAO will engage the FBFs, who will work in collaboration with DAE Sub-Assistant Agricultural Officers (SAAOs) and DAM officials with their POs and selected FGs on a continuous basis, to foster adoption of improved management capacities, sustainable agricultural technologies, and improved marketing practices.

##### Support to POs:

- a) First, FBFs will conduct a mission and vision formulating exercise with the POs they support: what services do the PO members need from their PO?
- b) FBFs will support POs to improve their governance and organizational management and with any formalization step still needed, including formulation of PO constitution and bylaws, election of an executive board, independent audit committee and any other committees the PO may need, registration, opening of a bank account, etc. Attention will be given to gender relations within the organization and facilitating the participation of women and youth in the POs decision making processes.
- c) FBFs will also support the POs in developing their business plan at PO level, in order to have the income needed to provide the services to their members. This business plan will make use of the findings of the value chain studies and buyer mapping. Yet, in preparation of their business plan, each PO will visit potential input suppliers and buyers.
- d) FBFs will support POs in identifying sources of funding for any investment needed to implement their business plan. For women- and youth-dominated POs, this may be the RAINS project (under Activity 2.4). POs will further benefit from training on marketing, post-harvest handling, primary processing etc. under output 2.

##### Support to selected Farmer Groups

From the first batches of Farmer Groups that have completed the Farmer Field and Business School programme, the 28 most cohesive groups that show interest in developing collective business activities will be selected to be supported by the Farm Business Facilitators (2 FGs per FBF), aligning as much as possible with the support to the POs described above. The selection will be based on a set of objective criteria to be developed with the FBFs and RAINS PMU.

FBFs will report to the RAINS PMU and the FAO-TA on a quarterly basis about activities undertaken, progress of supported POs and any challenges on which TA-team or DAE or DAM support may be needed. A participatory monitoring approach for POs progress will be adopted, using a PO maturity scorecard, adapted from the one used by the GAFSP MMI-BD and ACCESS projects with SBKS. The FAO

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gafspfund.org/news/insight-series-bouncing-back-during-crisis-bangladesh>



will train DAE staff and FBFs on the use of the scorecards. The FBFs will also be provided tablets and will be trained on their use, on which the data for the monitoring of activities and of PO maturity scorecards will be collected.

#### 1.1.5 Exposure visits to well performing Producer Organization

This FAO-TA activity is farmer centred. DAE, DAM and FBFs need a good understanding of POs so that they can support farmers in establishing and managing their own POs under RAINS. FAO-TA, in collaboration with DAE, DAM and ACCESS and SACP projects will facilitate exposure and knowledge exchange visits for the newly trained FBFs, the FFS Master Trainers, PO representatives and selected FG lead farmers and DAE/DAM district, upazila and union officers to successful producer organizations. This way FBFs and selected Lead Farmers can directly interact with PO members and learn the advantages and challenges of PO capacity building, managing production clusters, and coordinating marketing arrangements.

### FAO-TA Activity 1.2 Improving family nutrition at village level

#### 1.2.1 Compilation of village-based nutrition guidelines

Based on the results of the participatory rural assessment conducted at the start of the project and based on existing approaches and training materials, simplified Nutrition Behaviour Change Communication (NBCC) messages will be used or adapted in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh (GoBD) and other involved agencies (e.g., Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition - GAIN). Priority actions/messages will be identified and included in the training activities for DAE, farmer groups and their producers' organizations (mainstreaming of nutrition messages).

#### 1.2.2 Compilation of integrated homestead garden guidelines

FAO, in collaboration with BARI will review the existing models of improved homestead gardens (already developed by BARI) and will elaborate simple step-by-step guidelines for the establishment of the same. Already existing training materials (e.g., from SACP or other projects) will be used to the possible extent. These handouts will serve as the basis for the ToT.

#### 1.2.3 Selection of sites for establishing demo-gardens

FAO will engage BARI to collaborate on the establishment of demonstration homestead gardens. FAO and BARI, in collaboration with DAE and project management and will agree on the sites for supporting the establishment of demo homestead gardens. The sites will preferably be under the control of women groups, female headed households, and poor households.

#### 1.2.4 ToT on establishment of nutrition sensitive homestead gardens

FAO and BARI will provide Training of Trainers (ToT) for DAE-SAAOs on the establishment of the integrated homestead gardens. The training will include nutrition behaviour change communications and relevant food safety messages (Activity 1.2.1 and 2.1.1) as well as the technical part for establishing the model homestead gardens (guidelines from Activity 1.2.2) and will have a theoretical part and a practical part at the selected sites. The practical part will consist of the establishment, maintenance and monitoring of the demo-gardens. FAO and BARI will coach the SAAOs in their follow-up support to the demonstration gardens once established.

### FAO-TA Activity 1.3 Market-led Farmer Field and Business Schools (FFS)

#### 1.3.1 Identification of adaptive integrated farming models and Market-led FFS curriculum development

The FAO-TA will engage an international agronomist/agribusiness expert to assess integrated farming models identified by the RAINS PMU on the basis of BARI-DAE action research. The expert will assess



best practices and review related cost-benefit scenarios for the various models (including homestead gardens, under Activity 1.2). At the start of the project, the cost-benefit analysis will be based on data from literature, updated by actual market prices for inputs and outputs.

Building on SACP developed material, lessons learnt from SACP implementation and feedback from SACP Master Trainers, FAO-TA will review, and where necessary, update the curriculum and implementation modalities of the training sessions. The process will be supported by two national FFS experts (one female, one male). The FFS will be organized to farmer-test the identified diversified climate smart integrated farming models, using integrated pest management (IPM), good agricultural practices (GAP), sustainable soil and water management and technologies such as drip irrigation, solar-powered pumps and nature-based pesticides and fertilizers, where applicable. At the core of the FFS methodology is the comparison of a plot where conventional farmer practices are used with a plot where the promoted integrated best practices are used. All costs and labour inputs will be recorded for both plots. At the end of the season, the collected data will be used by the groups to compare cost-benefits of the two options. Additionally, data will be compiled from all project sites and analysed by the agribusiness expert to update the cost-benefit analysis and to use for feedback to research and to update extension messages. Similarly, data will be collected and analysed from the homestead garden demo sites.

#### 1.3.2 ToT of FFS master trainers on market-led FFS

To enable farmers and their organizations to diversify and sustainably intensify their production for improved nutrition security and income, FAO will provide targeted ToT using the curriculum of the market-led Farmer Field and Business School model (FFS). The 120 trainees to become FFS master trainers will be selected in collaboration with the RAINS PMU and DAE, and will likely consist of DAE frontline extension agents (e.g. SAAOs). The ToT is designed to build facilitation skills and insights into basic group dynamics and organizational governance before moving on to farming as a business, business management skills and knowledge needed by the group to produce as per market requirements, including post-harvest operations. Trainees will include women and men. The RAINS PMU will subsequently roll-out the FFS programme: i.e. the 120 master trainers will train DAE frontline extension staff (SAAOs) and lead farmers to become FFS facilitators and implement the FFS programme with the farmer groups. The FAO FFS experts will continue to backstop the master trainers in their work of training and supervision of the FFS facilitators.

#### 1.3.3 Knowledge exchange and exposure visits to successful climate smart irrigation

FAO-TA will contribute to the overall project's effort to expose farmers to new and improved farming practices. In this respect FAO-TA, will identify and organize visits for DAE, POs representatives, FBFs, FFS master trainers and selected FFS lead farmers to water saving irrigation sites used for growing high value crops (one visit per district). The FAO-FFS experts in collaboration with master trainers will integrate the improved water management technologies relevant for the selected integrated farming system into the FFS curriculum.

#### 1.3.4 Support digital literacy programs

Within the framework of market-led FFS ToT and PO capacity building, FAO-TA will provide needs-based digital literacy training to enable especially female farmers to access and use existing government endorsed on- and off-line applications such as krisoker janala (Farmers' Almanac), krishoker digital thikana (Farmers' Digital Address), digital climate advisory services (BAMIS, BMD mobile app) and online market services.

#### FAO TA Activity 1.4 Support to building back a better agricultural support system

At the start of the project, the FAO TA will support an institutional assessment to identify existing capacity and capacity needs of DAE to community based rural organizations. This assessment will build



on existing assessments done by other projects (SACP, NATPIL etc), with additional key informant and focus group discussions to fill gaps specifically regarding DAE capacity to support farmer organizations, participatory extension approaches and facilitation of market linkages. This assessment will be conducted by the TA team through literature review, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The results will be discussed in a validation workshop and inform the capacity development plans and training curricula of the various Training of Trainers on specific thematic areas under the other activities. This will notably include:

- i. integrating gender and nutrition mainstreaming;
- ii. agricultural diversification options (Activity 1.1.2), integrated farming and improved water management (Activity 1.3); and
- iii. training on group and business development to improve volume, compliance to standards and value addition (Activity 1.1 and Component 2).

If needed, FAO-TA will provide additional training to DAE to address identified gaps not covered by the other project activities. The FAO-TA will compile all ToT training handouts into a package that will be made available online to all DAE extension staff.

Furthermore, the FAO-TA will organize and facilitate multistakeholder "farmer–research–extension–private sector – academia" roundtables which are expected to generate proposals and ideas for more demand-led agricultural extension and research approaches influencing priorities for current and future engagement with farmers and private sector.

The project will publish an Analytical Report on the basis of project findings and other major activities

**Output 2: Improved capacity of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) and other implementing partners for RAINS Component 2 (Market linkage and off-farm diversification).**

The RAINS Component 2 will develop capacities of DAE, DAM, producer organizations and farmer groups to facilitate and establish post-harvest management, market linkages and value chain partnerships, with specific attention to high value crops and nutrition-rich products. The component will also invest in promoting women and youth-tailored off-farm self-employment and income generating opportunities.

FAO-TA Activity 2.1 Marketing Arrangements, Post-harvest Management, Packaging and Storage

FAO will engage a national consultant for post-harvest and storage technologies to contribute to the guidelines, assist with the ToT and provide technical backstopping to the value chain roundtables and the call for co-investment in post-harvest facilities.

**2.1.1 Guidelines for Post-harvest handling, primary processing and Storage**

FAO-TA, in collaboration with SACP and ACCESS will review and update training manuals on harvest, post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques, which will be used for the ToT under Activity 2.1.2. Buyers will be consulted to ensure their needs and expectations are included in the manuals. The training package will include practical aspects of maturity indexes, harvest time and harvesting methods, use of crates and field trolleys, washing, grading, sorting, packaging, storage and transport, hygiene and food safety, and quality assurance. The training package will also include a section on the use and maintenance of post-harvest equipment.

**2.1.2 ToT on post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques**

Building on knowledge gained in SACP, FAO-TA in collaboration with private sector entities, will support a ToT on improved post-harvest management, storage, and primary processing for DAM and DAE-SAAO staff who in turn will advise and train FBFs, POs and Farmer groups (FGs). Emphasis will be put on value adding activities, especially those which relate to reduction of post-harvest losses, better product quality, reduction of storage and transport losses, and enhanced food safety.



### 2.1.3 Facilitate multistakeholder Value Chain Roundtables and producer-buyer matchmaking

FAO-TA will support the organization and facilitation of Value Chain Roundtables around prioritized value chains. Participants will include POs' representatives, lead farmers, traders, processors, DAM, DAE, e-commerce providers, etc. Selection of buyers (traders, processors and exporters) will use the buyer mapping prepared under Activity 1.1.1 and market information collected by POs during their business planning process. In addition, such Roundtables may engage financial service providers that could co-finance specific partnership investments. FAO-TA will seek to enhance nutrition considerations along marketing arrangements, for instance by engaging the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) business network in Bangladesh.

These events will serve as a platform to discuss challenges and opportunities along the value chains and function as a first step for "producer-buyer matchmaking" for linking FGs and POs to potential buyers. This will enable targeted improvements within the value chain, production as per market demand, and creation or upscaling farmer-trader-processor linkages. This activity will build on lessons learnt from the SACP piloted "multistakeholder platforms" hosted by the respective District Chambers of Commerce.

When potential matches between POs or producer groups and buyers will have been identified, the agribusiness expert and market expert will organize follow-up one-on-one meetings between the group and the buyer, with the presence of the most closely involved DAM or DAE staff supporting the PO or FG. These meetings are meant to build the relationship and trust among the stakeholders and ultimately facilitate the development of a contract for a pilot supply of products by the PO/FG to the buyer.

### FAO-TA Activity 2.2 E-commerce, branding, certification for agriproducts

FAO-TA, will share experience from FAO-led rural digitization and certification projects, such as the digital village initiative and the support to the Dhaka farmers' market and to the farmers supplying the market with assured safe vegetables. As part of PO capacity building, FAO-TA will explore opportunities for connecting POs with established e-commerce providers. Opportunities for branding and certification for agriproducts will be identified through the outsourced value chain studies and further discussed and assessed in the "value chain roundtables". In case opportunities for value addition through a Participatory Guarantee System or third-party certification are confirmed, FAO-TA will support POs to comply with the relevant standards and establish an internal control system if needed.

### FAO-TA Activity 2.3 Women and Youth Income Generation

#### 2.3.1 Agriculture related small businesses (investments and training)

FAO-TA will support the establishing small scale food processing business model demonstration sites in collaboration with interested youth and women groups. Youth and women groups will be selected based on objective criteria after an open call for interest in the villages where project activities are already taking place. One of the selection criteria would be that the business would source raw materials from the POs supported by the project or from farmers groups enrolled in the FFS programme. FAO-TA will also support the training of the small food processing entrepreneurs, based on guidelines developed under Activity 2.1.1, and engaging trainers trained in the ToT under 2.1.2. Trainers will also be sourced from private sector enterprises or vocational training centres. The training will include preparation of a simple business plan and follow-up coaching. The FAO-TA will support the women and youth entrepreneurs to apply for matching grants from the SACP Matching Grant Facility and/or for grants or credit from other sources to cover part of the business start-up costs. FAO-TA will also assist the entrepreneurs with the technical specifications and the selection of appropriate-scale equipment.



### 2.3.2 Agriculture related machinery services (investment and training)

In Bangladesh smallholder farmers are too small to be able to invest in farm machinery. Even donated machinery (from government programmes or projects) often quickly fall in disrepair, either because of lack of operation and maintenance skills, or because even investments in spare parts do not make economic sense. However, in some villages, farmers have assigned youth to operate and maintain machinery for which farmers pay a service fee, and there are examples of producer organizations running a machinery service centre. Therefore, the FAO-TA will pilot the establishment of youth managed agricultural machinery and equipment services units, both for rental and maintenance services. These may also be youth-managed machinery service units at the POs. Youth will be selected based on objective criteria detailed in a manual, after an open call for interest in the villages where the project activities are already taking place, and where members of supported POs or FFS groups have expressed the need for such services. Such businesses may not only provide rental, operation and maintenance service for farm machinery but could also provide installation and repair services for on-farm irrigation equipment such as drip irrigation. The training will involve the creation of a simple business plan. Depending on the services the young entrepreneurs would like to provide, FAO-TA will seek collaboration with the appropriate institutes able to provide vocational training. These could include, among others, the Mechanized Agriculture and Green Energy (IMAGE) group and/or the Appropriate Scale Mechanization Innovation Hub (ASMIH) of the Department of Farm Power and Machinery of Bangladesh Agriculture University and/or the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

#### **Output 3. Improved capacity of RAINS PMU for RAINS component 3: Effective and efficient project implementation, coordination and knowledge management**

The RAINS project Component 3 supports overall project management and coordination, with strong attention to quality M&E, knowledge management and policy engagement to facilitate the scaling of successful approaches and innovations within other programmes and policies.

