

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE BAMBOO ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE FUND AWARD

September 2024

1. Background

The Innovation Challenge Fund (ICF), an initiative of the Bamboo for Climate Action project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, is jointly implemented by Center for Natural Resource Studies- CNRS and iDE Bangladesh. The GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh (GTFB), in collaboration with iDE, is launching the Bamboo Entrepreneur Initiative to support bamboo entrepreneurs, with a particular focus on the Cox's Bazar district. The initiative aims to foster innovation, expand existing businesses, and open new market opportunities for bamboo-based products and businesses, and unlock benefits for carbon trading.

GTFB is dedicated to promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices within the green technology sector. The foundation emphasizes the use of renewable resources, such as bamboo, to create sustainable business solutions that not only benefit the economy but also protect and preserve the environment.

iDE, an international NGO, focuses on creating income and livelihood opportunities for poor rural households. By leveraging market-based approaches, iDE aims to stimulate inclusive growth and sustainable development, ensuring that even the most marginalized communities can benefit from economic advancements.

Bamboo, known for its rapid growth and versatility, presents a significant opportunity for sustainable business development. It can be used to produce a wide range of products, from handicrafts and furniture to construction materials and bioenergy. Bamboo cultivation also contributes to environmental conservation by preventing soil erosion, improving air quality, and providing habitats for wildlife.

Bamboo Business Opportunities

Bamboo presents a wide range of business opportunities across various sectors, including:

- **Manufacturing:** Production of bamboo-based products such as furniture, handicrafts, construction materials, and household items.
- **Trading and Distribution:** Facilitating the supply chain and distribution of bamboo products to local and international markets.
- **Innovation in Processing:** Developing new technologies and processes for bamboo treatment, preservation, and utilization.
- **Commercial Cultivation:** Promoting sustainable bamboo cultivation practices to meet increasing demand and ensure long-term supply.

Environmentally Friendly Practices

Bamboo is renowned for its environmental benefits:

- **Renewable Resource:** Bamboo grows rapidly and can be harvested sustainably without causing deforestation.
- **Carbon Sequestration:** Bamboo forests absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, mitigating climate change.
- **Soil Conservation:** Bamboo roots help prevent soil erosion and improve soil health.
- **Versatility:** Bamboo products are biodegradable and have low environmental impact compared to traditional materials.

2. Objectives

The primary objectives of this initiative are:

- ✓ To provide financial support to bamboo entrepreneurs.
- ✓ To offer personalized guidance and expert advice.
- ✓ To connect entrepreneurs with local and international markets.
- ✓ To provide access to resources, funding opportunities, and administrative support.

3. Scope of Work

The selected entrepreneurs will be expected to:

- ✓ Utilize the funding to innovate or expand their bamboo-based businesses.
- ✓ Attend and actively participate in all training sessions and workshops provided by GTFB.
- ✓ Collaborate with GTFB experts and mentors to refine and scale their business.
- ✓ Report on the progress and use of funds as required by GTFB.

4. Funding and Support

- ✓ **Funding:** BDT 50,000 to 350,000.
- ✓ **Personalized Guidance:** One-on-one sessions with business experts.
- ✓ **Market Linkage:** Introduction to potential buyers and markets.
- ✓ **Resource Access:** Information and resources from industry experts.
- ✓ **Financial Advice:** Guidance on additional funding and financial management.
- ✓ **Administrative Support:** Assistance with legal and administrative tasks.
- ✓ **Incubation Support:** Continues Business incubation support for business development.

5. Eligibility Criteria (Age and Education applicable for individual run business)

- ✓ **Age:** 15 or above, inclusive of women, men, and third gender
- ✓ **Education:** Basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- ✓ **Business Stage:** Open to all stages (ideation, start-up, established).
- ✓ **Sub-Sector Focus:**
 - Bamboo product manufacturing (showpieces, handicrafts, furniture, construction materials, interior design, utensils, etc.).
 - Bamboo trading and distribution.
 - Innovations in bamboo use and processing.
 - Commercial bamboo cultivation and propagation.
 - High carbon sequestration and long-term carbon trading prospects
 - The focused area is Cox'sBazar, However, other area in Bangladesh also included.
- ✓ **Exclusions:** Employees, board members, and immediate family members of GTFB, iDE, CNRS, and Jury Board.

6. Selection Process

The selection process will involve:

- ✓ Primary application (prescribed format) for the competition
- ✓ Notification to the primary selected participants
- ✓ Orientation (daylong workshop) to the primarily selected competitors on details of submission of business proposal.
- ✓ Submission of business proposal by the competitors
- ✓ Business proposal review and selection of twenty-five to thirty candidates for grooming
- ✓ In the grooming session they will be provided with expert support so that they can present their individual proposal to the selection board
- ✓ Selection board will select top 10 entrepreneurs from the twenty-five to thirty candidates

7. Application Process

Interested candidates must submit their applications (both primary application and business proposal) through one of the following methods:

- ✓ **Online:** Complete the application form on the GTFB website (www.greentech.bd.org).
- ✓ **Email:** Send a completed application form to b4c.funds@greentech.bd.org.
- ✓ **Hardcopy:** Submit a completed application form to the Cox's Bazar AMAN Office.

8. Deliverables/ Participation by the participants/competitors

- ✓ Submission of the initial application
- ✓ Participation in a full-day workshop on business proposal preparation
- ✓ Submission of the business proposal
- ✓ Attendance at the grooming session
- ✓ Providing evidence (the firm received award) of utilization of the fund in innovation

9. Reporting and Monitoring

- ✓ Selected and supported entrepreneurs will be required to provide regular progress reports.
- ✓ GTFB will conduct periodic reviews and monitoring visits to assess progress and provide additional support as needed.

10. Contact Information (contact information will be included in different outreach media)

For any inquiries or further information:

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Hardcopy Submission: AMAN Office: Hakim Para, Khain Khali, Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar