



Terms of Reference (TOR)

for

Consultancy services for Safeguards and GESI Expert

1. Background

Climate change emerges as one of the biggest challenges to prosperity and sustainable development in Nepal. As a least developed country with a high poverty rate of 18.7% and a predominantly agrarian economy mainly influenced by the monsoon, Nepal is highly vulnerable to climate change. Nepal's rugged topography and fragile geology also render it vulnerable to climate change. The *Managing Watersheds for Enhanced Resilience of Communities to Climate Change in Nepal (MaWRiN) Project*¹ considers watershed approach to ensure the longer-term resilience of local and indigenous communities against climate emergencies. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Least Development Countries (LDCF), the project is implemented through an agreement between the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (WWF GEF Agency) and the Ministry of Forests and Environment (Project Executing Agency), Government of Nepal, and the Ministry of Forests and Environment, Bagmati Province (Project Executing Partner). The project area² covers two major rivers, i.e., Maru and Kyan in the midwestern part of Sindhuli District, within the Churia belt of Nepal. The watershed is highly vulnerable to climate change, with higher exposure to multiple hazards such as landslides, floods, and droughts and higher sensitivity to indigenous and local people in terms of livelihood depends on subsistence agriculture.

The objective of the project is “to enhance climate resilience of Indigenous people and local communities through nature-based solutions and livelihood improvement.” The project's objective will be achieved through the following three inter-connected components:

Component 1: Enabling the environment for mainstreaming climate change through development of capacity of the municipalities and other key local agencies to assess and understand climate risks and vulnerabilities, and accordingly mainstream climate change adaptation strategies and actions in local policies and plans. Also, through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue and coordinated actions on climate change adaptation at the watershed level.

Component 2: Enhanced Resilience of Local Communities to Climate Change through a) community-based natural resource management such as community identification of adaptation interventions, support and demonstration of sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture and livestock practices, improved water management, strengthened management of community and leasehold forests, and b) Nature-based Solutions (NbS) that reduce climate impacts and risks.

¹ <https://mawrin.bagamati.gov.np/>

² Partly/fully covering area of Kamalamai Municipality, Maru Rural Municipality, Ghyanglekh Rural Municipality, and Hariharpurgadhi Rural Municipality



Component 3: Monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management, through tracking of project progress on a regular basis; garnering and analysis of lessons and good practices; and development and dissemination of knowledge that reinforces project results from components 1 and 2, providing sound basis for their replication, adaptation and sustainability.

Marin watershed is highly vulnerable to climate change, experiencing erratic weather patterns, floods, landslides, and droughts. These impacts disproportionately affect local and Indigenous communities whose livelihoods depend heavily on natural resources and agriculture. To address these challenges, the project has been implementing integrated adaptation programs and activities aimed at strengthening community resilience. Mainstreaming Gender Action Plan (GAP) and Environmental and Social Safeguards have been key priorities throughout project implementation. These approaches are critical to ensure that interventions are equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and free from unintended social or environmental risks. As WWF GEF Accredited Entity requires that all GEF projects including MaWRiN Project comply with WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework, as detailed in the Environment and Social Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP)³.

In this context, the consultancy will provide technical support to screening both the positive and negative environmental and social impacts of project activities, and to ensure that safeguards and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) measures are effectively integrated across the entire program cycle, from planning and implementation to monitoring and reporting.

2. Objectives

The consultant will carry out assessments to identify project site specific social and environmental safeguard plans, Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPP) and ensure the implementation the activities identified in GAP. All tasks will be aligned with the MaWRiN Project requirements and WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework, as outlined in the Environment and Social Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP).

3. Scope of Work

As per WWF's Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP), ensuring environmental and social safeguards is a key priority for the MaWRiN project. This includes screening potential environmental and social impacts and effectively implementing management measures in line with the Environmental and Social Monitoring Framework (ESMF), Process Framework (PF), Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), and Gender Action Plan (GAP). To achieve this objective, an expert will be hired to review, update, and align the project's ESMF, PF, IPPF, and GAP throughout the planning and implementation phases. The expert will also conduct periodic monitoring, ensure compliance, and prepare implementation reports in close collaboration and consultation with the Project Management Unit (PMU). The consultant will be based at the project site in Sindhuli to provide technical support during project implementation, with frequent field travel as required. The primary scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following:

³<https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/wwf-environment-and-social-safeguards-integrated-policies-and-procedures>



- Review and update ESMF, IPPF, GAP and Safeguards Eligibility and Impact Screening of the project.
- Ensure principles, procedures, and mitigation measures for addressing environmental and social impacts associated with the project in accordance with the laws and regulations of Nepal and the WWF's Environmental and Social Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP).
- Prepare project site specific Environmental and Social Management Plan, indigenous people plan (IPP) and ensure its implementation.
- Review and prepare Environmental and Social Safeguard, and GESI mainstreaming training materials, manuals, curricula and facilitate trainings, workshops, and seminars to build the capacity of PMU staff, NRM groups, government agencies and related stakeholders as required.
- Prepare and ensure Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) process and provisions before activities implementation.
- Review and update project's requirements related to disclosure and grievance redress mechanism (GRM).
- Conduct regular updates with Users Committee, Natural Resources Management (NRM) Groups (e.g. Community and Leasehold Forest Users Groups) to solve grievance in line with WWF's three-staged grievance process.
- Ensure timely reporting of incidents and implementation of corrective actions and maintain documentation of grievance and report on progress solving grievances.
- Prepare and submit Environmental and Social Safeguards & GAP implementation report (Quarterly, Semi-annual, Annual) with highlighting Outputs, outcomes, and lessons through regular monitoring, assessments, and studies.
- Lead and support the overall areas of GESI and ensure the timely implementation of Environmental and Social Safeguards & GAP related project activities.
- Ensure and mainstream GAP provision and priorities in project activities implementation. Devise GESI friendly approaches to integrate institutional capacity development processes.
- Prepare and track gender disaggregated database, monitoring indicators, and budget.
- Ensure equitable beneficiaries' selection and active participation in project activities.