##### FAO-TA Activity 3.1 M&E and Knowledge Management

FAO-TA will train those responsible for RAINS project M&E at national, district and upazila level on results-based M&E and Knowledge Management, and also train the RAINS M&E team on the use of handheld devices for data collection and data analysis and reporting (3 ToT modules). At the start of the project, FAO M&E experts will assist with the development of a Management Information System (MIS), with GIS mapping and tablets, and its integration with the existing SACP MIS system to facilitate the flow of data and real-time monitoring of ongoing interventions. The MIS will track financial and technical data on project outputs and outcomes. As part of this MIS, the FAO-TA will assist with the preparation of a format for beneficiary profiles and convert this format into a digital one for collecting through handheld devices (KOBO or ODK or Collect Mobile or similar software). These profiles will also be used by the supported POs, where the FBFs will be responsible for data collection as part of the participatory M&E system. The FAO-TA will assist that data collected by the supported POs can also be integrated in the overall SACP & RAINS MIS.

Data collection training will be provided to national, district and upazila staff, whereas data analysis and reporting only to national and district M&E staff. Subsequently, the FAO M&E experts will coach/mentor the project M&E team in the training of agency field staff involved in data collection to use the system. A lesson learning-cum-refresher training will be organized in the second year to address any issues that may have arisen during the first year. For ease of reference and comparability of data, the TA team will build on SACP's Benefit M&E system with Age and Sex Disaggregated Data (ASDD) collection and analysis. The system is designed to also record and share challenges, best





practices, lessons learned, and will also include a scoring card methodology for farmer group assessment on key project indicators.

For knowledge sharing, identification of best practices and lesson learning, FAO-TA will also pro-actively and continuously identify synergies and possible partnerships with other projects, especially also with the GAFSP funded PO-led ACCESS project and other IFAD and FAO-led projects. Specifically, FAO TA will assist the RAINS Technical Advisory Committee in its synergy building for convergent interests and interventions at national level.

### FAO-TA Activity 3.2 Strategic policy research and advice

FAO-TA will be available to support the PMU, the project steering committee (PSC) and other relevant governmental bodies to address relevant high-level advocacy issues identified as being a constraint to project success. Where appropriate, FAO-TA would fund special studies required to elaborate emerging, relevant issues that the PSC wishes to address, in the form of strategic policy research and advisory services

## **1.2 Comparative Advantages**

### **1.2.1 Mandate to Act**

FAO has a global mandate to improve food security, nutrition, agricultural productivity and reduce rural poverty. FAO is expected to serve as an advisor and technical expert, especially for developing and transition countries. In this project, FAO will provide technical support to Bangladesh's Ministry of Agriculture, specifically to the Department of Extension and the Department of Marketing. The project will also contribute to the implementation of the sustainable development goal (SDG) indicators that are under the custodian of FAO, as referenced in Section 1.1.1.

### **1.2.2 Capacity to Act**

FAO has a comparative advantage and a capacity to act in delivering technical assistance to this project in several respects. Firstly, it has the advantage of having worked in rural Bangladesh since Bangladesh joined FAO in 1973. The project will draw on experiences from core areas of FAO's work in Bangladesh including facilitation skills, market analysis and value chain development, engagement with producer organizations, Farmer Field Schools, post-harvest handling and commercialization of selected high value crops, nutrition and food safety, water management and monitoring and evaluation.

Specifically, under the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) financed Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP), FAO has been collaborating with the MoA and the World Bank. FAO provided technical assistance to the IAPP project teams of field facilitators and DAE staff to increase public capacity in delivering investment operations. A wide range of capacity development activities were provided to the national, regional and grassroots level extension officials/agents on participatory approaches for mobilizing farmers organizations, M&E, project cycle management, nutrition, etc. The IAPP-TA included an economic and financial analysis of the buried pipe schemes, which facilitated a useful decision-making tool for the Government to invest more in this new irrigation technology, especially in the southern region.

Subsequently, FAO implemented the GAFSP-funded MMI-BD project in collaboration with the Sara Bangla Krishak Society (SBKS), and can draw on its' experience in participatory extension approaches and participatory PO development processes, including strengthening PO governance, facilitating PO business planning and implementing a participatory M&E.

In addition, under the Dutch financed Enhancing Food Security through Improved Crop Water Management Practices in the Southern Coastal Areas of Bangladesh, FAO has completed water balance



studies in the basin/sub-basin, introduced low lift pumps, organized Training of Trainers (ToT) for DAE and other partner staff, and established Water Management Groups Training Centres.

FAO will also be able to build synergies with other projects such as the ongoing Improving Food Safety in Bangladesh (funded by The Kingdom of the Netherlands) and the Meeting the Undernutrition Challenge (funded by the United Nations Agency for International Development [USAID] and the European Union [EU]) projects, the GAFSP funded Accelerating Economic and Social Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers through Strong Producers' Organizations (ACCESS), and the Smallholder Agriculture Competitiveness Project (SACP), implemented by IFAD with FAO-TA support.

### **1.2.3 Position to Act**

Furthermore, FAO has strong experience and internationally recognized technical expertise in responsible investment in agriculture and food systems, including value chains and capacity development. FAO was closely involved in the Bangladesh Country Investment Plan for Agriculture Food Security and Nutrition. FAO also actively supported the Government with the preparation of the Country Investment Plan for Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

FAO has a comparative advantage in drawing on its specialized staff and its' methodologies, approaches and training materials in other countries. As a result, FAO is able to combine its wide-ranging global knowledge on the three technical components of RAINS with its in-depth knowledge of the country and adapt those materials to the needs of the RAINS implementing agencies and the context in the project's geographic areas.

FAO is recognized by GAFSP as one of the international organizations qualified to function as a supervising entity for work undertaken with its' resources. The GAFSP has awarded financing for this project on the strength of the proposal that was jointly prepared and submitted by GoB, IFAD and FAO.

### **1.3 Context Analysis**

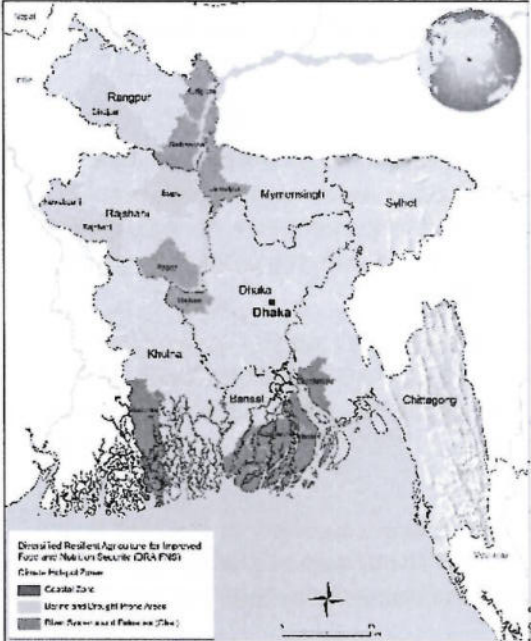
The project will focus on three climate-affected areas: (1) the southern coastal region; (2) the Barind and drought-prone areas; and (3) the river systems and estuaries (char).

The coast of Bangladesh is about 700 km long and is characterized by an evolving flat delta subject to very high tides and frequent cyclones coming from the Bay of Bengal. The coast can be broadly divided into three regions: the deltaic eastern region, the deltaic central region, and the stable deltaic western region with the Sundarbans mangrove forests. It is also divided between "exposed coast" and "interior coast".

Areas in the north-western region (Rangpur and Rajshahi Divisions) are severely drought prone because of the high variability in rainfall. Within this region, the Barind is a comparatively high, undulating region, with reddish and yellowish clay soils. It is cut by ravines and is divided into separate sections by the Atrai River and one of its tributaries to the east. Agricultural plots are commonly irrigated and stand between stretches of wasteland and scrub.

Chars are unstable land created from river sediment, either mid-river islands or attached to the mainland. In land-scarce Bangladesh, emerging chars create new areas for settlement and cultivation by landless poor. They are highly vulnerable to climate change and climate hazards, especially to sudden and forceful flooding. They are isolated due to lack of transport infrastructure and services.

Project districts were selected based on the following criteria: i) poverty and prevalence of stunting; ii) agro-ecological constraints and climate risks; iii) markets and processing potentials and capacities; iv) opportunities for climate resilient agriculture development; and v) areas with investment gaps while avoiding too much overlap with existing programmes.



Climate Hotspot Zone	Divisions and Districts
Coastal Zone	Khulna Division: Satkhira Barisal Division: Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola Chattogram Division: Lakshmipur
Barind and Drought Prone Areas	Rajshahi Division: Rajshahi, Bogra, Chapainawabganj Rangpur Division: Dinajpur
River Systems and Estuaries (Char)	Rangpur Division: Kurigram, Gaibandha Rajshahi Division: Pabna Dhaka Division: Rajbari Mymensingh: Jamalpur

Farmers in these areas face significant economic and social challenges. Farm sizes are extremely small, with an average of 0.9 ha per family, often fragmented into even smaller plots. Inputs purchased in small volumes are more expensive and low production volumes give rise to relatively high transport costs and other transaction costs in marketing and service provision. Large buyers are not interested to buy small volumes. Furthermore, because farmers do not have significant land or sometimes even lack legal land title, they have limited access to finance. While the extension service employs a large number of extension agents, there is still only one extension agent per approximately 1 100 smallholder households.

Not surprisingly, given the small farm size, agriculture is the primary source of income for only 51 percent of households, and non-farm income sources play an important part in the rural economy. Thirty (30) percent of smallholders are rural youth, and the demographic dividend should continue until 2030. Youth are key to transition to a more innovative and productive agriculture sector, while such innovation is also necessary to make agriculture attractive for youth.



The RAINS project targeting strategy will be to select the poor, smallholder farmers and micro agro-entrepreneurs as the core target segments, prioritizing women, youth and other vulnerable groups (details are provided in Annex 8 of the PDR). A gender analysis is provided in Section 3.4. For the FAO-TA, the direct target beneficiary is the Ministry of Agriculture and specifically the staff of the Project Directorate (including recruited consultants) and staff of the RAINS implementing agencies.

### 1.3.1 Stakeholder Engagement

#### 1.3.1.1 Stakeholder Engagement

##### Stakeholder identification

The direct beneficiary of this TA Project is the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and specifically the staff of the Project Directorate (including recruited consultants) and staff of the RAINS implementing agencies. Furthermore, the members of the 14 POs supported through the TA, the lead farmers of the demonstration homestead gardens and the small entrepreneurs of pilot processing and mechanization service businesses.

Indirect beneficiaries are the targeted 420 000 households reached with services promoted or supported by the project, located in 14 districts. The stakeholder consultation process was organized jointly by FAO and IFAD. An overview of the stakeholder consultation process and plan is provided in Annex II.

##### Stakeholder consultation

**Concept note stage:** During the development of the project concept note, three consultation workshops were organized, one in each of the climate hotspots. Participants were mainly representatives from government agencies and knowledge institutes, but also from other projects, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and some farmer representatives.

The findings may be summarized as follow:

**Barind workshop:** The Barind Tract is grouped into High Barind Tract, Level Barind Tract and North-Eastern Barind Tract. The High Barind Tract is characterized by low fertility, sparse vegetation, absence of major river channels, and a long dry period during October and May. It is the most drought prone area of the country due to its relatively low and erratic precipitation, limited groundwater reserves, poor water holding capacity of surface soil and high summer temperature. Growers often rent the land, also as sharecroppers. Insufficient farm mechanization and poor market linkage and storage facilities are some of the common challenges. There are 12 ethnic groups living in the area, who are mostly poor agricultural laborers.

The workshop participants were of the opinion that the indigenous community people are to be given priority in the project along with the smallholder and marginal farmers. The following project interventions were prioritized: i) adoption of drought and heat tolerant crops and varieties; ii) homestead vegetable and fruit cultivation using Barind model and fostering household utilization for a nutrient dense diet; iii) promotion of export quality fruit cultivation following Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and building storage capacity; iv) strengthening integrated water resource management through rain water harvest, digitization and water saving agronomic practices; v) Women and young girl entrepreneurship development, vi) Linking agro-processing development with nutrition; vii) market linkage development involving public-private-partnership; viii) Formation of Farmers' cooperative to sustain their entrepreneurship, FFS etc.; ix) Advancing farm mechanization with sufficient local service provider; x) soil acidity and soil fertility management through sensor-based soil analysis; and xi) facilitating portable solar energy use.

**Wetland across the Coast:** The southern coast covers about 30 percent of the country's cultivable area, accommodating more than 20 percent of the total population. Climatic hazards include prolonged





water logging, increasing soil salinity and drought during the dry season. Because of the clayey soil surface irrigation is very troublesome and inefficient.

The project interventions which were suggested in the consultation workshop include: i) Adoption of salinity and drought tolerant crops during Kharif I and Rabi seasons and submergence tolerant crops during Kharif II; ii) Boosting use of local innovative and modern technologies such as raised beds, Sorjan method, pyramid agriculture, dyke cropping for vegetable cultivation, floating agricultural, hydroponics, coco dust culture etc.; iii) Facilitating polder management and drainage, and infrastructure development for irrigation, e.g. permanent subsurface irrigation systems and rain water harvesting; iv) Providing more timely and precise weather information alerts and introduction of crop insurance; v) Promoting women friendly, gender responsive and nutrition sensitive agricultural technologies; vi) Market linkage development involving women and youth in the value chain and entrepreneurship development; vii) Wetland biodiversity management; and viii) Upgrading the extension services

**Char Land:** In Bangladesh, nearly 1 million hectare of land is char. Char land in the northern part is dominantly sandy, whereas char land in the southern part is mostly clayey. In the central part, char land is dominated by silty soil. Chars are highly vulnerable to landslides, floods, drought accompanied by heat etc. Due to their remote locations, farmers have difficult access to inputs, information, market linkages and storage facilities.

The following project interventions were suggested for char land: i) Bring more char land under cultivation with nutrient dense crops suitable for the specific soil properties; ii) Invest in supplementary irrigation during Kharif I and Rabi season, with solar pumps, fita pipe irrigation, portable drip irrigation etc.; iii) Establish moveable small scale storage facilities with solar power; iv) Facilitate value chain linkages with the private sector and SME development involving women and young girls. Development of micro seed entrepreneurs; v) Cooperative development for marketing and linkages with financial and other local service providers; vi) Link char people to government services, through digital extension services, Krishi Call Centre etc., and providing incentive to extension staff (“char allowance”); vii) Facilitate behavioral change for improved nutrition: raising awareness, develop diversified food recipes, locally readymade food during crisis period to overcome hidden hunger, school meal program, develop homestead vegetable gardens (sack culture during monsoon) and fruit gardens on more stable chars; and viii) Appropriate farm mechanization like dryer, portable machineries etc.

Participants in all three workshops observed that a very strong coordination among the farmers, researchers, extension workers, NGOs, international organizations and market actors is to be encouraged in the project proposal. Also, inter-ministerial coordination is necessary for the coordination and monitoring of various government services.

