

Terms of reference (ToR) for the procurement of services

Project Title: Enabling the Implementation of Georgia's Forest Sector Reform (ECO.Georgia)

Project/Activity Number: 20.2275.4-007.00 / 0301 and 0302– 30% each
20.2275.4-007.00 / 0304 – 40%

Title of the assignment: Prepare and conduct the socio-cultural study with the beneficiaries of the ECO.Georgia project, component 3

1. Brief information on the project

Climate change impacts and the demand for fuelwood from rural population put significant pressure on Georgia's forests: up to 90% of rural households (1.43 million people) rely on fuelwood for their energy needs. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that households use obsolete technologies, such as traditional stoves with a lifetime of two years and an efficiency of 35% or less. Fuelwood demand exceeds sustainable harvesting levels, considering reduced productivity of many forests in the country because of extensive forest degradation. This forest degradation leads to a loss of carbon absorption capacity which is projected to decrease by five times between 1990 and 2030.

In order to address this negative development, the project "Enabling the Implementation of Georgia's Forest Sector Reform - ECO.Georgia" supports the Government of Georgia to implement its transformational forest sector reform agenda to put the entire nation's forests under the framework for sustainable forest management (SFM). It will do so by supporting the establishment of a nation-wide SFM system (Component 1) and in parallel promoting market development for energy efficient appliances and alternative fuels (Component 2) to address the main driver of forest degradation. The project will safeguard the reform implementation by diversifying livelihood opportunities and strengthening local self-governance in forest adjoining rural communities (Component 3).

The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) with GIZ being the project's accredited entity. The German contribution is part of the wider German support in the priority area "Environmental policy, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the South Caucasus", which aims at the sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation and climate protection, particularly for the benefit of the rural population. Similarly, both the share of renewables in the energy composition as well as the energy efficiency levels will increase.

Especially rural households using firewood as their source of heating energy will benefit from improved air quality and reduced fuelwood demand through eased access to energy efficient stoves. Forest-related small and medium-sized enterprises and their employees will receive support to improve economic efficiency and environmental sustainability of their business activities. Additionally, staff members of relevant public institutions (National Forestry Agency NFA, Department of Environmental Supervision DES, Environmental Information and Education Center EIEC, Rural Development Agency RDA, municipalities) will receive direct support through human capacity development measures and grant finance.

ECO.Georgia primarily contributes to achieving the SDG 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems) of the 2030 Agenda of the UN, but also to achieving SDG 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), SDG 13

(Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), SDG 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), and SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).

The duration of ECO.Georgia is from April 2021 until March 2029.

The target regions and municipalities of the project are listed below:

Guria

- Ozurgeti
- Lanchkhuti
- Chokhatauri

Mtskheta-Mtianeti

- Tianeti

Kakheti

- Akhmeta
- Telavi
- Kvareli
- Dedoplistskaro

The tendered assignment is situated in Component 3 "Strengthening Livelihoods and Social Inclusion in Georgia's Forest Sector Reform". The aim of the component is to diversify the livelihood opportunities and strengthen local self-governance in forest management to increase incomes and reduce socio-economic disparities. The project will work on enabling local communities to benefit from diversified income opportunities by a) developing professional skills and knowledge for forest management and conservation through vocational education, short-cycle training courses and international university partnerships, as well as by b) strengthening selected value chains for timber products, non-timber forest products (NFTP) and eco-tourism.

Component 3 has four outputs:

Output 1: Municipal level tools, practices, plans and necessary capacities for participatory sustainable forest management and conservation are developed and introduced;

Output 2: Mechanisms at local level to better protect the interests of adversely affected stakeholders are developed, promoted, and tested;

Output 3: Professional skills and knowledge relevant to sustainable forest management and conservation are available through vocational education and international partnerships with centres of knowledge.

Output 4: Selected value chains are strengthened of non-timber forest product (NFTP), timber forest product (TFP) and eco-tourism.

2. Description of the Assignment

2.1. Context

The socio-cultural study aims to assess the impact and outcomes of the above-described component 3 of the project with a focus on the progress against three key indicators measuring:

- 1) Economic benefits: The study will assess the components success in enhancing the economic well-being of forest-dependent households by increasing their income through sustainable practices.
- 2) Local level participation and capacities in natural resource governance: The study will assess the number of municipal authorities and citizens who have acquired and applied relevant technical and human capacities to engage in improved natural resource management. This indicator reflects the project's success in fostering capacities and active participation among stakeholders.

- 3) Community perceptions of their influence on decision-making: The study will measure changes in forest-dependent inhabitants’ perceptions of their influence on sustainable forest management and related decision-making. The baseline perception score is 2.8 on a 1-5 scale, with the project aiming to increase it at least by one point.

Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, the study will provide insights into the project's effectiveness, highlighting successes and identifying areas for future improvement.

Aligned with the **Leave No One Behind** (LNOB) principle, the study will pay particular attention to the inclusion of vulnerable groups, ensuring that the project's benefits reach those most in need. This approach is essential for assessing whether progress has been equitably distributed across different socio-economic groups, including women, low-income households, etc.

2.2. Objective(s) of the assignment and work packages/tasks

The objective of the assignment is to prepare and conduct a socio-cultural study with the beneficiaries of Component 3. in the eight target municipalities of Georgia – Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, Lanchkhuti, Dedoplistskaro, Telavi, Kvareli, Akhmeta and Tianeti.

The study will examine how different activities of the component have contributed to diversify livelihood opportunities and strengthen local capacities in the target municipalities, in particular the study will aim to assess the progress of the project towards the target values of 3 selected indicators (see the indicator table under work package 1) of the project logical framework among the beneficiaries from the eight target municipalities.

The contractor should develop the methodology, implement the study and deliver the analysed results, following the LNoB principle. In particular, the contractor shall fulfil the following tasks:

Work package 1: Prepare the methodology

In close collaboration with component 3 team of the ECO.Georgia project:

- Develop methodology for the socio-cultural study, covering the following 3 indicators of the project logframe and respective requirements in terms of types of data needed:

#	Indicator	# of target beneficiaries	Geographic coverage
Impact Indicator 2:	% of forest-dependent households targeted by the project with increased income ¹ Baseline: 0 Target: at least 30%	135	8 municipalities
Outcome indicator 1.2	Number of municipal authorities and citizens who use relevant technical and human capacities to participate in the better management of natural resources	81	
Outcome indicator 1.3	Increase of forest-dependent inhabitants’ average perception regarding their influence on SFM and related decision-making in the target regions Baseline: 0 Target: Increase by one score point (range 1-5)	176	

¹ Referencing value chains as one of several contributing factors to livelihood improvement.

More specifically:

- Develop quantitative, semi-quantitative and qualitative questionnaires.
- Define number of focus group discussions by target regions and beneficiaries according to the respective indicators, for the indicator 1.3 consider the methodology defined for the baseline study (annex 1).
- Define number of individual/in-depth Interviews by target regions or beneficiaries according to the respective indicator.
- Any other alternative/complimentary method.
- Develop the sampling design to select the beneficiaries for the study. The study should be representative for each indicator to be addressed, displayed in the table 1.
- Use the existing methodology applied for the baseline survey for the indicator 1.3 (perception of forest dependent population).
- Make sure to find the optimal way to reflect connections between the indicators in the methodology in terms of:
 - Target municipalities.
 - Target beneficiaries.
 - Topics to cover.
- If considered needed, for the impact indicator 2, conduct pilot survey and adjust questionnaire if necessary to ensure that the suggested methodology captures a comprehensive evaluation of livelihood diversification efforts, supported by the project.

Work Package 2: Implement the study

- Plan the study in eight municipalities, preferably in two parallel rounds for east and west Georgia
- Conduct the study in eight municipalities preferably in two parallel rounds for east and west Georgia
- While planning and implementing the study, independently organize mobilization of interviewees/survey participants/focus group members

Note: The project will share the database of the beneficiaries, ensuring all confidentiality requirements are considered.