- Involve in differential impact assessment of the climate change on Indigenous Peoples including women, poor and vulnerable groups and ensure impact are properly addressed.

4. Qualifications and Experience

- Master's degree in environmental management planning, or Environmental Science, or Natural Resources Management or Social Science, or related field.
- Minimum 5 years of experience in environmental and social impact assessment and management and GESI related work, preferably in climate change or watershed management projects.
- Preference will be given consultant with familiarity with WWF's Environmental and Social Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP), and ability to work with interdisciplinary team.

5. Deliverables and Timeline

The timeline for assignments will be from November 2025 to June 2026. The consultant/firm should submit the following deliverables within the timeline specified below:

S.N.	Deliverable	Timeline	Details & Remarks
1	Inception report with action plan	Within 2 weeks of contract signing	Includes methodology, compliance approach, and alignment with ESMF, SIPP, GAP, Annual work plan and budget (QWP&B), and Project documents.
2	Safeguard screening reports	As per activity schedule	Conduct screening using WWF's Safeguards Eligibility and Impacts Screening Tool. Includes risk categorization and recommendations.
3	FPIC	Project priority sub-watershed	Screening indicates Project restriction of access to resources and sources of livelihood and other impacts on IPs/marginalized groups.
4	Site-specific ESMPs	Prior to activity implementation	Includes management measures, monitoring indicators, and community engagement protocols.
5	Livelihood restoration plans (LRPs)	As needed	Includes FPIC documentation and gender-sensitive support mechanisms.
6	Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs)	Project priority sub-watershed within 3 months	One IPP per landscape, developed in consultation with IP communities.
7	Review of grievance redress mechanism (GRM) & reports	Setup within 2 months; reports quarterly	Submit quarterly logs and resolution summaries. Building capacity of PMU staff and communities.



8	Quarterly safeguard & GAP compliance monitoring reports	As required and quarterly	Includes field observations, compliance status, grievance updates, and corrective actions.
9	Safeguards and GAP implementation reports	Bi-annual/Annual*	Track progress in mainstreaming and integration of GAP recommendations into activities, disaggregated data, budget and inclusion outcomes.
10	Stakeholder engagement report and logs	Bi-annual/Annual	Document consultations with IPLCs, including FPIC processes considering the GEF reporting format.
11	Training materials, curricula & capacity building reports	Within 3 months and ongoing	Develop and deliver training on ESMF, GESI, and safeguards considering the GEF reporting format.
12	Overall safeguard & stakeholders' engagement and GAP implementation report	Annual	Consolidated report on safeguard implementation, stakeholders' engagement, GAP outcomes, lessons learned and way forwards considering the GEF reporting format.
13	Final consultancy report	Week before end of contract	Comprehensive summary of activities, achievements, challenges, lessons learned and way forwards considering the GEF reporting format.

* The bi-annual report covers progress till 31 December, while the annual report covers progress till 30 June.

6. Coordination, Communication and Management

The assignment will be overseen by the Project Management Unit (PMU) to ensure alignment with project objectives and timely delivery of outputs. The Technical Team Leader (TTL) will provide technical supervision, guidance, and support throughout the assignment period, reviewing progress and offering constructive inputs for improvement. The consultant will coordinate with PMU, stakeholders, beneficiaries, to develop the methodology, work plan and reporting in technical support from PMU. The consultant will manage all logistics and maintain close communication with the PMU throughout the assignment. The report, data collected, materials related to project must be copyrighted to © MoFE/ WWF Nepal/GEF-MaWRiN and cannot be shared or published without prior approval from the MaWRiN PMU Office.

7. Mode of Payment

The payment will be made based on the existing norms of WWF Nepal. The payment is subject to a tax deduction as per the prevailing government rules.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Applicants will be evaluated based on work experience in the required field, value for money, and quality of submitted proposals. Proposal selection criteria will have 80% for technical and 20% for financial weightage.



The evaluation process will be carried out in two stages (i.e. technical evaluation and financial evaluation):

1. **Technical Evaluation (Stage One):** The technical proposal scoring a minimum of 60 out of 80 will be considered for financial evaluation. The financial proposal of the selected consultant will then be evaluated.
2. **Financial Evaluation (Stage Two):** The financial proposals of the consultant who passes stage one will be evaluated. Proposals that fall within the budget limit of the consultancy will be assigned maximum 20 scores. The award of the contract shall be based on the consultant who receives the highest cumulative score.

9. Proposal Submission

Interested VAT registered firms/consultants in Nepal are requested to submit technical and financial proposals providing a detailed breakdown of total budget in Nepali Rupees along with an application letter electronically to: proposals-mawrin@wwfnepal.org. Please mention **“Proposal–Safeguards and GESI Expert”** as the email subject. Submit the proposal **by 5 p.m. Nepal Standard Time, 30 October 2025**.

The proposal must include the following:

- Signed cover letter specifying the value of the proposal
- Curriculum Vitae
- Copy of Nepali Citizenship
- PAN registration certificate
- Latest tax clearance certificate
- Tax Exemption Certificate, if applicable
- Technical proposal
- Financial proposal

Please refer to Annex 1 for the financial proposal template. Only selected applicants for further consideration will be contacted.



Annex 1: Financial Proposal Template

S. N	Description	Unit	Qty	Rate	Amount (NRs.)	Remarks
1.	Fee (1.1+1.2...VAT)					
1.1	Expert-Name	Days				
1.2						
	TOTAL COST					

Note: please add/edit rows as required