#### **Project design stage**

On 6 December 2021, the GAFSP confirmed to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) the selection of the proposal for its grant funding consideration of a total USD 20 million, with IFAD as Supervising Entity (SE) for investments and FAO as SE for technical assistance (TA), stipulating the key conditions and recommendations for the detailed design. An IFAD-FAO-Government design mission was fielded in the People’s Republic of Bangladesh during 12-26 June 2022. The design mission was constituted of MoA focal persons, FAO and IFAD experts and it held in-depth consultations at central level with relevant departments and agencies, and during field visits to the Barind and Drought Prone district of Dinajpur. Meetings and discussions were held with Additional Secretaries of the Ministry of Agriculture, government focal points, Director General of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM), Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) and related stakeholders at District level, and potential farmer beneficiaries in visited villages. A mission aide-memoire was presented at the virtual wrap up meeting chaired by Dr Ruhul Amin Talukder on 27 June 2022 in Dhaka to highlight the primary conclusions and key elements of the design framework.



The mission recommended the final district selection, and the FAO Bangladesh office in coordination with SACP PD finalized the list of unions. The completed Project Design Report of IFAD and this project document were submitted to the government for feedback before submission to the GAFSP Steering Committee for final endorsement.

### **Implementation stage**

Stakeholder engagement and consultation is further built in the project implementation through three main routes:

The first one is the development of the Participatory Rural Appraisal approach and the training of trainers for 300 extension staff. The PRA will not only enable them to use an inclusive targeting strategy focusing on landless, marginal and smallholder farmers during the mobilization of the farmer groups, but also to discuss the detailed project planning with each community, ensuring RAINS project activities cater to their needs.

Second, the assessment of the DAE capacity to support rural institutions, which will involve key informant interviews, focus group discussions and a validation workshop, will inform the development of the training curricula of the various Training of Trainer activities undertaken by the FAO-TA.

Third, the participatory training and capacity building approaches used throughout the project, which will also be practiced during the ToT sessions for extension staff and in the training of the Farmer Business Facilitators.

Formal stakeholder consultations will include the RAINS Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings. In addition, engagement with partners such as SBKS and service providers for specific activities will be discussed, negotiated and formalized in agreements. These formal consultations are presented in the stakeholder consultation plan in Annex II.

#### **1.3.1.2 Grievance Mechanism**

The grievance mechanism of the FAO-TA will be the same as for the overall RAINS project. Most ministries and projects in Bangladesh have institution and/or project-level grievance redress mechanisms (GRM), often also replicated at lower levels. At the national, cross-governmental level, the Cabinet Division of the GoB has set up the platforms for dialogue to facilitate these processes and act as an overall grievance redress mechanism. IFAD requires that all borrowers adopt an easily accessible grievance mechanism at the project-level. As such, the project will further assess existing mechanisms at national and local levels and build upon them to establish a project-level GRM. The GRM requires: (i) working proactively with the affected parties to resolve complaints; (ii) ensuring that the complaints procedure is responsive and operates effectively; and (iii) maintaining records of all complaints and their resolutions.

In addition to the project-level GRM, affected people may also access IFAD's Complaints Procedure which ensures that appropriate mechanisms are in place to allow individuals and communities to contact IFAD directly and file a complaint if they believe they are or might be adversely affected by an IFAD-funded project/programme not complying with IFAD's Social and Environmental Policies. The project-level GRM and IFAD's Complaints Procedure shall be fully explained to stakeholders during the project start-up and beneficiaries during the awareness building on project activities. Details of the complaint procedure can be found at <https://www.ifad.org/en/accountability-and-complaints-procedures>.

To address concerns with regard to alleged and potential violations of FAO commitments, this TA project will carry out regular monitoring of capacity building activities. It will take necessary measures and adjustments to resolve potential concerns and will report to the respective authorities on such incidents. Furthermore, the FAO Representation in Bangladesh is in the process of establishing a call centre dedicated to grievance redress. It will be a place to gather feedback and complaints from



stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries. The call centre will have a particular focal point to receive feedback and follow up on issues as they arise. Parties may call a designated phone number to give feedback. FAO will publicize grievance handling mechanisms at the time of project start up. The details are provided in Annex II.

#### **1.3.1.3 Disclosure**

As the main stakeholders for the FAO-TA are the government agencies and their staff that FAO will train and coach during the project, the consultations with the government during project design as described under 1.3.1.1 double as disclosure.

#### **1.3.2 Problems to be addressed.**

The main problem that the RAINS project will contribute to address is food and nutrition insecurity of vulnerable households in climatic hotspots.

Building on the development problem analysis conducted during the workshops at the concept note stage (see Paragraph 1.3.1.1) and during the design mission, the project will focus on the following specific issues: i) insufficient diversification in production and nutrition, with heavy reliance on import of pulses and oilseeds and mono-crop culture and rice dominance; ii) fragile ecosystem and vulnerability to climate change including in saltwater intrusion and changing rainfall patterns; iii) low access to knowledge and inputs to adopt more productive, nutrition-sensitive and climate adapted practices; iv) lack of responsive technical support and functioning models for government to support nutrition-sensitive and market-oriented diversification and public-private partnership; v) production and post-harvest losses with low access to processing and storing equipment; vi) lack of efficient environment for private sector investments, with poor access to markets and credits and limited capacities of farmer organizations to engage with the private sector; and vii) severe rural poverty, worsened by income inequality and empowerment gaps, especially for women and youth.

The FAO-TA will specifically focus to address problems iv) "lack of responsive technical support and functioning models for government to support nutrition-sensitive and market-oriented diversification and public-private partnership"; and vii) limited capacities of farmer organizations to engage with the private sector. The technical assistance provided will build the capacity of the extension system and of farmer organizations to be able to address the other problems identified. Extension staff and facilitators supporting farmer organizations will be trained in both participatory extension approaches and facilitation skills as well as in technical areas related to the identified problems of insufficient diversification and nutrition, vulnerability to climate change and poor access to markets and will be linked to sources of knowledge, input providers, buyers and credit providers.

In Bangladesh, crops, fishery and livestock are supported by different ministries that deliver services through different structures. There is therefore a tendency to avoid integrated farming system approaches, although farmers often have integrated farms with crops, livestock and/or fishponds and past grants show such integration adds value to address also inclusion, nutrition and climate resilience issues. The project will therefore promote local collaborations between DAE, Department of Livestock (DLS) and Department of Fisheries (DoF), sensitize DAE on integrated approaches and promote innovative climate and nutrition-sensitive community planning.

#### **1.3.3 Partnerships**

The main partnerships that the project will pursue is with the Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD. Specifically, with the agencies implementing the RAINS project: DAE and DAM and the RAINS Project Management Unit (PMU) and District Coordination Units (see implementation arrangements).



Furthermore, the FAO-TA team will build partnerships with the selected Producer Organizations (1 per district). The project will also build on the existing partnership between FAO-BGD and Sara Bangla Krishak Society (SBKS), an apex producer organization. SBKS emerged as a registered apex of producers' organizations that was strengthened by the FAO Technical Assistance component of the Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project, financed by GAFSP from 2011 to 2016. The subsequent GAFSP-funded MMI-BD project was implemented jointly by FAO and SBKS with 55 member POs from 2018 to 2022. Over these years of collaboration, FAO and SBKS have developed an effective approach to build and strengthen POs to support smallholders to access finance, technology, information and value chains. Simultaneously with the FAO-TA to the RAINS project, FAO-BGD and SBKS will also partner to implement the GAFSP funded ACCESS project, and synergies will be sought between the two projects. Specifically, the FAO-TA will engage SBKS to provide training to extension staff and selected POs, and to organize exchange visits to successful member POs of SBKS.

In addition, the project will promote partnerships with relevant private sector organizations and rural finance organization to strengthen sustainability prospects further. The project will organize roundtables between supported POs and farmer groups with identified potential buyers (buyer-seller meetings). A marketing expert will facilitate follow-up meetings to build the relationship and trust and to ultimately negotiate supply contracts between the farmers and the buyers.

### **1.3.4 Knowledge Management and Communication**

#### **1.3.4.1 Knowledge Sharing**

Technical knowledge products such as training manuals and videos, operational guidelines and standard operation practices will be developed in a participatory manner with RAINS project staff (both from MoA and external) in Bengali. They will be appropriately stored in the FAO and RAINS project archives and non-confidential materials will be disseminated on Ministry, FAO-BGD and IFAD-BGD web pages.

Lessons learned materials—for example on the project approach—intended for wider knowledge sharing will be produced in English or in both languages, and such materials will also be shared with the GAFSP. FAO logo use and publication rules will be followed. The project will work closely with the FAO Country Office to find further opportunities for knowledge sharing, both among other FAO projects and with our Government counterparts and IFAD.

As part of its technical assistance to the RAINS project, the technical team will also have an explicit role of sharing knowledge from other projects and countries to the RAINS partners. As such, knowledge sharing activities are at the core of the project in the form of technical guidelines, training manuals and ToT. Knowledge sharing and training approaches will be participatory, and indeed, one of the main objectives of the project is to familiarize the extension system with these participatory approaches that also identify local and traditional knowledge and build on knowledge sharing among participants. Under Activity 1.4, FAO will compile all training materials into a package and make them available online for extension staff. Under Component 3, the TA team will train RAINS project staff responsible for project M&E at national, district and upazila level on results-based M&E and Knowledge Management.

#### **1.3.4.2 Lessons Learned**

For this project, lessons from two projects have had a great influence on its design.

Since 2018, FAO has provided technical assistance to the IFAD funded Smallholder Agriculture Competitiveness Project (SACP). While outputs in terms of training manuals and high-level ToT were



largely achieved, the mid-term review observed a lack of FAO engagement in ensuring that this cascades down the system so that meaningful training is received at farm level. Thus, more follow-up coaching activities are included in this RAINS-TA. Nevertheless, similar to SACP, it is clear that the small TA team cannot be made responsible to deliver training to 14 000 farmer groups; this is the responsibility of DAE and DAM frontline extension staff.

Another lesson from the SACP TA is that when making use of international expertise, these should be based in Bangladesh. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not always possible to bring international consultants in-country, and the quality and relevance of produced material for the situation in Bangladesh suffered as a result. Therefore, all international experts to be recruited under RAINS-TA will be based in Bangladesh for the duration of their engagement.

The second project is the GAFSP MMI-BD project that has been implemented from 2018 in partnership with Sara Bangla Krishak Society (SBKS). FAO and SBKS have developed an effective approach to building and strengthening POs to support smallholders in access to finance, technology, information and value chains. Several successful approaches from this project will be replicated, such as the training of Farm Business Facilitators recruited from among the PO members, and the participatory M&E approach using the PO maturity scorecard. To the extent possible in the context of RAINS, also the holistic training package for POs covering governance, record keeping, financial management and business development will be replicated with the selected 14 POs and 28 FGs. This will provide the opportunity to the involved extension staff to experience and participate in the “MMI approach” throughout the duration of the project and facilitate discussions with DAE how such an approach, or elements thereof, could be mainstreamed nationally.

#### 1.3.4.3 Communication

To ensure project visibility, the FAO-TA project will engage the services of a communications specialist in the FAO-Bangladesh office to ensure major project events are covered by Bangladesh media outlets (television and print). Concise awareness raising and knowledge sharing products will be communicated through multiple channels, including blogs, written publications, videos through YouTube, print, electronic and social media), and regular publications.

Furthermore, the project will collaborate with the GAFSP communication unit, IFAD and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and Investment Centre communication officers to prepare case studies and disseminate stories from the field. All external communication materials will be shared with IFAD for approval.

## SECTION 2 – FEASIBILITY

### 2.1 Implementation Arrangements

#### 2.1.1 Institutional Framework and Coordination

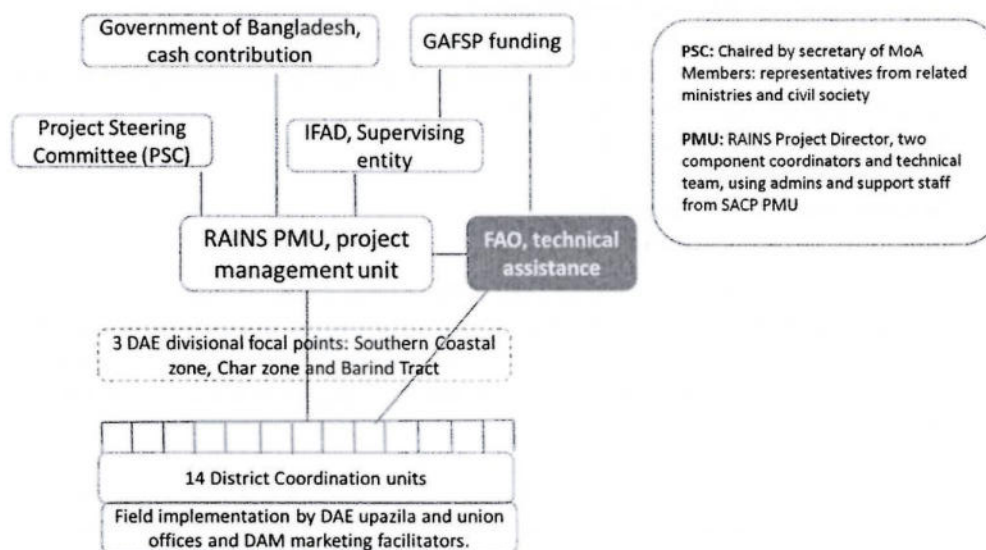
The MoA will establish a streamlined PMU by integrating the RAINS’ overall functions of management and coordination into the PMU of the Smallholders Agricultural Competitiveness Project (SACP), which is based in Dhaka and includes already a management team combined of government-deputed officers and support staff, and externally recruited specialists. A Project Director (PD) will be appointed by the MoA, supported by the SACP’s existing management team. Two component coordinators of RAINS will also be appointed by MoA under the direct supervision of the RAINS PD, in charge of daily coordination of implementation related to RAINS. RAINS focal points will be appointed at DAE division-level offices in the three project areas of Southern Coastal zone, Barind Tract and Char zone to assume liaison between the central PMU and District Coordination Units.

The District Coordination Units (DCU) will be embedded in the respective District DAE office and will consist of one lead technical officer from the District DAE and necessary staff required from other



implementing agencies. The DCU will be led by the Deputy Director of District DAE and it will be responsible for coordination of the project activities implemented by the district project line agencies and/or other contracted service providers, ensuring operational coordination through the structure of upazila and union offices to the grassroots level, ensure the timely and operational functions in the areas of project financial management, M&E and KM, procurement support and follow-ups, at its own level and the lower levels. DAE offices and service outlets at Upazila and Union, and DAM Marketing Facilitators (MFs) in SACP area where present will participate in extending the operational coordination from the DCU to the target groups. Upazila Agricultural Officer and Union Sub-Assistant Agricultural Officers (SAAOs) will be the focal persons for the field implementation.

Figure 1 presents a schematic representation of the institutional framework.



The Project Steering Committee, headed by Secretary, MoA will oversee the implementation of the project. The RAINS Project Steering Committee will review the annual workplan, including the TA workplan.

FAO Technical assistance will be provided at all levels, from PMU to frontline extension staff, through background analysis, development of guidelines and training manuals, ToT and coaching.

The work planning for the FAO technical assistance will be done in close consultation and collaboration with the RAINS Project Director and PMU, tailoring timing and content of activities to the needs of the RAINS implementing agencies. From an operational perspective, the TA implementation will follow FAO internal rules and procedures for project implementation. Budget management and operational support will be provided by the FAO Representation office in Dhaka.

### 2.1.2 Government Inputs

As this FAO-TA project will be limited to technical assistance only, the government will fund (from the GAFSP grant and own cash contribution) all the operational costs for implementing the follow-up activities of the RAINS project such as the FFS programme roll-out, the matching grant programme and the M&E system, as per the RAINS workplan and budget.

