

Government of Nepal
Ministry of Forests and Environment
REDD Implementation Centre



**Terms of Reference (ToR) for Consultancy Services for
Revision of Community Forest Operational Plans
(Budget Head 2.12.1.83)**

1. Background

Nepal is one of the leading countries in REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forests, and the Conservation and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks) – supported under the World Bank’s Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). The implementation of the first phase of the REDD+ readiness was completed in 2015. In the same year, Nepal’s request for an additional readiness grant was approved by the 21st FCPF Participants Committee meeting. The grant agreement for the additional readiness funding (USD 5.2 million) was signed by the Government of Nepal and the World Bank in January 2017. This second phase of the readiness project will be completed in July 2020. Among other readiness activities, the improvement of the national forest inventory and monitoring system for a robust and functional Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system is one of the focus areas of the ongoing REDD+ readiness project. Nepal’s Emission Reduction Program Document (ER-PD) was included into the FCPF Carbon Fund portfolio in June 2018. It is expected that Nepal will enter into implementation of the ER Program in January 2020 after negotiation and signing of the Emission Reduction Payment Agreement (ERPA) between the government of Nepal and the World Bank.

Nepal’s 2018 National REDD+ Strategy considers community forestry (CF) as one of the key interventions to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. CF is also one of the priority programs of the Government of Nepal. The main objective of the CF program is to achieve sustainable management of forest resources by handing over national forests to local people and establishing community tenure over the resources. Handing over accessible forest areas to the local people who are organized as Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) is the strategy that has been implemented since the CF program was initiated in the late 1970s.

About 1.6 million households or 35 percent of the population of Nepal is involved in the community forestry management program. To date, 22,266 Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) have been formed. Major expected outcomes/impacts of the Community Forestry Program are: restoration of degraded forest land, enhancement of biodiversity, increase in supply of forest products, empowerment of women, poor and disadvantage groups, promotion of income generation and community development activities; improvement of local people’s livelihood, promotion of democratic process and good governance in local communities, contribution in climate change mitigation through reduction in forest based emission, climate change adaptation and help in achieving the sustainable development goals.

CFs are managed and utilized as per the Forest Management Plans, which are approved by the respective Divisional Forest Offices for a 5-10 years period. Community Forest Operational Plans (CFOP) need to be revised and updated before their time expire as to avoid interruption of forest management and utilization activities CFUGs would like to implement. However, the CFOPs can be revised and updated anytime if the CFOPs are already expired or CFUGs want to change or include new activities in the existing CFOPs. CFUG cannot implement any activities which are not included in their approved CFOPs.

Currently, there is a backlog of thousands of CFOPs that need to be revised and updated. The REDD Implementation Center (REDD IC) is supporting the revisions of CFOPs under the World Bank supported REDD Readiness project. This TOR is developed to procure a service provider/s who will support CFUGs of different districts in revising their CFOPs.

2. Objectives of the Assignment

The main objective of this assignment is to revise 1500 CFOPs in consultation with CFUGs and concerned Division Forest Offices in 29 districts which are located within (Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur) and beyond (remaining other districts) the ER Program Area. The revision of CFOPs in the districts beyond ER program area is desirable for two reasons--1) Contribute to implementing National REDD+ Strategy at national level, and 2) Control displacement/leakage of emission beyond ER Program Area.

Specific objectives of the assignment include:

- Conduct a robust discussion with the concerned CFUGs about several factors, including, but are not limited to, the condition of their forests, resource availability, demand-supply situation of forest products, needs of local people, interests of women, poor, indigenous people and other marginalized communities, and forest management options. and;
- After wider consultations with CFUGs as well as Divisional Forest Offices following the provisions of Community Forestry Development Guidelines 2071, revise the CFOPs of CFUGs in the targeted districts as specified in the scope of the work (section 3 below).

3. Scope of the work

REDD IC is seeking a qualified firm/consortium of firms to support 1500 CFUGs in revising their CFOPs following the Guidelines of Community Forestry Development Program 2071. These CFOPs need to be approved by the concerned Divisional Forest Offices.

Under this ToR, there will be six separate assignments dividing the targeted districts into six clusters as follows:

- Cluster-1: Bhojpur, Dhankuta, Terhathum, Sankhuwasabha: 250 CFOPs
- Cluster-2 : Solukhumbu, Okhaldhunga, Khotang, Udaypur : 250 CFOPs
- Cluster -3: Ramechhap, Dolakha, Kabhrepalanchowk, Sidhupalchowk, Sindhuli,--: 250 CFOPs
- Cluster -4: Palpa, Rolpa, Dang, Salyan, Pyuthan and Banke: 250 CFOPs
- Cluster-5 : Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Doti,: 250 CFOPs
- Cluster 6: Acham, Bajhang, Baitadi, Dadeldhura: 250 CFOPs

REDD IC in close coordination with the Department of Forests and Soil Conservation and respective Divisional Forest Offices will decide for which CFOPs in which districts in the given clusters will be revised as part of this assignment.

