**Annex 4a: Terms of Reference for MTE – International Consultant**

**Mid Term Evaluation on Institutional Strengthening of the Forest Sector**

**Development Project in Ethiopia**

**I. GENERAL INFORMAION**

**Project/Program Title**: Institutional Strengthening for the Forest Sector

Development Project in Ethiopia

**Post Title**: International Consultant

**Consultant Level**: TBD

**Duty Station:** Addis Ababa

**Expected Places of Travel**: 4 selected project sites of the Project of which one

site will be from the SNNP

**Duration:** Thirty-five working days

**Expected Start Date**: Immediately after Concluding Contract Agreement

**II. BACKGROUND / PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The government of Ethiopia has a strong commitment to and recognition of the

importance of the forest sector. It is one of the four pillars in the Climate Resilient Green

Growth (CRGE) strategy, a national strategy to achieve middle-income status by 2025 in

a climate-resilient green economy. Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment, Forest

and Climate Change (EFCCC) was established in 2013 tasked to oversee the

implementation of the CRGE strategy. As the ministry is relatively new, there is need to

strengthen EFCCC’s capacity on federal regional levels to deliver on its mandate. The

Project is designed to support the strengthening of institutions and stakeholders in the

Ethiopian forest sector and to pilot afforestation and reforestation efforts to assist

Ethiopia in reaching the CRGE Strategy’s to attain the goals for afforestation,

reforestation and forest management – and consequently increased carbon

sequestration as indicated in the CRGE strategy.

**The Project Purpose** is assisting Ethiopia in achieving its targets on large scale

afforestation-reforestation as described in the CRGE strategy by 2025 and reach the

targets on reduced emissions into sequestration of Green House gasses from the forest

sector.

**The Overall objective of the project** is to strengthen the capacity of the new ministry,

EFCCC, and the Ethiopian government’s overall capacity in the forest sector at all levels

65

to spearhead the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy and the Growth and

Transformation plan (GTP) targets.

**The Specific Project Objectives are**:

• Enhance and stimulate sustainable forest development in line with GTP and

CRGE

• Foster institutional strengthening at all levels

• Promote popular participation

• Strengthen Science and Innovation

• Promote private sector engagement

**The Programmed Outcomes are**:

• By 2020, the institutional capacity of the forest sector is strengthened at all

levels

• Forest conservation and development for their multiple benefits promoted

• Private sector involvement in forest development facilitated

• Science and innovation for enhancing Sustainable Forest Management promoted

• Stakeholder engagement in forest development enhanced

**III. OBJECTIVE OF THE MID TERM EVALUATION**

The MTE will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and

outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success

or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the

project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTE will also review the project’s

strategy, its risks to sustainability.

**IV. MTE APPROACH & METHODOLOGY**

The MTE is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring

close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the Ministry of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change; relevant regional and woreda bureaus in

Amhara, SNNP and Tigray; the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP, the Norwegian and

Sweden Embassies as well as beneficiaries

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement

should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities,

including but not limited to: executing agencies, senior officials and task team leaders,

66

key experts in the subject area, REDD+ Steering Committee, local communities etc.

Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions in selected 4 woredas

from Amhara, Tigray and SNNNP regions.

The final MTE report should describe the full MTE approach taken and the rationale for

the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions/logics of the program,

challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

The findings of the MTE will be presented to key stakeholders for further validation,

enrichment and endorsement.

In general, the approach and methodology will be

Conduct desk review

Collect primary data using appropriate tools in line with evaluation questions

and log frame indicators

KII with program stakeholders and FGD with communities

Field visits to the implementation sites

Approach and methodology can be adjusted based on consultants’ experience

and on the details of the information required

**V. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTE**

The MTE team will assess the following four categories of evaluation criteria

**i) Relevance**

vi. Review the problems addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions.

Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to

achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.

vii. Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most

effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other

relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?

viii. Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership.

Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and

plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country

projects)?

67

ix. Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be

affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who

could contribute information or other resources to the process, considered during

project design processes?

x. Review the extent to which relevant gender and crosscutting issues were raised in

the project design.

xi. Review underlying assumptions/logics of the program

xii. If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

**ii) Effectiveness**

Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s log frame indicators and targets, assess

how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable,

Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to

the targets and indicators as necessary.

Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and

feasible within its time frame?

Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyze beneficial

development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s

empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project

results framework and monitored on an annual basis.

Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored

effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including

sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

**Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:**

Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-ofproject

targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the

Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported Projects; color

code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved;

assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the

areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved.

In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of

the project by reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been

successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits

68

**Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

vii. Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project

Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities

and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a

timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.

viii. Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing

Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.

ix. Review the quality of support provided by UNDP and recommend areas for

improvement.

x. Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes

and examine if they have been resolved.

xi. Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate

work planning to focus on results?

xii. Examine the use of the project’s results framework/ log frame as a management

tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

**iii) Efficiency**

Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the

cost-effectiveness of interventions.

Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess

the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.

Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and

planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the

budget and allow for timely flow of funds?

Are program activities cost effective and has planned targets been achieved on

time

Is the expenditure justifiable when compared to the plans, progress and outputs

of the program?

What are the options for improving the cost efficiency of the program?

Is the program’s strategic, financial, and administrative management efficient in

reaching the objectives

**Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:**

Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the

necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or

69

mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are

they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could

they be made more participatory and inclusive?

Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation

budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation?

Are these resources being allocated effectively?

**iv) Partnership strategy**

**Stakeholder Engagement**

Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and

appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?

Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government

stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an

active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective

project implementation?

Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement

and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of

project objectives?

**Reporting:**

Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project

management and shared with the Project Board.

Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been

documented, shared with key partners and internalized by development

partners.

**Communications:**

Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication

regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are

there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this

communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project

outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?

Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication

established or being established to express the project progress and intended

70

impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project

implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)

For reporting purposes, write half-page paragraph that summarizes the project’s

progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development

benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

**v) Sustainability**

Is there any indication of ownership with in government and stakeholders?

Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document and the ATLAS

Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings

applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why. In addition, assess the

following risks to sustainability:

**Financial risks to sustainability:**

What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available

once the donor assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from

multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating

activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for

sustaining project’s outcomes)?

What are the issues of scale and the options/economic models for the

sustainability of the project?

Analyze the concept of mobilizing “free labor”. What is meant by this? How “free”

is it? Is it replicable or problematic?

How can we make sure that Government/UNDP/donors can assist the tree

felling and sale of timber products in the future in accordance with desirable

principles (including support to marketing etc.)?

**Socio-economic risks to sustainability**:

Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project

outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including

ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for

the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that

it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public

/ stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are

lessons learned to be documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/

71

transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially

replicate and/or scale it in the future?

**Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:**

Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that

may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also

consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and

technical knowledge transfer are in place.

**Environmental risks to sustainability:**

Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project

outcomes?

**Impact**

Identify early signs of impact

What tangible impact has the program had on the programs beneficiaries to

date?

**Conclusions & Recommendations**

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR’s

evidence-based conclusions, considering the findings.

Recommendations should be succinct with suggestions for critical intervention

that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table

should be put in the report’s executive summary. See the Guidance for

Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported,

Lessons learned; The midterm evaluation is expected to extract lessons and

successes of the program

**Ratings**

The MTE team will include its ratings of the project’s results and brief descriptions of

the associated achievements in a MTE Ratings & Achievement in line with the 4

evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness; efficiency and sustainability)

**VI TIME FRAME**

The total duration of the MTE will be approximately 35 days over a time of 12 weeks.

**VII. MIDTERM EVALUATION DELIVERABLES**

**Deliverable Description Timing Responsibilities**

**MTE Inception**

**Report**

MTE team clarifies

objectives and methods of

Midterm Review

Within 2 weeks after

the commencement

of the consultancy

service

MTR consultant

submits inception

report to UNDP and

MoEFCC

**Presentation** Initial Findings Within 4 weeks after

the commencement

MTE expert presents

to UNDP and MoEFCC

72

of the consultancy

service

**Draft Final**

**Report**

Full report Within 8 weeks of

the MTE mission:

Sent to the UNDP and

MoEFCC

**Final Report** Revised report with table

detailing how all received

comments have (and have

not) been addressed in

the final MTE report

Within 12 weeks of

receiving UNDP

comments on draft:

Submitted to UNDP

and MoEFCC

**VIII. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT / REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The international consultant will work under the daily supervision of the ISFDP project

manager and the overall guidance of the Team Leader for Inclusive Growth and

Sustainable Development Unit

**IX. LOGISTICS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

The UNDP CO and the MoEFCC will provide the required logistical facilities such as DSA;

field vehicle, etc.

**X. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT**

**a. Academic Qualifications**:

Master degree or equivalent in forest conservation and development or other closely

related fields

**b. Years of experience:**

A minimum of 8 years in evaluation of similar projects

**XI. Evaluation Criteria**

**Criteria Weight Max. Point**

**70%** 100

MSc or equivalent in forest conservation

and development or other closely related

fields

**30%** 30

Experience in monitoring and evaluation

of projects and programs

**30%** 30

Minimum 8 years of experience in

monitoring and evaluation of projects

**30%** 30

Understanding of the ToR **10%** 10

**Financial (Lower Offer/Offer\*100) 30%** 30

**Total Score Technical Score \* 70% + Financial Score \* 30%**

**c. Competencies:**

Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;

Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline

scenarios;

73

Competence in adaptive management, as applied to forest conservation and

management

Experience working in Ethiopia;

Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;

Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and climate change

adaptation; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.

Excellent communication skills;

Demonstrable analytical skills;

Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be

considered an asset;

**d. Language and other skills:**

Proficiency in both spoken and written English

**e. Compliance of the UN Core Values:**

Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN’s values and ethical standards

Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;

Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and

adaptability

Treats all people fairly without favouritism;

Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual

harassment

**Annex 1: Evaluation Rating Table**

0.1 Evaluation Rating Table\*\*

\*\* The detail under each criterion is elaborated in section V.