### 2.1.3 Resource Partner Inputs

The FAO-TA will be financed by the GAFSP, with a total contribution of USD 4 000 000. FAO will use the main part of these funds to recruit the technical assistance team, as follow:

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- **International agricultural economist/agribusiness expert who will also act as team leader**
- **National expert on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) procedures**
- **National climate smart agriculture specialist**
- **National consultant homestead garden and nutrition**
- **Two National FFS experts**
- **National value chain and marketing expert**
- **International value chain expert – technical advisor**
- **National consultant post-harvest and storage technologies**
- **National food safety expert**
- **National public-private partnership expert**
- **National e-commerce and agriculture digitalization expert**
- **National consultant for small scale income generating food processing and machinery business options for women and youth**
- **International M&E/MIS expert**
- **National M&E/MIS expert**
- **National communication assistant**
- **International communication expert**

Terms of References of most positions are presented in the Annex. Terms of References for the other positions will be developed by the team leader during the recruitment process. Furthermore, after the identified Farm Budget Facilitators have successfully completed the training, FAO will engage them for the duration of the project. In addition, budget is reserved to engage a communication specialist for specific communication products and events.

It is envisioned to engage a local service provider through a Letter of Agreement (LoA) to conduct value chain studies at the start of the project. For these studies a team of local value chain experts will be needed to collect data in the three project regions, interview market players, and analyse the data and adding their own expert knowledge. For consistency of the analysis, a service provider is preferred over the ad-hoc recruitment of individual consultants. In addition, BARI will be engaged through an LoA to collaborate on the development of the homestead garden guidelines and establishment of the demonstration homestead gardens.

In addition, funds will be used to organize the training-of-trainer sessions and travel, including domestic travel for coaching and monitoring. Some procurement of primary processing equipment or small-scale farm machinery is foreseen to establish pilot models of women and youth managed small scale food processing and machinery service businesses.

#### **2.1.4 Strategy/Methodology**

The theory of change is based on the hypothesis that building capacities of government decentralized extension services and farmer organizations to diversify extension support and engage with different actors can create an ecosystem of services and income opportunities for rural households to adopt diversified climate resilient and nutrition-sensitive food systems.

The first component will support the increased availability of diversified, nutritious, safe and demand-driven agrifoods through: a) capacity building on community engagement, gender and participatory planning; b) farmers' capability to organize production and link to market; c) capacity development on nutrition and integrated homestead gardens, climate smart value chain opportunities and the identification of locally relevant diversification options; d) increasing agriculture productivity and sustainable production of lucrative and nutrition-sensitive alternatives to rice production, including high-value crops, leveraging synergies across crops, livestock and fishery; e) sustainable



management of natural resources through support to more efficient water management and adoption of good agricultural practices; and f) efficient and demand led research-extension pluralistic services.

At the same time, Component 2 will create an enabling agribusiness environment for public-private partnership, with improved post-harvest management and market access efficiency, and investments in post-harvest facilities. They will reduce post-harvest losses, obtain a better share of the price, and contribute to the achievement of an improved system for agricultural production and food security at both national and household levels. Investments in machinery service and rental business will improve access to mechanization. Women and youth will benefit from both on-farm and off-farm focused support to help speed up the gender transformative process and promote women and youth on-farm and off-farm entrepreneurship.

The following participatory methodologies will be used to ensure stakeholder participation:

- Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) approach for the identification of farmer groups
- The “MMI-BD approach” for strengthening of producer organization
- Homestead demo-gardens with female lead farmers
- Farmer Field and Business Schools

The PRA and FFS methodologies are both well-tested participatory approaches used globally. The basic principle of the PRA is that rural people examine their own problems and are setting their own goals. Tools include focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, transect walk and community mapping, social mapping, and ranking exercises (of problems, opportunities, priorities etc.). The FFS approach was developed by FAO and brings together a group of farmers to learn on how to shift towards more sustainable production practices, by better understanding complex agro-ecosystems and by enhancing ecosystem services. A FFS group meets regularly during a production cycle, setting up experimentation and engaging in hands-on learning to improve skills and knowledge that will help adapt practices to their specific context. Similarly, the training of master trainers and of FFS facilitators, is participatory and experiential, going through the season using the FFS methodology, with additional training on adult learning and facilitation skills.

The “MMI-BD approach” developed by FAO and SBKS during the GAFSP funded project under its’ Missing Middle Initiative (MMI), is a holistic support to producer organizations tailored to the needs of the producer organization. It starts with discussion with the producer organization about the services they would like to provide to their members and the participatory selection of the Farm Business Facilitator (FBF) from among its own members. Even the ToRs of the FBFs will be defined in discussion with the PO members. The FBFs are trained and subsequently train the PO members on governance and organizational management, financial management and record keeping and business planning. Depending on the business plan, the POs will be linked to relevant government services and trained on specific technical areas needed to implement the business plan. Monitoring is also participatory using a scorecard for organizational maturity. The RAINS project will pilot a “light” MMI approach for possible large-scale implementation by DAE with many farmer groups across the country.

### 2.1.5 Technical Oversight and Support Arrangements

FAO backstopping support in the technical areas of project implementation will be provided by FAO experts in the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and headquarters. The project’s Lead Technical Officer (LTO), based in RAP, will review terms of reference, progress reports, annual workplans and project training materials and will be responsible for technical clearances.

The FAO Investment Centre will be the project Lead Technical Unit in FAO headquarters and perform oversight functions and assist with complying with GAFSP M&E and reporting requirements. GAFSP is

also expected to continue to provide guidance on their M&E framework and to organize knowledge sharing among its portfolio of projects.

In addition, IFAD as the supervising entity for the RAINS project will organize supervision missions and the project mid-term evaluation, in which FAO will also participate.

#### **2.1.6 Management and Operational Support Arrangements**

The FAO Representative in Bangladesh will be the project budget holder. All consultants of FAO will be remunerated as per established payment scales and will be recruited following established Human Resources (HR) rules and procedures. Since this is a technical assistance project, operationally the project is quite simple. The RAINS PMU will handle most of the operational management for field activities. The FAO technical team will be based in the SACP/RAINS PMU offices to facilitate synchronous implementation of activities and coaching and on-the-job training of PMU counterparts.

Project coordination costs include the handling of recruitment and contracting procedures, travel, procurement of equipment, IT support, security provisions and financial reporting. Therefore, the FAO-TA project will have its own administration and finance officers (based in FAO-BGD office), and the budget includes the part-time use of the FAO-BGD pool of HR, procurement and IT officers, in accordance with FAO budgeting rules. The budget includes a standard 7 percent indirect support cost, and the direct support costs as per FAO cost recovery policy and budgeting rules, which amount to 8 percent of total project cost.

The accounts of all FAO projects - are subject exclusively to internal and external audit in accordance with the UN Agency's Financial Regulations and Rule. The External Auditors of the UN Agencies are appointed by and report to the UN Agency's Governing Bodies, of which the Government of Bangladesh is also member of the committee.

In FAO, the Office of the Inspector General has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of the Organization's system of internal control, financial management and use of assets. The Office provides the Director-General and the functions and programmes audited with independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the Organization's operations. It helps the Organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and internal governance processes.

The RAINS Project Steering Committee will review the annual workplan, including the TA workplan.

The RAINS is closely linked to the FAO PO-Led grant on "Accelerating Economic and Social Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers in Climatic Hotspots through Strong Producers' Organizations (ACCESS)" in Bangladesh which has been confirmed for the consideration of GAFSP funding. The Country-Led and PO-Led designs have been in close consultation since the early stage of proposal drafting in 2021. The country-led will notably leverage the experience and training approach adapted by ACCESS to help reinforce the rural institutions, especially the farmer groups and producer organizations. The country-led RAINS and the PO-led ACCESS projects will include each other's representatives in the respective PSCs.

## **2.2 Operational Modalities**

As per FAO modality categories, this project will be implemented through the direct implementation modality, because, as a technical assistance project, the project will make ample use of FAO consultants and limited use of contracted services from non-profit organizations under Manual Section 507 (Letters of Agreement).



## 2.3 Statistics

The project's data collection will involve mainly data for the M&E system: (i) baseline information; (ii) data on POs governance score card; and (iii) data on training and outreach events, such as participant lists. These data will be disaggregated by gender. See Paragraph 2.6 for details on the M&E system. In addition, quantitative and qualitative data will be collected for the various studies, such as value chain studies, and the institutional assessment of DAE capacity to support rural institutions, etc. No capacity building on statistical methods and standards is foreseen.

## 2.4 Information Technology

Within the framework of the market-led FFS and the PO capacity building, the project will provide training of trainers to develop farmers' digital literacy and access to digital climate advisory services (BAMIS, BMD mobile app, community radio), online market services and the government farmers' window app with agricultural, land and meteorological information.

The project will also facilitate PO linkages with buyers, which may involve the use of digital tools for traceability, financial transactions or e-commerce. The project will be sure to get membership buy-in when partnerships are established with such buyers and related digital service providers.

## 2.5 Risk Management

### 2.5.1 Potential risks to the project

The identified risks to the project are presented in Annex V Part A. The IFAD Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) identified multiple climate change related risks of the RAINS project, which lead to rating the climate change related risks as "Substantial." However, for the TA project the likelihood such phenomena will impact on TA activities will be considerably lower, as, for example, ToT venues can be easily adapted, hence the internal risk classification is LOW.

As a social risk, as the majority of staff of the implementing agencies are predominantly male, gender balance may not be attainable among the ToT participants. This will further affect the training provided by these trainers.

### 2.5.2 Environmental and social risks from the project

The risk classification certified by the LTO is LOW.

## 2.6 Monitoring, Performance Assessment and Reporting

### 2.6.1 Monitoring Arrangements

The TA team's Monitoring and Evaluation experts will, in addition to providing training and technical backstopping to the RAINS M&E team, also be responsible for the M&E of the FAO-TA component.

At the start of the project, they will develop the FAO-TA M&E system. In the course of the project, the national M&E expert will monitor progress against the log-frame indicator targets and to this end will organize data collection, analysis and reporting. The M&E expert will assist the team leader with the preparation of the six-monthly progress report.

In addition, all team members will contribute to the six-monthly progress reports by providing inputs on their own activities and related results during the reporting period.

The risk log will be reviewed annually and updated if needed.



FAO will also join IFAD support missions, during which also progress and quality of FAO-TA activities will be reviewed and discussed, and recommendations made for their improvement. As FAO-TA activities are closely linked to the general progress of the RAINS project, any change in workplan or change in activities of the RAINS project will be reviewed, and the FAO-TA work planning, will be adapted accordingly. The mid-term review will be especially important, during which also logframe indicator targets will be reviewed and adapted if needed.

### **2.6.2 Performance Assessment**

Regarding the support activities to producer organization, the monitoring of their progress will be organized in a participatory manner, similar to the process followed in the ACCESS project.

For accountability purposes, the FAO-TA project will track physical and financial progress against the annual workplan and budget. It will monitor its results by tracking the indicators identified in the logical framework, including mandatory and selected optional GAFSP indicators. As explained, the M&E experts will have a dual role of providing training and technical backstopping to the RAINS M&E team as well as for the monitoring and performance assessment of the FAO-TA component. Their terms of reference are included in Annex VI.

It will be the joint responsibility of the team leader and project budget holder to coordinate the preparation of progress reports, mid-term assessments and terminal reports for submission to GAFSP. It is the responsibility of the Lead Technical Officer to ensure technical validity of the reports as well as to ensure inputs from other Technical Officers from within the Project Task Force (PTF) and from other partners as needed.

After approximately two years of implementation, a mid-term review mission will be organized for the RAINS project, which will also cover the FAO-TA and in which FAO will participate.

In addition, for lesson learning purposes, specific research and thematic studies may be conducted by the ISU, the FAO-TA team or be outsourced to subject-matter specialists.

### **2.6.3 Reporting**

The project will provide the six-monthly progress reports as per GAFSP template, according to the donor agreement. Reports to be submitted to GAFSP will be technically cleared by the LTO and reviewed by the Investment Centre before submission to GAFSP. Such reports will also be archived in the FAO Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS).

In addition, the FAO-TA team will report on their activities to the RAINS PMU, for incorporation into the PMU's bi-annual progress reports.

Technical reports that may be of interest to a wider audience and do not contain confidential (financial, private or commercial) information will be posted on the RAINS project website and possibly on the FAO-Bangladesh webpages.

Financial reports will be prepared on an annual basis, in line with the GAFSP's reporting schedule and deadlines.

## **2.7 Evaluation Provisions**

There are two types of evaluation provisions.

First, support to the RAINS Monitoring and Evaluation system is a substantive part of the FAO technical assistance activities. To this end, a national M&E expert will be recruited for the duration of the project,



with support from an international expert at intervals. They will thus train, coach and support the RAINS PMU to implement the baseline study, mid-term review and impact evaluation of the RAINS project.

Second, the FAO-TA itself is subject to standard FAO evaluation procedures, and to this end, adequate provisions are included in the budget. In compliance with FAO policy on evaluation and considering the budget size, no separate project evaluation is anticipated. However, the project will contribute to the Evaluation Trust Fund being managed by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) and might be potentially evaluated through a cluster approach, along with other projects that share one or more of the following characteristics: theme and/or approach, geographical area of intervention, resource partner”.

## SECTION 3 - SUSTAINABILITY

### 3.1 Capacity Development

#### Capacity building

As a technical assistance project, almost all the project’s activities contribute to capacity development. Technical assistance and capacity building will be targeted at specific areas of the RAINS project that will benefit from strengthening of the government project implementation partners.

During the design of the RAINS project, the provisions for the FAO-technical assistance component have been included to address the following identified capacity gaps: i) lack of responsive technical support and functioning models for government to support nutrition-sensitive and market-oriented diversification and public-private partnership; and ii) limited capacities of farmer organizations to engage with the private sector.

To address these issues, the following capacity building activities are included:

**Capacity building for POs:** Building on the successful approach of the GAFSP pilot Missing Middle Initiative in Bangladesh (MMI-BD), the FAO-TA will support the project to identify, train and work with Farmer Business Facilitators (FBFs) to strengthen producers’ organizations. FBFs will work in collaboration with frontline extension officers to support the selected POs and farmer groups on a continuous basis to foster adoption of improved management capacities, sustainable agricultural technologies, and improved marketing practices. In collaboration with the Department of Extension (DAE) and Department of Agriculture Marketing (DAM) and the ACCESS and SACP projects, FAO will facilitate exchange visits for the newly trained FBFs and FFS Master Trainers to successful producer organizations.

**Capacity building to improve nutrition at village level:** Based on a rapid field assessment and existing approaches and training materials, simplified Nutrition Behavior Change Communication (NBCC) messages will be used or adapted in collaboration with the appropriate GoBD and other involved agencies, e.g., the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN). Priority actions/messages will be included in the training activities for DAE, farmer groups and producer organizations (mainstreaming of nutrition messages).

FAO, in collaboration with BARI will review the existing models of improved homestead gardens (already developed by BARI) and will elaborate simple step-by-step guidelines for the establishment of the same. Already existing training materials (e.g., from SACP or other projects) will be built upon. FAO and BARI, in collaboration with DAE, and the RAINS PMU will agree on the sites for the establishment of demo homestead gardens. The sites will preferably be under the control of women groups, female headed households, and poor households. FAO, in collaboration

with DAE and BARI, will provide Training of Trainers (ToT) for DAE frontline extension officers on the establishment of the integrated homestead garden models.

**Capacity building for the Farmer Field School Programme:** Building on SACP developed material and feedback from SACP Master Trainers, FAO-TA will review and where necessary update the curriculum of the Farmer Field and Business School (FFS) programme and implementation modalities of the training sessions. The process will be supported by two national FFS experts (one female, one male). The FFS programme will promote climate-smart integrated and diversified farming models. FAO will provide the ToT to build basic FFS facilitation skills and insights into group dynamics and organizational governance before moving on to farming as a business, business management skills, and knowledge needed to produce as per market requirements, including post-harvest operations. Trainees will include women and men.

FAO-TA will organize visits for DAE, PO representatives, FBFs and FFS lead farmers to water saving irrigation sites used for growing High Value Crops and provide needs-based digital literacy training.

FAO-TA will support the organization and facilitation of Value Chain Roundtables around prioritized value chains. Participants will include PO representatives, lead farmers, traders, processors, DAM, DAE, e-commerce providers, etc. These events will serve as a platform to discuss challenges and opportunities along the value chains, and they will also function as “producer-buyer matchmaking events” for linking farmer groups and POs to potential buyers. This will enable targeted improvements within the value chain, production as per market demand, and creation or upscaling farmer-trader-processor linkages. This activity will build on lessons learnt from the SACP piloted “multistakeholder platforms” hosted by the respective District Chamber of Commerce.

**Capacity building on Post-harvest Management, Packaging, Storage:** FAO-TA, in collaboration with SACP and ACCESS will review and update training manuals on harvest, post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques. Buyers will be consulted to ensure their needs and expectations are included in the manuals. Subsequently, in collaboration with DAM and private sector entities, FAO will support a ToT on improved post-harvest management, storage and primary processing for DAE frontline extension staff who in turn will advise and train FBFs, selected POs and farmer groups.

FAO-TA will also share experience from FAO-led digitization and certification projects, such as the digital village initiative. As part of PO capacity building, FAO-TA will explore opportunities for connecting POs with established e-commerce providers. Opportunities for branding and certification for agriproducts will be identified through the outsourced value chain studies and further discussed and assessed in the “value chain roundtables”. In case opportunities for value addition through a Participatory Guarantee System or third-party certification are confirmed, FAO-TA will support POs to comply with the relevant standards and establish an internal control system if needed.

**Capacity building for the establishment of small rural business:** FAO-TA will support the investment for establishing small scale food processing business model demonstration sites in collaboration with interested youth and women groups. FAO-TA will also support the training of the small food processing entrepreneurs. Trainers will be sourced from private sector enterprises or vocational training centres. The training will involve the creation of a simple business plan and follow-up coaching. The FAO-TA will also pilot the establishment of youth managed agricultural





machinery services (including repair and business skills). These may also be youth-managed machinery service units at the POs. The training will involve the creation of a simple business plan.

**Capacity building on project management, coordination and M&E:** FAO-TA will pro-actively and continuously identify synergies and possible partnerships with other projects, especially also with the GAFSP funded PO-led ACCESS project and the IFAD funded SACP project. FAO will assist with the development of a MIS system and will train those responsible for project M&E at national, district and upazila level on results-based M&E and Knowledge Management, and also train the team on the use of handheld devices for data collection and data analysis and reporting. Subsequently, FAO M&E experts will coach the project M&E team in the training of agency field staff involved in data collection to use the system. A lesson learning-cum-refresher training will be organized in the second year to address any issues that may have arisen during the first year. For ease of reference and comparability of data, the TA team will build on SACP's Benefit M&E system with Age and Sex Disaggregated Data (ASDD) collection and analysis. The system is designed to also record and share challenges, best practices, lessons learned, and will also include a scoring card methodology for farmer group assessment on key project indicators.

#### **Exit strategy and sustainability.**

The project's exit strategy is built on the ongoing government's programmatic reform of decentralized institutional agribusiness support services and the project's engagement and the above-described capacity development of such decentralized extension staff in a sustainable approach. Interventions will complement GoBD's agenda in this regard and will seek to leverage Bangladesh's Agricultural extension network. Principal participating agencies such as DAE and DAM will continue improving services after the project exit.

In addition, the project invests in developing self-sustaining community-based organizations such as farmers' interest groups and entrepreneurs involved in production and marketing. The project will seek to build on existing institutions and strengthen their capacities where applicable. The project will promote partnerships with relevant private sector organizations and rural finance organization in Component 2 to strengthen sustainability prospects further.

A more comprehensive exit and sustainability strategy will be developed at start-up to ensure all stakeholders have a common vision and understanding of sustainability requirements. Movements towards improved sustainability and exit will be regularly monitored and evaluated, particularly at MTR, to help analyse the readiness and identify the preliminary indications for later strengthening interventions during the second half of implementation.

Component 3 will ensure quality monitoring and evaluation of project results and develop required documentation and replication guidelines to facilitate the continuation of the extension approach promoted beyond the project.

### **3.2 Decent Rural Employment**

Decent rural employment is mainly addressed through Pillar 1 and 4 of the Decent Work Agenda.

Pillar 1 Employment creation and enterprise development:

a) Through developing PO business plans and value chain linkages for specific commodity clusters. Through the bulk purchase of inputs and collective marketing activities, the Pos will be able to lower production costs and increase prices received by their members, thereby increasing the financial return on farmers' labour inputs. This was demonstrated by the results under the MMI-BD project.



b) The establishment of pilot business models of women and youth-run small-scale food processing and machinery service businesses

Pillar 4 Governance and social dialogue. Specifically, through the capacity building of RAINS implementing agencies in participatory extension approaches, farmers gain a voice as interlocutors of government service providers and are better able to access extension services and ensure these services cater to their needs.

### 3.3 Environmental Sustainability

Population density in Bangladesh is very high, even in rural areas, and therefore land is scarce. This has given rise to very intensive but diversified smallholder farming systems that use the land very efficiently.

For the RAINS project an abbreviated Environmental Social and Climate management Framework has been developed according to IFAD rules and procedures. The FAO-TA will be in line with this framework.

The TA project will contribute to improving efficiency in the use of resources in various ways:

The project will establish demo-sites of homestead gardens that will be managed organically, without the use of pesticides. The project will identify integrated farming models and promote them through the FFS programme. The FFS programme that will promote integrated diverse farming systems, integrated pest management (IPM) and good agricultural practices (GAP) and is aimed to reduce the use pesticides and fertilizers by farmers.

These practices include:

- the promotion of non-chemical fertilizers: vermi-compost and manure; kitchen waste; compost; water hyacinth/straw-based municipal waste compost;
- mulching (live, straw, plastic); and
- biological pest control technologies.

Specific attention will be provided on mutual beneficial integration of crop and livestock production and/or aquaculture/fisheries. For example, how crop investment can contribute to feeding issues of animal production and how animal waste can improve crop fertility management. Additionally, farmers will be encouraged to keep their topsoil, rather than selling it to brick fields, thereby ensuring improved soil health. FAO-TA will also organize exchange and exposure visits to successful water saving irrigation sites. Promoted integrated pest management and good agriculture practices may include limited use of inputs such as fertilizers and control agents to achieve higher yields for optimal resource efficiency (however, not procured directly by FAO).

The project will also contribute to reduce post-harvest losses by supporting the development of post-harvest, primary processing and storage guidelines and training of trainers. Furthermore, the project will facilitate the setting up of local small-scale processing facilities that will be able to absorb increased production volumes and/or absorb rejects that cannot be sold to exporters or other high-quality demanding buyers.

### 3.4 Gender Equality

#### Analysis: Roles, capacities and needs of women and men

Recognizing the challenges faced by women, FAO Bangladesh conducted a country gender assessment of agriculture and the rural sector in 2022. This assessment as well as SBKS' direct experience with women's empowerment in agriculture are the basis for the gender analysis and considerations here below.



The driver of agriculture in Bangladesh is smallholder family farming. The ratio of men to women involved in farming is almost 1:1. However, the engagement of women and girls in agri-economic activities is often impeded due to mind-sets, prejudices, myths and other social customs. Often men are more involved in the finance, marketing and technology aspects of agriculture while women are more involved in 'backbreaking work', pre-processing and animal grooming. Rural women are silent workers and fundamental contributors to the rural economy, as women are a vital part of agricultural activities. Additionally, women also provide care for all household members, especially children. Thus, the role of women is vital for household food security and resilient livelihoods.

One of the main challenges for women in agriculture is the lack of proper recognition of their critical contribution to the sector. As such their access to relevant information, technology, markets and finance is significantly lower than their male counterparts. At the market, many consumers have a bias against purchasing from women. In terms of technology there are also mindsets that women cannot drive a power tiller. In general, the technologies and machinery are biased towards men. Women also have less access to extension services than men. Female farmers are very often less mobile than male farmers. Therefore, for maintaining contact with female farmers, extension workers need to visit them, which requires high mobility capacity, but the mobility capacity of extension workers is limited.

A summary of current gender roles in rural Bangladesh:

<b>Agricultural production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women are involved in tilling the fields, post-harvest activities, growing vegetables, and kitchen gardens, rearing poultry, sheep and goats and milking cows.</li> <li>• Men are involved in mechanized activities such as ploughing. Productive land is owned mostly by men.</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the market, many consumers have a bias against buying from women.</li> <li>• Men are more involved in decisions for marketing of the major field crops.</li> <li>• Women may sell goods they have produced themselves at the farm gate if the amount involved is tiny. However, men are involved if quantities are larger, and usually keep the proceeds.</li> </ul>
<b>Credit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smallholder and landless women have access to micro-credit.</li> <li>• Men have more access to institutional sources of credit, which often have more favourable terms.</li> </ul>
<b>Technology use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women tend to work on low-technology activities whereas men undertake high technology activities. There are strongly held beliefs that women cannot operate machinery. This argument is prevalent even though female wage labourers frequently use such machines. Men tend to own all machinery.</li> </ul>
<b>Access to information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men have access to more sources of information, and they are better reached by the extension services.</li> <li>• Women have limited access to extension services.</li> </ul>
<b>Agricultural Decision making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men make decisions regarding agriculture and fish production.</li> <li>• Women have the space to make more significant decisions in selling poultry, eggs and vegetables grown by them.</li> <li>• Sometimes the involvement of women in local groups depends on the decision of husbands or male members of the family.</li> <li>• Men typically decide how to use micro-credit, even if procured by women.</li> <li>• In small farms and landless households, men tend to decide whether women can take up work as daily labourers and define the terms of their engagement.</li> <li>• Overall, women have very limited access to the decision-making process at community level.</li> <li>• Regardless of the topic, for the most part, even if women are consulted, men take the final decision.</li> </ul>

### **RAINS-TA gender approach**

The project will actively seek to tackle the barriers faced by women related to income opportunities and nutritious diets. The activities on homestead gardens will be specifically targeted to women to increase their access to nutritious diets. Furthermore, the capacity building for the establishment of small-scale rural business, including in entrepreneurship, farm processing and post-harvest techniques will be specifically targeted at women to increase their income earning capacity.

In all other activities, gender sensitization and training (targeting both men and women), will be mainstreamed, starting from developing a gender sensitive PRA and farmer mobilization process. Care will be taken to also select women as FBFs and trainers and to adjust training locations and times to ensure women are able to participate. To monitor that this targeting is successful, gender-disaggregated indicators have been established.

The FAO-TA will assist the RAINS project M&E unit to create a real time (during the selection of the beneficiary) baseline profile of the project beneficiaries at dis-aggregated level including gender, gender of the household head, age (youth), indigenous status, income strata, farm size classification, geographical location including geo-code and very basic information about their agriculture and non-agricultural enterprise. This will enable gender-disaggregated data collection for monitoring throughout the project implementation as well as for the mid-term and endline evaluations. The RAINS PMU will also have a social inclusion (gender, youth, Ips and PWDs) specialist.

### **3.5 Indigenous Peoples**

Bangladesh has around 30 small ethnic minorities with Santal, Orao, Chakma, Marma, Garo, Khashia, Tripura, Monipuri, and Rakhain being the main groups in terms of numbers. The Santal and Orao populations live in the North-western districts (Barind Tracts), and therefore project activities will be implemented in areas of commuting distance to them. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for ethnic minorities who are gradually entering in trade and other service sectors because their livelihoods are being affected by environmental and problems and climate change (climate migration). GoBD recognizes that the ethnic communities of Bangladesh are the most deprived of economic, social, cultural and political rights, mainly due to their ethnic condition, having committed in the 8FYP actions in favour of their fundamental rights and social security, together with the empowerment of their social, cultural and traditional identities.

The RAINS project may have a moderate impact on ethnic minorities, because it is sited within commuting distance of such communities, and because it offers employment to ethnic minorities people. Without specific measures to ensure their inclusion, the RAINS project may risk not adequately engaging ethnic minorities in its' activities. To mitigate this risk, the RAINS project, for which FAO will provide TA, will conduct a socio-cultural and land tenure assessment before any investment is made and will follow Full Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) procedures. The FAO PRA expert will provide training on FPIC in conjunction with the training on the PRA approach. Special attention will be given to the presence and engagement of ethnic minorities in the PRA approach to be developed with DAE, as well as in areas where ethnic minorities are present, their inclusion in activities in support of producer organizations, homestead garden pilot sites and establishment of women and youth led pilot business models for food processing and machinery services.

The project will not adversely or seriously affect on ethnic minorities' rights, lands, natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions, governance systems, and culture or heritage (physical<sup>2</sup> and non-physical or intangible<sup>3</sup>) inside and/or outside the project area.



### Annex I: Logical Framework Matrix<sup>3</sup>

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<b>FAO-TA Impact</b>					
To contribute to Bangladesh's food and nutrition security through diversified and resilient agriculture.	Beneficiary households experience of Food Insecurity (FIES scale) (only regarding members of POs directly supported by FAO-TA).  Monthly household income (only regarding members of POs directly supported by FAO-TA).	tbd	0% of households experience severe food insecurity.  20% decrease in moderate food insecurity.	FIES survey among members of supported Pos.  Profiling of PO and members at time of PO selection and project completion (baseline/evaluation instruments).	Increased knowledge and skills of implementing partners lead to effective RAINS implementation (absence of other major bottlenecks).  Steady market demand and economic conditions. Incomes increase through a combined effect of increased production, reduced production costs and improved marketing.
<b>FAO-TA Outcome</b>					
The capacity of implementing agencies has been strengthened to successfully implement the RAINS project and reach expected results.	Number of extensions staff whose capacities have been developed in participatory extension approaches (disaggregated by gender). Implementing agency staff report to be better equipped to implement participatory extension and gender-sensitive project activities.	0	300 (at least 30% female).  240 (80% of staff trained).	Training participant lists.  Training evaluation forms, staff interviews.	RAINS implementing partners have the human resources to absorb all training and TA activities will be sufficient to build the necessary knowledge and skills of the implementing partners.

<sup>3</sup> To support strategic planning, the results matrix and the workplan and budget describe the entire chain of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and strategic goals. It provides an effective and transparent linkage between means and ends.