Note: There are six clusters. We are seeking six consulting firms under this ToR in a way each firm provides works in a different cluster since the works will be carried out in parallel in the six clusters. However, a firm can apply for more than one cluster if the firm can provide more than one team for the targeted clusters, i.e. team of experts and crew members should not overlap between clusters.

Following tasks need to be carried out for successful completion of this assignment:

3.1 Desk Review and analysis

- Review of recent forest policy, strategies, Acts and CF development guidelines;
- Review of Emission Reduction Program Documents (ER-PD) for the TAL;
- Review of Forest Investment Plan for Nepal;
- Principles of SFM and forest certification process in Nepal;
- Emerging issues related to the federal structure of the country including the rights and responsibilities of the local governments in forest resource management;
- Review of existing Forest Management Plans; and;
- Review of principles of Decent Works and issues related to the forest labor.
- Summarize recommendations arising from the desk review as a basis for the discussions with the CFUGs and other stakeholders

3.2 Consultation and discussion with the CFUGs

Consultation and discussion with the CFUGs about the different aspects of the operational plans including the outcomes of the desk review and analysis (section 3.1) is a very important part of this assignment.

3.3 Forest Survey and Inventory

An inventory of the targeted CFs should be carried out following the Community Forestry Inventory Guidelines (2004), the Forest Act, and the CF Guidelines 2071. For carbon assessment, carbon assessment guidelines will also be used.

3.4 Socio Economic Survey

For selected CFUGs, conduct a household survey, collect gender disaggregated data, identify gender and social inclusion actions, discuss benefit sharing plans, well-being ranking and the monitoring plan (2071, Forest Act)

3.5 Development of draft CFOPs

Based on outcomes of the desk review, consultations and survey results, a draft CFOP should be developed for each CF. The plan should include all headings provided in the CF Program Guidelines 2071 as well as Forest Regulation, 1995.

3.5 Sharing the draft CFOPs



When drafts CFOPs are ready, they should be shared with the concerned CFUGs, and the respective Division Forest Offices and/or sub-division offices for comments, inputs and feedbacks.

3.6 Finalization and validation of the CFOPs

CFOPs should be finalized incorporating all comments, inputs and other feedback from the CFUGs and Divisional Forest Offices (DFO). Thereafter, the concerned CFUG will validate the plan from their general assemblies and submit them to respective division forest offices for approval. .

4. Expected Deliverables

4.1 Inception report with detailed action plan and timeframe

Within the one week of signing of the contract, the firm will submit an Inception Report with a detailed workplan and timeframe as well as the methodology to be used to conduct the assignment. This report should be presented to an inception workshop with the technical committee in REDD IC. The technical committee will comprise 5 staff members (2 from REDD IC and 3 from the Department of Forests and Soil Conservation). The inception report will be finalized and submitted to REDD IC by incorporating all suggestions, inputs and other feedback from the participants of the workshop within the one week of the inception workshop. The selected firm and REDD IC/technical committee will agree on the specific activities, detailed work plan and expected deliverables. The work plan should be developed in close collaboration with the technical committee.

4.2. Revised operational plans

The consulting firm should prepare revised community forest operational plan in close consultation with concerned DFOs and CFUGs. The technical committee formed for this assignment will oversee the assignment. The committee will make field visits as needed for monitoring progress and quality. The Team Leader will report to the technical committee. The technical committee will report the progress status to the Director General of the Department of Forests and Soil Conservation and Chief of REDD IC. Five hard copies of each revised operational plan in standard format prescribed by the CF guidelines for all CF need to be submitted to the respective CFUGs along with a digital copy. The firm will report to the respective DFOs about the submission of the CFOPs to the CFUGs along with the digital copies. A final digital copy of each CFOP will be submitted to REDD IC.

4.3 Completion Report

The firm will submit to REDD IC a completion report for the assignment along with the digital copies of the CFOPs. The firm will also submit a recommendation letter from the relevant DFOs confirming the submission of the revised CFOPs to REDD IC.

