

Terms of Reference

Mid-term review of the project “REDD+ Participatory Forest Management in South West Ethiopia (REPAFAMA II)”

1. Background

The “REDD+ Participatory Forest Management in South West Ethiopia (REPAFAMA II)” project is implemented by the Development Fund (DF) in partnership with Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resource Association (EWNRA), and funded by the Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI). The overall goal of the project is to develop and implement community-based and sustainable REDD+ models that ensure forest-dependent communities’ rights and interests in South-West Ethiopia. The project is implemented in three regions, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region and Gambella. Through the project, community based Participatory Forest Management (PFM) models as a vehicle for REDD+ are up-scaled from 240,000 ha (achieved in the project’s first phase) to 400,000 ha forested landscape. This area will then be part of the total area where REDD+ is implemented in Ethiopia. The project increases carbon storage, reduce deforestation and secure forest dependent communities rights on forest. It prepares communities, local and regional governments on REDD+, basically through capacity building and establishment and strengthening of community level PFM institutions. Furthermore, it supports the enforcement of forest legislation through creating and facilitating a platform for dialogue among the three regional governments where the project takes place. The project will fine-tune methods for implementation of local REDD+ models and community level MRV systems, with particular emphasis on implementation of social and environmental safeguards, rights and women’s participation. This will be fed into the national REDD+ strategy through policy and lobby based on coordination and dialogue with national and regional authorities. In this way, the project aims to prepare the ground for an efficient implementation of REDD+ and contribute directly to Ethiopia achieving its ambitious goals in terms of reduced deforestation and forest degradation.

The project builds on a previous NICFI project, implemented by the DF and EWNRA. The project period runs from 2016 to 2020, and the project is currently in its third year of implementation. A mid-term review is required to assess progress and challenges, which will lead to recommendations for the final two years of the project.

2. Purpose and scope

The purpose of mid-term review is to assess progress and the relevance of the project, with the aim of drafting recommendations for the final two years of the project period. The evaluation will look into the relevance of the project with regard to the communities’ needs and interests, Ethiopia’s REDD+ strategy and NICFI’s objectives. It will also determine results achieved so far. Furthermore, the mid-term review shall assess the sustainability of the REDD+ models that are being implemented through the project. The review shall also provide recommendations and identify important areas for learning.

The main users of the mid-term review are the Development Fund, EWNRA and the community-based REDD+ institutions established by the project. The review will also be used by NICFI and relevant government institutions in Ethiopia, and will serve other civil society organisations and government institutions implementing similar projects in Ethiopia or other countries.

3. Evaluation questions

The mid-term review shall answer the following questions:

Relevance:

1. To what extent and how does the project address the needs and interests of forest-dependent communities?
2. To what extent has the project managed to include and address women and minorities' needs and interests?
3. To what extent and how is the project relevant for Ethiopia's REDD+ strategy and other related policies?
4. To what extent is the project relevant for NICFI's objectives?

Results and progress so far:

5. What are the main results achieved by the project so far?
6. To what extent is the outcomes of the project likely to be achieved?
7. Has the project been implemented in an effective and cost-efficient way?
8. Which factors have favoured or disfavoured the achievement of results?

Sustainability:

9. Assess the sustainability of the REDD+ models that are being implemented by the project?
10. To what extent are the project's positive actions likely to continue after the end of the project?
11. To what extent is forest tenure security crucial for the sustainability of community-based REDD+ models?
12. What are the main challenges for the sustainability of community-based REDD+ models in particular, and Ethiopia's REDD+ strategy in general?

Legal framework and local, regional and national policies:

13. In what way do the different national and regional legal frameworks and forest policies affect, positively or negatively, the achievement of the expected outcomes of the project, including ensuring forest-dependent communities' rights (including user and tenure rights)?

Livelihood security and REDD+

14. "To what extent does the REDD+ PFM project strategy provide an adequate answer in balancing the forest management efforts and forest benefits to ensure livelihood security of forest dependent communities?
15. To what extent does Ethiopia's REDD+ strategy consider livelihood security of forest dependent communities?

4. Methodology:

The consultant will develop appropriate methodologies and data collection tools to answer the above questions. The evaluation team shall use a mix of quantitative and qualitative data for the assessment of results. Qualitative data can be collected through focal group discussions, interviews or observation among other techniques. The evaluation shall employ participatory methods that give voice to the local communities. The evaluation shall consult community-based institutions,

namely Forest User Groups, Forest Management Cooperatives, Forest Management Association and Forest Product Marketing Cooperatives, project staff (from DF and EWNRA), relevant government office staff, local, regional and national authorities, regional and national REDD+ coordination units, and other relevant stakeholders.