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<b>FAO-TA Outputs</b>					
<b>Output 1: Improved capacity of DAE and other implementing partners for RAINS Component 1 (Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Production).</b>	Implementing partners have enhanced knowledge and skills to implement selected project activities.			RAINS progress reports.	See Outcome.
1.1 Building capacity to support POs and Farmer Groups.	Number of DAE staff trained (ToT) in the PRA approach and FPIC procedures.	0	300 persons (at least 30% are women).	Attendance lists.	DOA will proactively support their field staff to take part in the training.
	Assessment of value chains and market opportunities (including buyer mapping, mapping of existing POs, e-commerce and branding potential) for pre-selected agricultural commodities.	0	9 value chain studies.	Reports.	
	Number of Producer based organization supported (T2-4).	0	42	Reports, baseline and endline survey	14 POs and 28 Farmer groups. In each district there exist at least 1 suitable POs interested to collaborate with the project.
	Farmer Business Facilitators (FBFs) are trained.	0	14	Record of enrollment/ attendance	Suitable persons to take up FBF role can be identified. SKBS is able to accommodate additional FBFs in their training programmes.
	Number of POs completed business plan and improved services to members.	0	14	PO maturity scorecard	
	Number of smallholders receiving climate-resilient productivity enhancement support (disaggregated by gender) through their PO (GAFSP Tier 2 - 13).	tbd	1 680 PO members, of whom at least 40% female.		



Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
1.2 Improving family nutrition at village level.	guidelines for nutrition and food safety and homestead gardens.  People receiving improved nutrition services and products (gender disaggregated, age disaggregated) (T2-12).  Integrated homestead gardens plots established	0	7 guidelines (1 nutrition & 6 fs, and 6 homestead garden models).  240 persons (120 DAE staff, at least 50% female, 120 lead farmers, 100% female).  First 120 demo plots, scaled out to 500 total.	Guidelines.  Attendance lists of homestead garden demo plots training.  Location specific data and photo story.	Close collaboration with Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), BARI, MOA and other partners.  DAE will proactively support their field staff to take part in the training.  Female Lead Farmers ready to host the demonstration sites.
1.3 Market-led Farmer Field and Business Schools (FFS).	Market-led FFS curriculum (including training implementation modalities) reviewed and updated with cost-benefit analysis and digital literacy training.  Number of master trainers trained (season-long FFS ToT) & coached during FFS programme roll-out. (disaggregated by gender and age).  Number of visits to water-saving irrigation sites.	0	1 complete package  120 (at least 30% are women).	FFS curriculum.  Training report, signed participant lists.	DAE will release staff to be trained.
1.4 Support to building back a better agricultural support system.	Institutional assessment of DAE capacity to support rural institutions.	0	14 visits.	Travel records.  Assessment report & validation workshop report.	Improved water saving irrigation systems are available to be visited.  Key informants and focus group participants willing to discuss issues openly.

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
	Number of farmer-research-extension-private sector roundtables held.	0	28 meetings.	Minutes of meeting.	All stakeholders interested in identifying problems, opportunities and solutions.
<b>Output 2: Improved capacity of DAE and other implementing partners for RAINS Component 2 (Market linkage and off-farm diversification)</b>	Implementing partners have enhanced knowledge and skills to implement selected project activities			RAINS progress reports.	See Outcome.
2.1 Marketing Arrangements, Post-harvest Management, Packaging and Storage.	Training manuals on harvest, post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques developed/ adapted.	0	2	1 training manual for perishables and 1 for non-perishable products.	Private sector representatives are willing to contribute.
	Number of DAE/DAM staff trained on improved post-harvest management, storage and primary processing (disaggregated by gender and age).	0	120 (at least 30% are women).	Training report and signed participant lists.	DAE will release staff to be trained; enough female trainees available.
	Number of multistakeholder value chain roundtable meetings held.	0	28 (2 per district).	Minutes of meeting; attendance lists.	Traders, end-buyers and input suppliers are willing to participate.
2.2 E-commerce, branding, certification for agriproducts.	Number of POs linked to e-commerce providers and/or a brand label and/or obtained certification.	0	At least 10 out of 14 Pos.	Records of the Pos.	Relevant e-commerce providers, brand labels and certification programmes available.
	Farmers that are supported in accessing improved marketing opportunities (farmer). (T2-8)	0	800 PO members, of whom at least 40% female.	Records of the POs and e-commerce providers.	All members of the 10 POs linked to e-commerce, branding and/or obtain certification are supported to access these marketing opportunities.



Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
2.3 Women and Youth Income Generation.	Number of post-harvest facilities constructed/rehabilitated (T2-7).	0	28 (2 per district).	Simple business plans plus photo story.	Successful models of simple food processing available and tested.
	Number of women and youth trained to run the food processing businesses (gender and age disaggregated).	0	280 (at least 50% female).	Attendance lists.	Suitable and experienced trainers are available.
	Volume of agriculture produce processed by post-harvest facilities established with GAFSP support, by food group (tonnes) (T2-9).	0	Tbd (running at 80% of capacity during season).		
	Number of youth managed agriculture related machinery services units established.	0	14 (1 per district).	Simple business plans plus photo story.	Young people are interested to get engaged in this kind of business.
<b>Output 3. Effective and efficient project implementation, and coordination and knowledge management.</b>	Activities are implemented and lessons are shared timely for use by partners in the RAINS project.			Progress reports.	
3.1 M&E and Knowledge Management.	Gender and age disaggregated indicators developed for M&E system (based on SACP project).	0	1 set	Indicator set.	Close collaboration with SACP.
	Number of data collectors trained (disaggregated by gender and age).	0	60 (at least 30% are women).	Training report, signed participant lists.	Close collaboration with SACP possible.
	Number of M&E staff trained in data management and analysis. (disaggregated by gender and age).	0	18	Training report and signed participant lists.	Close collaboration with SACP possible.

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions
	Lessons learned are documented and shared with project partners and beyond.	0	at least 4 documents.	Communication and knowledge sharing products.	Good collaboration and sharing between implementing partners.
Total project outreach (T2-1).					
	Total number of beneficiaries reached, gender disaggregated (T2-1).		2,280 (at least 40% female).		
	Number of farmers supported (disaggregated by gender and age).	0	1,800 (at least 45% female).		All 1400 PO members receive improved services from their PO plus 280 members of farmer groups supported by FBFs, and 120 homestead garden female lead farmers, homestead garden female lead farmers are not member of a supported PO.
	Percentage of farmers who have been helped to cope with impact of climate change.	0	100%		
By organization type.	Persons receiving capacity development (gender disaggregated).	0	1,440 (at least 40% female).		
	Number of government staff trained (gender disaggregated).	0	340 (at least 30% female).		FFS master trainers and upazila M&E data collectors will be selected from among 300 DAE staff trained in PRA techniques. In addition, 20 district & national level M&E staff, 14 DAM district staff and 6 higher-level DAE staff.
	Farmers trained.	0	960 (at least 45% female).		FBFs directly train about 40% of PO members (as per MMI-BD experience).
	Number of small entrepreneurs trained (disaggregated by gender and age).	0	294 (at least 50% female, at least 50% youth).		50% of trained small entrepreneurs are members of supported POs (not double counted in total beneficiaries, nor in total persons receiving capacity development).



**Annex II: Stakeholder Engagement Matrix**  
**1) Stakeholder Consultation**

The stakeholder consultation plan for ongoing formal consultations for the duration of the project:

Stakeholder Name		Stakeholder Type		Stakeholder profile		Consultation Methodology		Timing	
RAINS Committee	Steering Committee	Partners	Partners	Ministry of Agriculture and its' agencies		Committee meeting whereby project updates will be shared and advice and insights will be received from committee members.		Annually	
ToT trainees		Partners	Partners	DAE and DAM extension staff, Farmer Business Facilitators (members of producer organizations), homestead garden lead farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs		Training approaches will be participatory, meaning that at the start of each training, training needs of participants will be discussed with them. At the end of each training, a training evaluation will be organized to improve the programme for following batches.		Annually	During training sessions
Sara Bangla Krishak Society		Partner	Partner	Civil Society Organization		Discussion with SBKS executive board on the modalities of integration of FBFs from selected POs into their SBKS FBF training programme.		Annually	
BARI and other providers, to be identified	Service providers, to be identified	Partner	Partner	Research Institute. Other service providers can be NGO, research institute or consulting company, as the case may be		Discussions on the roles and services to be provided, negotiation on the terms of reference.		As needed	

Stakeholder consultations to date

Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder profile	Consultation Methodology	Consultation Findings
MoA and agencies (DAE, DAM, BARC, BARI)	Partner & Direct beneficiary	National Government Institution body	Consultation workshops (August 2021), mission (July 2022), sharing of draft project document	Nutrition and climate resilience are high priorities. Value chain linkages with smallholders has proven difficult and needs some innovative approaches and a dedicated marketing expert.
IFAD	Partner	International Government Institution/body	Same as above	Important to include the ToT on PRA and assessment of DAE capacity.
Smallholder farmers in Dinajpur (Barind Tract and Drought Prone Areas)	Indirect Beneficiary	Local community	Discussions during mission	
SBKS/ ACCESS project team	Partner	Civil Society Organization	Discussions during mission and online during design	Given their responsibility to implement the ACCESS project, SBKS can take on training of only a limited number of FBFs. Happy to receive government staff and POs on exchange visits.
BRRI, BAU, BSMRAU, RU, SAU, PSTI, SRDI, JATI, CIMMYT, icddr, RDA	Partner	Other: research and training institutes	Consultation workshops (August 2021)	See workshop outcome summary in Section 1.3.1.1
Other government units (FPMU, BFSA)	Partner	National Government Institution body	Consultation workshops (August 2021)	See workshop outcome summary in Section 1.3.1.1
Golden Harvest, RRDf, KGF	Partner	Civil Society Organization	Consultation workshops (Aug 2021)	See workshop outcome summary in Section 1.3.1.1



GAIN, Practical Action, Solidaridad Asia network	Partner	Non-Governmental Organization	Consultation workshops (August 2021)	See workshop outcome summary in Section 1.3.1.1
GAFSP	Partner	Resource Partner/Donor	Concept note submission Draft Project Document sharing	GAFSP TAC recommendation: Fewer & more focused activities, higher women engagement and integrated farm approach with emphasis on nutrition.  Feedback from GAFSP on project document.



2) Grievance Mechanism

FAO-TA will not introduce any separate grievance mechanism. Necessary arrangements will be executed by the RAINS project as per description in the Section 1.3.1.2. Grievance Mechanism above.



### Annex III: Workplan

It is important that the FAO-TA activities are implemented timely and in coordination with the overall RAINS schedule of activities. The general sequence and phasing of activities in relation to the project's Components and their activities is provided in the following table.

	Project year 1 (Nov - Dec 2023)				Project year 2 (Jan - Dec 2024)				Project year 3 (Jan-Dec 2025)				Project year 4 (Jan-Jun 2026)		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
<b>Output 1: Improved capacity of the DAE and other implementing partners for RAINS Component 1: Nutrition-Sensitive Agricultural Production</b>															
HR: International agriculture economist / agribusiness expert (Senior Technical Advisor / Team Leader)	x														
<b>Activity 1.1 Building capacity to support POs and Farmer groups</b>															
HR: PRA & FPIC expert (national)	x														
HR: National Climate Smart Agriculture Specialist	x														
1.1.1 Training of DAE extension staff on Participatory Rural Appraisal	x														
1.1.2 Conduct value chain studies and buyer mapping	x														
1.1.3 Selection & Training of PO Farmer Business Facilitators FBFs & knowledge exchange with Sara Bangla Krishak Society	x														
1.1.4 Mentoring of RAINS Producer organizations															
1.1.5 Exposure visits to well performing POs															
<b>Activity 1.2 Improving family nutrition at village level</b>															
HR: National Homestead Garden and nutrition Specialist	x														
1.2.1 Compilation of village-based nutrition guidelines															
1.2.2 Compilation of integrated homestead garden guidelines															
1.2.3 Selection of sites for establishing demo-gardens															
1.2.4 ToT on establishment of nutrition sensitive home gardens, incl. establishment and maintenance of demo-gardens															



	Project year 1 (Nov - Dec 2023)				Project year 2 (Jan - Dec 2024)				Project year 3 (Jan-Dec 2025)				Project year 4 (Jan-Jun 2026)		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
<b>Activity 1.3 Market-led FFS</b>															
HR: National VC/Marketing Expert	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
HR: International Value Chain Expert (technical advisor)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
HR: National Market-led FFS Expert (1 male, 1 female)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
1.3.1 Market-led FFS curriculum development	X														
1.3.2 ToT of FFS master trainers on market-led FFS (4 batches, season long + 1 day refresher)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
1.3.3 Knowledge exchange visits to successful climate smart irrigation sites		X								X					
1.3.4 Support digital literacy programmes	X	X		X				X				X			
<b>Activity 1.4 Support to building back a better agricultural support system</b>															
1.4.1 Institutional assessment of DAE capacity to support rural institutions	X	X								X	X	X	X		
1.4.2 farmer-research-extension-private sector round tables (2 events/district)		X	X							X	X				
<b>Output 2: Improved capacity of DAE and other implementing partners for RAINS Component 2: Market linkage and off-farm diversification</b>															
<b>Activity 2.1 Marketing Arrangements, post-harvest management, packaging and storage</b>															
HR: National expert Post-harvest management	X		X	X						X	X	X	X		
HR: National consultant food safety	X		X	X						X	X	X	X		
HR: National business development and private sector engagement expert	X	X	X	X						X	X	X	X		

	Project year 1 (Nov - Dec 2023)				Project year 2 (Jan - Dec 2024)				Project year 3 (Jan-Dec 2025)				Project year 4 (Jan-Jun 2026)		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
2.1.1 Guidelines for post-Harvest handling, primary processing and storage	x														
2.1.2 ToT on post-harvest handling, primary processing and storage, (for DAM and DAE-SAAO staff)			x				x								
2.1.3 Facilitate "Value Chain Roundtables" and follow-up meetings for improved marketing arrangements			x		x							x			
<b>Activity 2.2 E-commerce, branding, certification for agriproducts</b>															
HR: National e-commerce and agriculture digitalization expert	x	x	x	x						x	x	x	x	x	x
2.2 E-commerce, branding, certification for agriproducts (as part of capacity building of POs and small-scale businesses)	x	x	x	x						x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Activity 2.3 Women and Youth Income Generation</b>															
HR: National Consultant for small scale income generating food processing options for women and youth			x							x	x	x	x		
2.3.1 Agriculture related small businesses (training).			x							x	x	x	x		
2.3.2 Agriculture related machinery services (training).			x							x	x	x	x		
<b>Output 3: Improved capacity of RAINS PMU for RAINS Component 3: Policies, Management and Coordination</b>															
<b>Activity 3.1 M&amp;E and Knowledge Management</b>															
HR: International M&E / MIS expert	x	x	x							x	x	x	x	x	x
HR: National M&E / MIS expert	x	x	x							x	x	x	x	x	x
Development of benefit M&E indicators	x	x													
Training of District and upazila staff on benefit M&E data collection & refresher	x	x	x							x	x				
Training national & district staff on data analysis and reporting	x	x		x											



	Project year 1 (Nov - Dec 2023)				Project year 2 (Jan - Dec 2024)				Project year 3 (Jan-Dec 2025)				Project year 4 (Jan-Jun 2026)		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Knowledge management & synergies with other projects	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Activity 3.2 Strategic policy research and advice</b>															
Demand based studies	x	x	x												

