Community Advisory Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Terms of Reference

The purpose of this document is to outline the process for the establishment and operation of a Community Advisory Group (CAG) for the Essential Skills for Atlantic Fisheries (ESAF) project. Ideally, a CAG will be formed in each pilot area. Upon its approval, this document will serve to guide the CAG for the entire duration of the project. Amendments may be made as required throughout the ongoing completion of the project.

2. Mandate

The CAG is an advisory body that meets and provides ongoing advice to the Project Team/Coordinator. The primary goal of the CAG is to bring together government agencies and community organizations that work with low-income target groups on a regular basis. Specifically, they will help identify appropriate pilot participants, identify community resources that are available to support job-seekers in overcoming barriers to employment (e.g. training allowance, transportation, childcare and wage subsidies for work placements) and provide logistic support. Accessing these community resources will increase the likelihood of job-seekers getting a job and will strengthen their attachment to the workforce going forward.

The CAG will:

- Act as a working group where the Project Team/Coordinator can discuss ideas, identify community resources and help with the recruitment of participants
- Provide an open and equitable forum for discussion
- Provide advice and assist with the recruitment of pilot participants from low-income target groups (in particular, underrepresented populations such as non-high school completers, youth-at-risk, underemployed and unemployed workers, women, newcomers, and indigenous people)
- Provide a direct channel of communication between government agencies, organizations, community groups and the Project Team/Coordinator
- Identify and discuss potential issues, challenges and opportunities and assist the Project Team/Coordinator in developing mechanisms to identify satisfactory outcomes for the pilot participants

3. Membership

Membership in the CAG is based upon:

- The spectrum of stakeholder groups (government agencies or community organizations) in the pilot areas

All government agencies or community organizations that work with low-income individuals are eligible for membership in the CAG.

Although the number of CAG members will depend on the stakeholder groups available in the pilot area, the project Coordinator should seek to form a CAG consisting of 6 to 12 members.

4. Formation

The following process shall be followed by the Project Coordinator towards the formation of the CAG for the ESAF project.

a) Stakeholder identification - Prepare a list of government agencies and community organizations that work with low-income target groups in the pilot areas.
b) Telephone call or in-person meeting - Connect with the identified government agencies and community organizations to briefly explain the objectives of the project and the purpose of the CAG
c) Presentation - Set a date to provide information about the project to key staff members of the government agencies and community organizations
d) Invitation - Invite a representative from key government agencies and community organizations to become members of the CAG (provide a brief description of their involvement and a copy of the CAG Terms of Reference)
e) Meetings - The initial CAG Meeting will be set once the committee has been finalized. The first CAG Meeting is expected to take place between July and September 2018, the second between February and May 2019 and the third between February and October 2020.

5. Terms of Membership

Membership in the CAG is for the duration of the project.

6. Meetings and Attendance

The Project Coordinator will chair the CAG.

The effectiveness of the CAG is based on the diversity of advice, input, and suggestions received from its members. Members of the CAG should strive to attend all meetings and other CAG-related activities. Members must advise the Project Coordinator if they anticipate an attendance issue. If attendance from any member of the CAG becomes a problem, a suitable replacement may be recommended.

7. Decision Making

The purpose of the CAG is to provide input, advice, and suggestions to the Project Team/Coordinator. The CAG is not a decision-making body.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Members:

- Adhere to the relevant aspects of the CAG terms of reference
- Behave in a manner which facilitates an environment of open and equitable discussion and communication
- Be courteous and respectful of all other members of the CAG
- Be open-minded and considerate of different viewpoints
- Provide input, advice, and suggestions to the Project Coordinator in a manner which promotes discussion and creative thinking
- Ask questions of other members of the CAG or Project Team/Coordinator where necessary to clarify understanding of an issue
- Communicate openly with the organization you represent (if applicable) and bring forward all input, advice, and suggestions
- Bring a unique perspective to the project
- Be prepared for all meetings and other CAG-related events
- Attend all meetings
- Declare any conflicts of interest (if applicable) for matters under consideration

Project Team/Coordinator:

- Adhere to the relevant aspects of the CAG terms of reference
- Keep CAG members up-to-date with project progress in accessible, easy-to-understand format and language
- Avoid the use of jargon and define technical terms where necessary
- As needed, invite technical experts or other specialist to offer input at CAG meetings
- Offer advice towards CAG discussions
- Provide project material well in advance of CAG meeting or other CAG-related events as required
- Treat all questions posed with respect, and provide clear and straightforward answers
- Provide a clear understanding on how input, advice, and suggestions will be used by the Project Team/Coordinator
- Balance input from different viewpoints to ensure the completion of a comprehensive study