The areas and partners to be included in the study is to be decided by DF through consultations with the partners and the consultant.

5. Desired competencies and skills of the consultant

The evaluation team should comprise two consultants, preferably one international and one national consultants. In the case the lead consultant has no in-depth knowledge to Ethiopia, the team should comprise one local consultant. The overall responsibility of the team towards the Development Fund lies within the lead consultant.

The member(s) of the consultancy team should hold the following competencies and skills:

- Expertise and knowledge to REDD+, including its safeguards,
- Experience in designing and conducting independent evaluations on forestry and empowerment of local communities
- Good understanding of gender, livelihood security and community organisations
- Good communication, analytical, drafting and document presentation skills
- Proven fluency in English (written and oral)
- Ability to communicate in Amharic. Ability to communicate in other local languages in the project area is an asset.
- Identify with DF's values and principles;
- Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines,

6. Expected deliverables:

Main deliverable: A report with the main findings and recommendations. The report should be no longer than 30 pages, including the executive summary.

Upon the selection, the consultant is expected to submit an inception report. The inception report shall state the evaluation questions, methodologies and data collection tools to be used in carrying out the study, all responding to the TORs.

Within the agreed timeline, the consultant is also expected to submit the draft study report for comment and feedback from the respective staff at DF and EWNRA. The consultant is responsible to incorporate feedback provided and submit the final report. The consultant will present the findings to DF staff.

All data collected and the data collection tools for this study shall remain the property of the Development Fund as its custodian. Any work product resulting from this review must cite DF and/or the participating implementing partner staff as a primary or contributing author.

7. Timeline:

The duration of the mid-term review is estimated to 7 weeks. The study should commence as soon as possible, and no later than 1st September 2018.

Activities, dates (to be agreed) and deadlines (to be agreed) for the consultancy work are:

Tasks	Required amount of time	Completed by	Responsibility
Contextual Analysis and Literature Review; Initial meeting with DF, Literature review etc.			Consultant
Prepare inception report; including initial preparations of data collection methodologies and tools, as well as detailed work plan			Consultant
Submit draft inception report			Consultant
Meeting between DF and consultant regarding inception report			DF
Interception phase; Finalize interception report, completion of data collection methodologies and tools, training of research team or similar, logistics of fieldwork including appointments.			Consultant
Field work			Consultant
Data entry, data analysis and development of draft report			Consultant
Submission of draft report			Consultant
Receive comments from DF			DF
Submission of final report			Consultant

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The main responsibility for ensuring that all responsibilities are carried out lies with the lead consultant.

The **consultant** will undertake the following activities:

- Conduct review of data sources, reports and relevant literature.
- Develop appropriate study methodology, design and tools
- Submit an inception report and finalize evaluation plan
- Conduct field work
- Synthesize findings
- Organize validation workshops with beneficiaries and local partners
- Produce draft report
- Produce final report, including incorporating comments from DF and its implementing partners.
- Present findings to DF staff, and to partner staff as required by DF.

Other responsibilities of the consultant:

- Adhere to all terms/conditions stipulated in the contract
- Pay income tax or other taxes as required
- Obtain relevant insurance
- Adhere to DF's code of conduct while undertaking the assignment. Conducting him/her in a respectful manner, while undertaking assignment, which includes not making any commitments to communities and any other persons, on behalf of DF.
- Adhere to the agreed time-frames with regard to all activities outlined in the timeline
- Consultant's own laptops and phones to be used during the assignment
- Pay for own accommodation

DF will be responsible for the following:

- Provide consultant with all required documents
- Link consultants to partner organizations and other relevant stakeholders and set up meetings as required
- Plan (in collaboration with partners and the consultant) the field visits

Implementing partners will be responsible for the following:

- Avail themselves for the consultant during the field visits
- Arrange interviews, focus groups discussions, meetings, project site visits as requested
- Logistics in the field as agreed with DF (transportation, accommodation – only booking)

9. Contract and payments

DF will sign a consultancy contract with the consultant.

Forty percent of the total amount will be paid upon signing the contract and the remaining amount upon submission and approval of the final report and all deliverables.

10. Presentation of proposals

Technical and financial proposals for the evaluation shall be presented by 5 August 2018 to elin@utviklingsfondet.no

For any question regarding the consultancy, please contact Elin Cecilie Ranum, Head of Programme Department of the Development Fund elin@utviklingsfondet.no Phone: +47 2310 9572 / +47 9622 9600

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