Work Package 3: Analyse data and submit the results

- Analyse the results of the study according to the 3 selected indicators
- Submit the results of the study according to the 3 selected indicators as a final report

2.3. Outputs/deliverables

Expected outputs according to the work packages are as follows:

Work package 1: Prepare the methodology

Output 1: Comprehensive methodology:

A comprehensive methodology document for the surveys to assess how the project has contributed to building local capacities, improving public participation, creating economic opportunities, encompassing 3 logframe indicators and defining:

- Semi-quantitative questionnaires
- Focus group discussion
- Individual/in-depth interviews.
- Any other alternative/complimentary method

Output 2: Updated methodology for indicator 1.3:

An updated methodology for indicator 1.3, building on the baseline study approach.

Work Package 2: Implement the study

Output 3: Implementation Plan

A detailed implementation plan for surveys across eight municipalities, ensuring:

- Scheduling of parallel sessions for East and West Georgia.
- Logistical arrangements for survey execution, including the outline for mobilizing the survey participants.

Output 4: Execution of study

Execution of surveys in all eight municipalities, including:

- Data collection through semi-quantitative questionnaires.
- Facilitation of focus group interviews.
- Completion of individual interviews.

Output 5: Documentation of field activities

Documentation of field activities, including participation records and observations.

Work Package 3: Analyse Data and Submit the Results

Output 6: Submit results

In a form of a comprehensive final report in English and Georgian, provide ECO.Georgia with:

- Methodology, including description of data analysis
- Data
- Results and findings corresponding to the 3 selected indicators including:
 - Insights for each of the 3 indicators (incl. comparative analysis with baseline results)
 - Recommendations based on survey outcomes.

2.4. Schedule and timeframe

	Deadline	Number of experts	Number of working days
Output 1 - comprehensive methodology	After 3 weeks from signing the contract	1	Up to 5
Output 2 - updated methodology for indicator 1.3	After 3 weeks from signing the contract	1	Up to 1
Output 3 - implementation plan	After 5 weeks from signing the contract	1	Up to 3
Output 4 - execution of study	After 10 weeks from signing the contract	4	Up to 32 (8 WD per expert)
Output 5 - documentation of field activities	After 11 weeks from signing the contract	1	Up to 1
Output 6- submit results	After 13 weeks from signing of the contract	1	Up to 5

Travel expenses			Number of days/nights
Transportation			Up to 6 trips (round trip per region)
Accommodation (full board)		4 experts	5 overnights per expert
Workshop/events			Number of events
Refreshments for training/workshop participants			Up to 16 (focus group discussions)

**Experts are to travel by (own or rental) car; for reimbursement of the cost, lump sum rate per day can be agreed, but this applies only for one car (one region). It is expected that the experts travel together in one car.*

3. Company and Experts' profiles

Company

Proposed company should demonstrate the following background/qualification:

(1.1): Technical Experience, at least 7 years of extensive experience in developing and conducting sociological studies, including semi-quantitative questionnaires, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews.

(1.2): A strong understanding of Georgia's environmental and socio-economic context, particularly the challenges faced by forest-adjacent, rural communities

- Ability to work effectively in Georgia's municipalities, including familiarity with the eight target areas (Ozurgeti, Chokhatauri, Lanchkhuti, Dedoplistskaro, Telavi, Kvareli, Akhmeta, and Tianeti).
- Adequate resources and team structure to handle parallel surveys' sessions in multiple municipalities.
- Strong coordination skills to liaise with the GIZ/ECO.Georgia Component 3 team and other stakeholders.

Expert 1:

(5.1.) Team Leader (Expert 1)

Role: Responsible for overall coordination, methodology development and conducting the study, stakeholder engagement, and reporting.

(5.1.1) General qualification: **Education:** Master's or PhD in social sciences, anthropology, sociology, public policy, development studies, or a related field.