5. Qualification of the firm and experts

5.1 Qualification of the firms

Firms legally registered within the concerned authorities with clear mission, vision and objectives and registered in national VAT system are eligible to apply. The firms should have relevant work experience in forestry, community forest operational plans, SMF, REDD+ and /or related field in Nepal. The firm must have registered for at least three years with valid registration, Tax/VAT clearance, demonstrated annual transaction, audit and renewal.

5.2 Composition and qualification of the team members

The team of experts led by a Forestry Expert will provide the consulting services for this assignment. Other members of the team include a GESI expert and Crew members. Qualification and roles and responsibilities of each of the team members are as following:

Team Leader cum Forestry Expert: The team Leader and forestry expert, in close coordination with and under the guidance of the technical committee formed to oversee this assignment at the REDD IC, will lead the team for this assignment. Specific roles and responsibilities of the team leader include:

- Review and analyze related policies, measures, working documents, guidelines and forest management plans and develop a firm foundation for the assignment;
- Develop a plan of actions for successful completion of the assignment;
- Coordinate the team and make sure that all the experts are preparing corresponding reports and harmonizing the efforts;
- Coordinate consultation meetings with the technical committee and other senior officials from both REDD IC and the Department of Forests and Soil Conservation;
- Prepare draft Management Plans in coordination with other team members;
- Finalize the plans and validate from concerned Authorities, e.g. CFUG and respective Divisional Forest Offices; and;
- Prepare and submit a work completion report for the assignment to REDD IC.

Required qualification:

The team leader must be a Nepali national and have strong knowledge on community-based forest management process in Nepal. He/she should have minimum qualification and experiences as below:

- Hold at least a Bachelor's degree in forestry;
- Have at least 5 years of working experience in forestry – preparing and managing forest management plans/community forests operational plans;
- Demonstrate technical capacity, including analytical skills and proven track record in preparing community forests operational plans;
- Sound knowledge on current forestry sector policies and institutions; and;
- Command in writing, facilitation and communication skills are essentials.
- Knowledge in GIS mapping
- Should have prior proven engagement in such operational plan preparation.

Gender and Social Inclusion Expert

The Gender and Social Inclusion Expert will report to the team leader. She/he will work under the guidance of the team leader in close collaboration and consultation with the Technical Committee and REDD IC. She/he will specifically be responsible to:



- Access, review and analyze gender and social inclusion related policies, programs, activities in national and global context.
- Identify and integrate potential areas of gender and social inclusion issues in the community forests operational plans.
- Support and sensitize the team leader and forestry assistant about GESI integration in CFOPs.
- Participate in meeting with Technical Committee and REDD IC as well as consultations in selective CFUGs and guide the team for addressing the issues raised by the GESI interest groups in CFOPs.

Required qualification: The Gender and Social Inclusion Expert should possess the following qualification and experiences:

- Hold at least a Bachelor's degree in Forestry, Social Sciences, Sociology, Gender, Women Studies, Development Studies, Conflict Management, or relevant disciplines.
- Proven skills and experiences in dealing with gender related issues particularly in forestry sector.
- Should have at least five years of working experience in community development or rural development, familiarize with gender, social and cultural issues and local reality.
- Possess strong knowledge of user rights, customary rights and traditional practices in Forestry.
- **Woman candidate is highly desirable for this position.**

Crew Members as per need:

- Must be a Nepali national and have strong knowledge on community-based forest management process in Nepal;
- Should hold at least certificate level in forestry or equivalent;
- Women and Disadvantaged groups highly encouraged

6. Selection Process and Criteria

Selection process of the qualified firm/s will start from advertising for “Expression of Interest (EoI)”. The shortlisted firms based on EoIs submitted will be requested to submit the full proposal following THE WORLD BANK Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 Revised November 2017 and August 2018.

7. Work Schedule

The assignment is expected to complete in end in the last of May 2019.

8. Application Procedure

Eligible firm/consortium of the firms should submit “Expression of Interest (EoI)” in a sealed envelope with the following documents:

- Letter of EoI
- Profile of the firm
- Copy of firm registration, VAT registration and renewal certificates
- Copy of annual audit report for last three years and tax clearance certificate



- CVs of potential experts (team leader and GESI expert) duly signed by the experts. However, regarding crew members, list of names and qualification will be sufficient.
- Letter from partnering firm/institution if joint venture is proposed.

The shortlisted firms will be requested to submit the full proposal along with following documents:

- Full technical proposal for the assignment in a sealed envelope. The proposal should include commitment letters from the proposed experts along with duly signed CVs;
- Detail financial proposal for the assignment in a separate sealed envelope.

Contact Information

JanakPadhya

REDD Implementation Centre

Babarmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone: +977 1 4239126

Fax: +977 1 4215261

Email: info@redd.gov.np