Annex IV: Budget

A. Budget by Category (based on which FAO will report)

Budget Code	Budget line description	Base Costs (USD)					Total
		Year 2023	Year 2024	Year 2025	Year 2026	Total	
5011	Salaries Professional	28 292	28 292	28 292	28 292	113 166	
5013	Consultants	464 513	409 791	386 623	320 037	1 580 964	
5014	Contracts	150 400	101 204	50 100	-	301 704	
5021	Travel	38 380	38 380	38 380	38 380	153 520	
5023	Training	238 264	497 064	385 064	55 064	1 175 456	
5024	Expendable Procurement	20 220	20 220	20 220	20 220	80 880	
5025	Non-Expendable Procurement	7 720	7 720	7 720	7 720	30 880	
5027	Technical Support Services	19 184	19 184	19 184	55 734	113 286	
5028	General Operating Expenses	21 608	21 488	21 458	21 023	85 575	
5050	GOE Common Services- (Other Central Support Services)	56 023	17 349	17 035	12 482	102 887	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1 044 603</b>	<b>1 160 691</b>	<b>974 075</b>	<b>558 951</b>	<b>3 738 318</b>	
5029	Indirect support costs @7%	73 122	81 248	68 185	39 127	261 682	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1 117 725</b>	<b>1 241 939</b>	<b>1 042 260</b>	<b>598 077</b>	<b>4 000 000</b>	



**B. Budget by Outputs**

Outputs	Year 2023	Year 2024	Year 2025	Year 2026	Total (USD)
Component 1: Nutrition-Sensitive Agricultural Production	626 020	612 056	468 256	241 216	1 947 548
Component 2: Market linkage and off-farm diversification	48 752	258 332	271 528	33 788	612 400
Component 3: Policies, Management & Coordination	144 621	105 303	60 197	73 303	383 424
Project management, monitoring and evaluation	225 210	185 000	174 094	210 644	794 946
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 044 603</b>	<b>1 160 691</b>	<b>974 075</b>	<b>558 951</b>	<b>3 738 318</b>
Indirect support costs @7%	73 122	81 248	68 185	39 127	261 682
<b>TOTAL BUDGET FOR ALL COMPONENTS</b>	<b>1 117 725</b>	<b>1 241 939</b>	<b>1 042 260</b>	<b>598 077</b>	<b>4 000 000</b>

**Annex V: Risk Management**

Section A: Risks to the project

Risk description	Worst case consequence for the project	Risk Score		Mitigating action	Action owner
		Impact	Likelihood		
Non-synchronous SACP and FAO-TA implementation rates.	Project will not be completed within the stipulated time period.	High	Medium	Close coordination between FAO and RAINS Lead Project Directorate.	FAO-TA team leader.
Non-availability of DAE and DAM staff to be trained, especially lack of female staff.	Not enough staff will be trained to roll out the RAINS training activities as planned, so that RAINS will not be able to reach the expected number of farmers to be trained. Gender targets in terms of minimum percentage of female trainees will not be reached, which will have negative implications for RAINS support to female farmers.	High	Low	DAE & DAM have fully committed to the implementation of the RAINS project. Close coordination between the TA team, RAINS PMU and DAE offices in the planning of training activities.	FAO team member responsible for ToT organization and PMU & DAE counterparts.
Climate change related weather events hamper project activities.	This risk is beyond project control and will hamper the training schedule, particularly, practical sessions of market-led FFS training, post-harvest handling and primary processing, low pressure high-efficiency irrigation training. This will in turn delay the Government of Bangladesh activities directly linked to the training.	Medium	Medium	Relocate training venues as needed.	ToT organizer.



Section B: Environmental and Social risks from the project

Risk identified	Risk Classification	Risk Description in the project	Mitigation Actions	Indicators	Progress on mitigation action
ESS5	Low	The Farmer Field School programme will promote Integrated pest Management, which foresees limited use of pesticides when other (biological) options are not sufficient. However, FAO will not directly procure any pesticides, and FAO will train master trainers who already have expertise in this area, so the associated risk is low.	The FFS training will promote any preventative measures to prevent the need to use pesticides in the first place. When needed, the FFS curriculum provides selection of the safest pesticides and also includes training on the proper use, storage and disposal of pesticides to prevent any health or environmental problems arising from its use.	ToT curriculum and materials.	To be determined during project implementation.
ESS 8 gender	Low	Gender imbalance in ToT participants, with onward effect on reaching women in field training.	Participants are agency staff, who are predominantly male. This cannot be changed. Therefore, targets for % female trainees are lower for training of government staff (30%) compared to training of farmers (40%). Furthermore, ToTs will be organized in close coordination with PMU and agencies to include a maximum number of female extension staff. Gender awareness will also be included in ToT curriculum, so that male trainees will also develop their capacity to provide gender-sensitive training to farmers.	ToT curriculum and materials. ToT participant lists.	To be determined during project implementation.
ESS 10 Indigenous Peoples	Low	Indigenous people will be under-represented in ToT participant selection. The project will not adversely or seriously affect on indigenous peoples' rights, lands,	Participants are agency staff, and imbalances in the representation of indigenous people in the staff will be reflected also in the ToT. However, FAO will provide training on PRA and	ToT curriculum and materials. ToT participant lists.	To be determined during project implementation.

		<p>natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions, governance systems, and culture or heritage (physical<sup>2</sup> and non-physical or intangible<sup>3</sup>) inside and/or outside the project area.</p>	<p>FPIC to increase the capacity of agency staff to include indigenous people during identification of farmers for participation in the RAINS project. Special attention will also be given to the engagement of indigenous people in activities in support of producer organizations, homestead garden pilot sites and establishment of women and youth led pilot business models for food processing and machinery services.</p>		
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## Annex VI Terms of Reference (ToR) of key positions

This Annex contains the ToRs for the project personnel who will have major role in implementing the technical assistance, project management and administration activities. ToRs will be reviewed and finalized during the recruitment process. The detailed ToRs of other International and National consultants will be developed during the project inception phase and during the recruitment process as required. Terms of Reference of all positions will be reviewed at MTR.

### **Agriculture economist/Agribusiness expert and team leader (international)**

Duration: 36 months

Duty Station: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and in close coordination with the RAINS and SACP Project Directors, the incumbent will coordinate all project activities and be directly responsible for the technical assistance in the area of commercial integrated farm systems and agribusiness development. Specific duties are as follows:

#### *Agribusiness related activities*

Prepare the terms of reference and select a service provider for the value chain studies and buyer mapping and mapping of existing POs at the start of the project, review and provide feedback on the outputs and organize dissemination of the results among RAINS implementing agencies.

#### Strengthening of POs:

- Organize two workshops with PO and DAE and DAM representatives on the PO support roadmap, the participatory development of Farm Business Facilitator (FBF) terms of reference.
- Organize exposure visits of frontline extension agents and representatives of POs and Farmer Group to well-functioning POs.

#### Market-led Farmer Field and Business Schools:

- Perform cost-benefit analysis of these models and of the homestead garden models developed by BARI, and share finding with the team members supporting the FFS and homestead garden.
- Use the plot comparison at the end of the FFS cycles and the results of the homestead garden demo sites to update the cost-benefit analysis of the integrated farm models and the homestead garden models.

#### Support a better agriculture support system:

- Contribute to the institutional assessment of DAE capacity in the areas of support to farmer organizations, linking farmers to markets and value addition, including the organization of a validation workshop.
- Contribute to the organization of multistakeholder farmers -research -extension – private sector round tables.
- Collaborate and provide technical backstopping to DAE and DAM staff to ensure the quality and effectiveness of RAINS capacity development and knowledge sharing activities in the areas of linking farmers to markets, support to farmer organizations, value addition and small agricultural business development.

Value chain linkages and business development:

Support the marketing expert and business development and private sector engagement experts with the organization of the value chain round tables, the organization of training and support to women and youth-led small-scale businesses.

Additional activities as Senior advisor to RAINS PMU

- Analyse relevant technical issues to provide critical input to the PMU on RAINS annual workplans and the supporting budgets.
- Provide strategic advice to RAINS team members and PD, district and upazila offices in the development and implementation of their project activities.
- Assist the Project Director and other officers involved in the implementation of the project in the scheduling of consultant inputs to coincide effectively with the schedule of implementation requirements of the project activities.
- Assist in promoting knowledge about principles of participation, downward accountability, transparency, feedback and learning, including methods to operationalize them.
- Assist the Project Director in the identification of international training and study tours.
- Provide inputs to the PMU progress reports with regard the FAO TA activities.

TA Team leader duties

- Plan, manage and lead the specialized multidisciplinary TA team and provide strategic, technical and operational leadership.
- Arrange for joint (international and domestic) participatory meetings of the consultants, especially at the beginning of their first input, to develop a comprehensive understanding of the purpose of their inputs in the context of the aims and objectives of the project.
- Develop rapport and maintain close working relationships with the technical staff working in the team for effective planning and implementation.
- Be responsible for TA work planning, initiation of activities and budget oversight in synergy with the RAINS workplans.
- Guide project TA team for the development of the approach, evidence-based strategies, and related tools and methodologies.
- Liaise with the FAO Representation and other FAO projects for sharing of information, experiences, methodologies, tools and lessons learned and building synergies and collaboration.
- Represent FAO at national meetings and conferences, build effective working relationships and implement strategic partnerships with national stakeholders, advocate best practices and increased policy and programmatic coherence dialogue.
- Be responsible for meeting the FAO-TA's reporting obligations, including the inception report, 6 monthly progress reports to GAFSP and terminal report and other periodic and technical reports, ensuring quality standards and timeliness.
- Put into effect the technical advice provided by the review and backstopping missions



Qualifications:

- Advanced university degree in agribusiness, agronomy or related subject.
- Minimum of ten years of progressively responsible professional experience, including in project management in the field of commercial smallholder-based agricultural development and farmer organizations.
- Experience in providing technical assistance to government agencies.
- Experience in working with the private sector and small agribusinesses.
- Experience in working with international organizations.
- Excellent writing, presentation, communication and interpersonal skills.
- Working knowledge of English.
- Familiarity with the administrative and financial procedures of FAO would be an asset.



### **PRA expert (national)**

Duration: 6 months

Duty station: Dhaka

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbent will be directly responsible for the technical support to the RAINS project in the area of Participatory Rural Appraisal. Specifically, the incumbent will:

- Review PRA manuals from the SACP and other sources, Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) and lessons learned during the PRA process and farmer group selection of the SACP.
- With DAE, develop a step-by-step gender-centred PRA and FPIC process for RAINS to engage communities, identify target populations and in a community-drive process to identify their main challenges and priority project interventions.
- Provide training to the 300 DAE frontline extension officers that will be involved in the RAINS PRA (60 upazilas, 5 SAAOs per upazila) in 10 batches of 30 each. The training will be gender-centred, adapted from GALS.
- Backstop DAE staff during the first months of the PRA, farmer group mobilization and FPIC process.

### **Reporting**

- Prepare training and workshop reports and field mission back-to-office reports
- Contribute to FAO-TA and RAINS six-monthly progress reports to GAFSP regarding PRA related activities

### **Qualifications**

- Advanced university degree in rural development, agricultural extension, social science or a related field.
- 10 years of relevant experience
- Experience in the field of the Participatory Rural Appraisal and community engagement.
- Experience in training-of-trainers, preferably in ToTs for extension agents.
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.





### **Nutrition-sensitive homestead garden expert (national)**

Duration: 3 months

Duty Station: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbent will be directly responsible for the technical assistance in the area of homestead garden establishment and nutrition. The incumbent will collaborate with the appropriate agencies of the Government of Bangladesh and with GAINS. Specific duties are as follows:

#### **Nutrition sensitive homestead gardens**

Based on a rapid field assessment and existing approaches and training material, compile and adapt Nutrition Behavior Change Communication (NBCC) messages. Identify nutrition priority actions and messages to be included in the project training materials and activities for homestead gardens, Farmer Field and Business Schools, producer organizations and small food processing enterprises.

In collaboration with BARI, review existing models of improved homestead gardens and elaborate simple step-be-step guidelines for the establishment of the same.

With DAE, BARI, and RAINS project management, agree on the sites for the establishment of the demo gardens

In collaboration with DAE and BARI, organize and provide Training of Trainers (ToT) for DAE frontline staff (SAAOs) on the establishment of the integrated homestead garden models. The training will include the nutrition behavior change communications and relevant food safety messages and will have a theoretical part and the practical part will consist of the establishment and maintenance of the demo gardens at the selected sites.

#### **Mainstreaming nutrition in other project activities**

- Review the value chain studies by the service provider and provide feedback regarding nutrition aspects.
- Assist the post-harvest expert with the review and updating of training material on post-harvest, primary processing and storage with respect to nutrition aspects. Support the ToT on improved post-harvest management, storage and primary processing for DAM and DAE-SAAO staff. Provide post ToT coaching and on-the-job training support to the trained DAM and DAE-SAAO staff.
- Participate in value chain round tables and engage the SUN business network in Bangladesh to enhance nutrition considerations in marketing arrangements.
- Support the development of simple processing guidelines and the training of small food processing entrepreneurs in the aspects of nutritional value.

#### **Reporting**

- Prepare training and workshop reports and field mission back-to-office reports



- Contribute to FAO-TA and RAINS six-monthly progress reports to GAFSP regarding nutrition related activities

#### Qualifications

- Advanced university degree in nutrition, horticulture, homestead gardens or related subject.
- Minimum of ten years of progressively responsible professional experience.
- Good technical knowledge of and experience with homestead gardens, Nutrition Behavior Change Communication in a smallholder setting.
- Experience in providing technical assistance to government agencies.
- Excellent writing, presentation, communication and interpersonal skills.
- Experience in working with international organizations would be an asset.
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.





**Farmer Field and Business Schools (FFS) experts (one male and one female, national)**

Duration: 24 months each, over three years

Duty Station: Dhaka with frequent travel to project districts

The RAINS market-led Farmer Field and Business School (FFS) programme will promote and farmer-test identified diversified climate smart integrated farming models. Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbents will be responsible for the development, organization and facilitation of the training of 120 FFS master trainers and follow-up support to the master trainers in rolling-out the RAINS market-led FFS programme. Specifically, the incumbents will, in collaboration with the international agronomist:

- Building on the SACP developed material and lessons learnt, review and update the curriculum and implementation modalities of the training of the FFS master trainers.
- Liaise with the agribusiness specialist to integrate the results of the value chain studies in the curriculum, and with the nutrition expert and food safety expert to integrate nutrition and food safety messages.
- Organize and provide the Training-of-Trainers (ToT) to 120 FFS master trainers, selected in collaboration with DAE, in 4 batches of 30 participants.
- Subsequently, assist the RAINS PMU and master trainers to select the FFS facilitators and to organize the training of FFS facilitators in the project districts.
- Provide follow-up-coaching and backstopping of the master trainers to support them in their training and coordination of the FFS facilitators (DAE frontline staff and lead farmers) and during the further roll-out of the FFS programme.
- Review master trainer reports of the facilitator training and of the establishment of the FFS and assist the RAINS team in resolving any problems that may arise.
- After one year, organize and provide a refresher training to the master trainers that will also double as a lesson learning workshop and exchange of experience.
- In collaboration with BARI, organize knowledge exchange and exposure visits for DAE staff, PO representatives and FFS facilitators to water saving irrigation sites used for growing high value crops
- Integrate needs-based digital literacy training in the FFS curriculum, to enable farmers to access and use government endorsed apps such as krisoker janala and krisoker digital thikana.
- After the first completed round of FFS farmer training by FFS facilitators, support the identification of the most cohesive farmer groups interested to join or become a formal producer organization and receive training from one of the project's farm business facilitators. To this end support the development of a set of objective criteria and support the assessment of interested groups.