(5.1.2) Specific qualification: **Professional experience:**

- At least 7 years of experience in designing and implementing research methodologies, including semi-quantitative questionnaires, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews.
- At least 5 years of experience in developing methodological frameworks for impact assessment and evaluation studies, particularly in community engagement, capacity building, and economic development contexts.

(5.1.3) **Experience in the region/knowledge of the country:** Demonstrated experience of at least 5 years in designing and managing similar project in Georgia

Skills:

- Strong interpersonal and facilitation skills, with the ability to work in diverse rural contexts.

(5.1.4) Linguistic skills Fluency in Georgian and English.

(5.2 - 5.4) Pool of experts (3 Experts)

Role: Conduct surveys, focus group discussions, and individual interviews across the eight target municipalities, assist in compiling and analysing all the data as well as interpreting the results

(5.2.1 - 5.4.1) General qualification: Education: Master’s or Bachelor’s degree in Sociology, Anthropology, or a related social science field.

(5.2.2 – 5.4.2) Specific qualification: Professional Experience:

- At least 3 years of experience in conducting surveys, focus groups, and interviews in rural settings.
- Familiarity with data collection tools and techniques, particularly for participatory and gender-sensitive methodologies.
- Experience in engaging marginalized groups, including women and communities at risk of exclusion.

Skills:

- Strong interpersonal and facilitation skills, with the ability to work in diverse rural contexts.

(5.2.4 – 5.4.4) Linguistic skills: Fluency in Georgian and English.

4. Timing and duration

From May to August 2025.

5. Place of assignment

Georgia

6. Reporting

- Reports are to be prepared according to the GIZ template to be provided by the project.
- All documents shall be delivered electronically (text files, PPT) in English and in Georgian.
- The consultant shall report to Project Director, GIZ/ECO.Georgia.
- The consultant is expected to coordinate very closely with the Component 3 team, GIZ/ECO.Georgia.
- The consultants shall keep a time sheet (8 hours = 1 working day).

7. Other provisions

7.1 Budgeting and payment

Final payment will be effected after provision of timesheets for accomplished working days and provision of the output/deliverables given above.

7.2 Data Protection

In the context of prepare and conduct the socio-cultural study with the beneficiaries, personal data will be processed on behalf of GIZ. Therefore, an agreement on “Outsourcing of data processing (AuV)” will be concluded with the contractor in accordance with Art. 28 GDPR. For this purpose, the technical and organisational measures (TOM) for compliance with the data protection requirements must be outlined prior to conclusion of the contract. If the contractor has already been audited by GIZ in the past, an update in accordance with GDPR must nevertheless be sent. After a positive check, the contract is concluded with the AuV attachment.

The contractor will be granted access to the beneficiaries personal data (**name, contact and communication data: telephone and email**), in the ECO.Georgia Project database. The personal data must only be used to carry out activities determined by the ToR, particularly for conducting the socio-cultural study with the beneficiaries of the ECO.Georgia project, component 3.

The contractor shall only collect personal data from the beneficiaries that are strictly necessary and relevant to the task, such as their name, surname, ID, telephone number and gender following the principle of data minimization.

7.3 Tender Procedure

Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to submit a technical proposal showing how the objectives defined in Chapter 2 are to be achieved and if applicable under consideration of further method-related requirements (technical-methodological concept).

The technical proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the assessment grid which consists of followings:

(2.1) Concept

- a. interpretation of the objective /assignment (2.1)
- b. strategy for the implementation reflecting other alternatives (2.1)
- c. cooperation during the implementation (stakeholders in the implementation, reference projects etc.) (2.1)
- d. a work plan in a visual form

Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, on the basis of their CVs, the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

The CVs of the personnel proposed meeting the requirements below must be submitted using the format specified in the terms and conditions for application. The CVs shall not exceed 4 pages each. They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and for how long.

Annex

- Annex on Outsourcing of Data Processing (AuV)