- Collaborate with the project M&E team to develop indicators and monitoring tools for the FFS programme.

#### Reporting

- Prepare training and workshop reports conducted by the incumbent and field mission back-to-office reports.
- Contribute to FAO-TA and RAINS six-monthly progress reports to GAFSP regarding FFS related activities.

#### Qualifications

- Advanced university degree in agronomy, agricultural economics, agricultural extension, social science, political science or a related field.
- 10 years of relevant experience.
- Experience in the field of the group-based, market-led and participatory approach to agricultural extension and adult learning, i.e. "FFS methodology for adaptive research and participatory learning". Experience as FFS master trainer.
- Good technical knowledge of integrated pest and soil management and climate smart agriculture.
- Experience working with the private sector (input providers and produce buyers).
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.





#### **Value chain and marketing expert (national)<sup>4</sup>**

Duration: 19 months, over three years

Duty station: Dhaka

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbent will be directly responsible for the technical assistance in the area of value chain development and marketing. The incumbent will collaborate with the appropriate agencies of the Government of Bangladesh. Specific duties are as follows:

##### **Strengthening of POs:**

- Organize two workshops with PO and DAE and DAM representatives on the PO support roadmap, the participatory development of Farm Business Facilitator (FBF) terms of reference.
- Assist the POs with FBF selection and organize FBF training on PO governance, financial management and record keeping and business planning, using ACCESS training materials and engaging SBKS resource persons. Contracting and supervising of FBFs as trainers of their POs and selected Farmer Groups.
- Organize exposure visits of frontline extension agents and representatives of POs and Farmer Group to well-functioning POs.

##### **Market-led Farmer Field and Business Schools:**

- Collect data for cost-benefit analysis of integrated farm models and of the homestead garden models developed by BARI.
- In collaboration with the FFS experts, review and update the SACP curriculum for the market-led Farmer Field and Business Schools and contribute to the agribusiness aspects of the training of 120 master trainers.
- Provide follow-up coaching of the master trainers on the business aspects of the FFS.

##### **Support a better agriculture support system:**

- Contribute to the organization of multistakeholder farmers -research -extension – private sector round tables.
- Collaborate and provide technical backstopping to DAE and DAM staff to ensure the quality and effectiveness of RAINS capacity development and knowledge sharing activities in the areas of linking farmers to markets, support to farmer organization, value addition and small agricultural business development.

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<sup>4</sup> Depending on candidates' profiles, this position may be combined with the public-private partnership expert.



#### Value chain linkages and business development:

- Organize value chain round tables to facilitate the establishment of value chain linkages between POs and farmer groups with buyers and quality input suppliers and value chain service providers.
- When potential matches between POs or producer groups and buyers have been identified, organize follow-up one-on-one meetings between the group and the buyer, with the presence of the most closely involved DAM or DAE staff supporting the PO or FG. Facilitate the development of a contract for a pilot supply of products by the PO/FG to the buyer.
- Support women and youth-led small-scale agribusiness in developing their marketing activities.
- Provide other technical assistance related to value chain development, linking farmer to market and agribusiness development as requested by the International Agribusiness expert and RAINS PMU.

#### Reporting

- Prepare training and workshop reports conducted by the incumbent and field mission back-to-office reports.
- Contribute to FAO-TA and RAINS six-monthly progress reports to GAFSP regarding value chain development and marketing related activities.

#### Qualifications

- Advanced university degree in agribusiness or agricultural economics, or a related field or an MBA.
- 10 years of relevant experience
- Experience in the field of the agricultural value chain development and marketing of agricultural products.
- Experience working with the private sector (input providers and produce buyers, small-scale agriculture enterprises) and producer organizations.
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.





## **Post-harvest, primary processing and storage technologies expert<sup>5</sup> (national)**

Duration: 8 months, over three years

Duty station: Dhaka

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbent will be directly responsible for the technical assistance in the area of post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques. The incumbent will collaborate with the appropriate agencies of the Government of Bangladesh. Specific duties are as follows:

- Review and update training manuals on harvest, post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques. Consult buyers to ensure their needs and expectations are included in the manuals.
- In collaboration with BARI, support Training of Trainers for DAM and DAE=SAAO staff on post-harvest, primary processing and storage techniques. Involve private sector resource persons in the ToT. The training will put emphasis on reduction of post-harvest losses, ensuring better product quality, reduction of storage and transport losses, enhanced food safety and other value adding activities.
- Provide technical backstopping to trained trainers during the roll out of the training programme to FBFs, POs and farmer groups.
- Develop simple processing guidelines for women and youth-led small-scale food processing business models.
- Advise the procurement process of equipment for small-scale food processing and machinery rental business model demonstration sites: identification of types of equipment needed, drafting of technical specifications and technical evaluation of bidding proposals.
- Support training of women and youth establishing pilot small scale food processing and machinery service businesses with project support at demonstration sites.

### **Reporting**

- Prepare training and workshop reports conducted by the incumbent and field mission back-to-office reports
- Contribute to FAO-TA and RAINS six-monthly progress reports to GAFSP regarding value chain development and marketing related activities

### **Qualifications**

- Advanced university degree in agricultural engineering/mechanization, food processing, agribusiness or related field.

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<sup>5</sup> depending on the profiles of identified experts, the position may be merged with the food safety expert position.



- 10 years of relevant experience.
- Experience in the field of promoting improved and adapted post-harvest, primary processing and storage technologies.
- Experience working with the private sector (input providers and produce buyers, small-scale agriculture enterprises) and producer organizations.
- Experience in training and coaching, preferably of government extension staff.
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.





### **National e-commerce and agriculture digitalization expert**

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbent will be directly responsible for the technical assistance in the area of e-commerce and agriculture digitalization. Specific duties include the following:

- Share experience from FAO-led rural digitization and certification projects, such as the digital village initiative and the support to the Dhaka farmers' market and to the farmers supplying the market with assured safe vegetables.
- Provide capacity building to RAINS implementing agencies on digitization relevant to their areas of work and assist them in the identification and use of digital tools in their work.
- Contribute to the curriculum development for the Farmer Field School (FFS) programmes and the post-harvest handling, primary processing and storage guidelines, including sessions on digitization and e-commerce. Subsequently facilitate these sessions during the Training of Trainers and provide follow-up coaching during roll-out of the training programme.
- Similarly, contribute to the business skills training of women and youth supported by the project on how to use digital tools to streamline s, payment transactions and other business processes in the development of their rural enterprises.
- Provide capacity building to PO in the area of e-commerce, and other digitalization options relevant for their farming systems and their PO activities.
- Explore opportunities for connecting Pos with established e-commerce providers.
- In case opportunities for value addition through a Participatory Guarantee System or third-party certification are confirmed, assist Pos using IT for their internal control and traceability systems.

### **Qualifications**

University degree in agribusiness, MBA or related field

- 10 years of relevant experience.
- Hands-on experience with e-commerce, traceability systems and digitalization in the agriculture sector.
- Experience working with the private sector (input providers and produce buyers, small-scale agriculture enterprises) and producer organizations.
- Experience in training and coaching, preferably of government extension staff and of farmers.
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.



## **National consultant for small-scale income generating food processing and machinery business options for women and youth (14 months)<sup>6</sup>**

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and technical supervision of the project LTO, and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS Project Director, the incumbent will be directly responsible for the technical assistance in the area of women and youth off-farm income generation. The incumbent will collaborate with the appropriate agencies of the Government of Bangladesh. Specific duties are as follows:

The incumbent will be leading all women and youth entrepreneurship related activities:

Review agriculture-related off-farm business models successfully implemented by recently completed and ongoing IFAD and FAO-assisted projects in the country, such as: (i) women-run retail and service shops in wet markets; (ii) home-based micro-enterprises and business start-up for young people, especially girls; and (iii) agricultural machinery and equipment rental and repair businesses

Select promising business models and sites for the establishment of demonstration businesses (at least women-led business and 1 youth-led machinery rental and repair business per district).

Select interested women and youth, based on a competitive process with objective selection criteria

Provide training to the selected women and youth on business planning, business management, record keeping, logistics etc.

In collaboration with the post-harvest and primary processing expert, organize the procurement of the equipment and machinery to be provided as matching grants

Provide regular backstopping to the pilot businesses and refresher training as needed.

Coordinate the support of the post-harvest and primary processing expert and the marketing expert to the women and youth-led small-scale agribusiness development.

Organize exchange visits of PO representatives

- Provide other technical assistance related to value chain development, linking farmer to market and agribusiness development as requested by the International Agribusiness expert and RAINS PMU.

### **Reporting**

- Prepare training and workshop reports conducted by the incumbent and field mission back-to-office reports

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<sup>6</sup> Depending on candidates' profiles, this position may be combined with the value chain development and marketing expert position.



- Contribute to FAO-TA and RAINS six-monthly progress reports to GAFSP regarding value chain development and marketing related activities.

#### Qualifications

- Advanced university degree in agribusiness or agricultural economics, or a related field or an MBA.
- 10 years of relevant experience
- Experience in the field of the agricultural value chain development and marketing of agricultural products.
- Experience working with the private sector (input providers and produce buyers, small-scale agriculture enterprises) and producer organizations.
- Excellent communication skills including writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.



### **Monitoring and Evaluation Expert (international)**

Duration: six months over a period of three years

Duty Station: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and under the direct supervision of the FAO-TA team leader and in close coordination with the RAINS PMU M&E team, the incumbent will lead the technical assistance related to the development and implementation of the RAINS M&E system and knowledge management.

Specific duties are as follows:

- Assist the RAINS M&E team with the development of the M&E indicators, in collaboration with other technical experts, building on the SACP's Benefit M&E system with Age and Sex disaggregated Data (ASDD) collection.
- Assist the RAINS M&E team with the development of the baseline questionnaires
- Develop and implement training of the RAINS M&E team at national, district and upazila level to ensure they are technically capable to maintain and operate the system, to analyse the data and to use the M&E data for programming and planning. The training will consist of three modules: data collection, data analysis and reporting.
- Supervise the national M&E expert.
- Support the RAINS project mid-term and final evaluations.
- Lead the development of the FAO-TA project M&E system.

Qualifications:

- Master's degree or higher in economics, agriculture economics, rural development, social science, natural resources management or related subject.
- At least ten years of international work experience as M&E expert.
- Hands-on experience and deep understanding of developing and sustaining M&E systems preferably in the agriculture sector.
- Excellent communication skills in English including strong writing skills; proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English.





## **Monitoring and Evaluation expert (national)**

Duration: months

Duty Station: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh and direct supervision of the FAO TA team leader and technical guidance of the international M&E expert, contribute to timely implementation of the RAINS project M&E activities. Specific tasks include:

### **A. Technical Duties**

- Assist the RAINS M&E team with the development of the M&E indicators, in collaboration with other technical experts, building on the SACP's Benefit M&E system with Age and Sex disaggregated Data (ASDD) collection.
- Assist the RAINS M&E team with the development of the baseline questionnaires
- Develop and implement training of the RAINS M&E team at national, district and upazila level to ensure they are technically capable to maintain and operate the system, to analyse the data and to use the M&E data for programming and planning. The training will consist of three modules: data collection, data analysis and reporting.
- Coach and backstop the RAINS M&E team in the implementation of the M&E system and contribute to the mid-term and final evaluations.
- If requested by RAINS PMU, provide additional technical support on the M&E system maintenance, operation and use.
- Contribute to the development of the FAO-TA project M&E system and lead its implementation.
- Provide six-monthly progress reports on the M&E activities of the FAO-TA to the TA team leader for incorporation in the project progress report.
- Contribute to the RAINS progress reports.
- Pro-actively identify synergies and possible partnerships with M&E activities of other projects, especially with the GAFSP funded PO-led ACCESS project and the IFAD funded SACP, and contribute to knowledge exchange between these projects.
- Liaison with the RAINS Project Directorate, relevant agencies of the MoA, other national partners and country teams of IFAD and FAO on project related matters.
- Represent the project in relevant workshops and fora.

### **Qualifications:**

- Master's degree or higher in economics, agriculture economics, rural development, social science, natural resources management or related subject.
- At least ten years of work experience as M&E expert.
- Hands-on experience and deep understanding of developing and sustaining M&E systems preferably in the agriculture sector.



- Excellent communication skills including strong writing skills, proven ability to convey complex ideas through clear communication, and concise reports, and effective oral presentations.
- Working knowledge of English and Bengali.





### **Project Finance Officer (national)**

Duration: 36 months

Duty Station: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative in Bangladesh (and budget holder of the project) and direct supervision of the FAO TA team leader, the incumbent will:

- Act as a focal person for all matters related to the daily operation of the project.
- Initiate and follow up on administrative and financial actions related to staff management, non-staff support, travel, payments, logistics and procurement.
- Provide information on programme/project expenditures and status of programme/project budget. Provide financial reports for incorporation in six-monthly progress reports.
- Manage the project budget and prepare budget revisions when required.
- Ensure the quality of project data and documentation in the Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS).
- Participate in the preparation of project workplans, monitor progress and where necessary, identify corrective measures to overcome operational constraints.
- Collect and compile other data on programme/project activities to support reporting on programme/project delivery.
- Supervise the administration and operations officer.
- Perform other duties as required.

#### **Qualifications:**

- University degree in Finance/MBA in Finance.
- At least three years of relevant experience in financial management and administrative support work, including one year at the SB3 level.
- Working knowledge of English.
- Good knowledge of the MS Office applications, Internet and office technology equipment.
- Good knowledge of the Organization's corporate information systems.
- Good knowledge of the Organization's common administrative and financial rules and regulations.
- Good knowledge of the Organization's communication and documentation standards.
- Good knowledge of FAO's corporate computerized financial/travel/human resources systems and administrative procedures.
- Courtesy, tact and ability to maintain effective working relationships with people of different national and cultural backgrounds.



**Comments of relevant Ministries/Divisions and response from FAO**

<b>SL</b>	<b>Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</b>	<b>Responses from FAO</b>
1.	The RAINS project is a component of SACP project for the period July 2023 to June 2026;	Agreed and updated, page # 2 and Workplan (page # 46-48)
2 a.	The activities and budget break-up are consistent with SACP project. Submission of required reports/action plans to the Project Unit from time to time shall be ensured;	Agreed and updated, page # 49 and Annex-ECNEC GO and MoA Administrative Order
2 b.	Project activities and budget management should be made within the project period of main project (July 2023 to June 2026);	Agreed and updated, page # 46-48
2 c.	Progress of the component shall be presented in all PIC and PSC meetings;	Agreed, TA component will follow as approved in DPP, page # 28 (section 2.1.6)
	<b>Economic Relations Division (ERD)</b>	
1.	As a component of SACP project, the background and the alignment of the project should be incorporated clearly in the project document; (In Executive Summary and Section-1, Relevance)	Agreed, and incorporated Page # 3, 7 and 8
2.	The overall objective, specific objective and main activities should be incorporated in Introductory section;	Agreed and incorporated, page # 3 and 8
3.	The role of PIC and the PSC to be mentioned in Section-2, Institutional Arrangements- Page-24, Monitoring- Page-29	FAO follow the established PSC and PIC approved by the ECNEC in the RDPP, page # 25 and 28
4.	Modalities of Training shall be incorporated (preparation of training manuals, trainers, and trainees)	Agreed and incorporated, page # 32 and Annex I: Logical Framework Matrix (page # 37- 42)
5.	It would be justified to publish analytical report on the project incorporating the assessment results, recommendations, training manuals, etc.	Agreed and updated, page # 13