

Terms of Reference (ToR):
Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert (Intermittent) for Nepal: Private Sector Led Mini Grid Energy Access Project (MGEAP)

1. Introduction:

Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) is the apex government body under the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation (MoEWRI), established to promote the use of alternative/renewable energy technology to meet the energy needs in Nepal. The Private Sector Led Mini Grid Energy Access Project (MGEAP), supported by the World Bank, will be implemented by AEPC from February 2019 (tentative). The objective of the project is to increase electricity access and delivery from renewable energy mini-grids (solar, hydro, wind, and hybrid) by mobilizing private Energy Service Companies (ESCOs). The project is designed to support RE mini-grids market by introducing conditions to gradually shift from heavily subsidized to commercial model. The project will support mobilization of credit from participating Banks (PBs) to ESCOs for the development of mini-grid sub-projects.

Nepal is one of six countries identified for assistance under the Scaling-up Renewable Energy Program in Low Income Countries (SREP). As one of three programs under the Strategic Climate Fund, SREP aims to demonstrate the social, economic and environmental viability of low carbon development pathways in the energy sector. In particular, the objectives of SREP in Nepal are to: (i) leverage complementary credit and grant co-financing, (ii) bring about transformational impacts through scaling up energy access using renewable energy technologies (RETs), poverty reduction, gender and social inclusiveness and climate change mitigation, and (iii) ensure sustainable operations through technical assistance and capacity building.

2. Background:

The project will involve construction activities that bear potential risk on physical, biological, social and cultural environment of any area. Because of weak geology, rich biodiversity, high dependency of people on natural resources and widespread poverty, the social and environmental impacts are visibly significant, particularly when construction works are undertaken in sub-project areas.

Generally, the environmental and social risks triggered by construction include erosion, loss of forest, biodiversity and agricultural land; effect to water sources due to sedimentation and water logging, displacement/damage of permanent assets and loss of land. These problems are apparent not only during construction but also during operation phase. Hence, proper consideration of all environmental and social factors during the MGEAP's design and implementation is of utmost concern. It is required to undertake environmental and social due diligence to assess the environmental and social implications of developing energy projects. The due diligence shall be conducted based on the National Regulations and the World Bank's safeguard requirement. To achieve these objectives, it is required to prepare relevant environmental and social documents to assess potential impacts.

Hence, AEPC/MGEAP is looking for a Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert to aid the AEPC/MGEAP in the environment and social safeguard related activities.

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3. Objectives:

Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert shall lead the team to coordinate and ensure the formulation and implementation of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for MGEAP. The Expert shall be responsible for providing intermittent inputs in overall management, oversight and monitoring of implementation of environmental measures in the Mini Grid Energy Access Project during the project preparation and implementation phase.

4. Scope of Service (Activities):

The scope of work shall include, but shall not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Coordinate and oversee implementation of Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) provisions in various types of subprojects (Micro/Mini-hydro, Solar and Solar/Wind hybrid, grid interconnection);
- Carryout Training Need Assistance (TNA), prepare training plan and support and provide training on the WB and ESMF requirements on environmental safeguard to the project PIU staff, ESCOs and Partner Banks on the application of ESMF;
- Supervise conduction of environmental screening and categorization for the subproject prepared by AEPC or proposed by the ESCOs.
- Oversee the process of environmental impact assessment and preparation of risk management plan, for submission by AEPC to the World Bank for review, and to the Ministry for approval.
- Coordinate with and inform/update the World Bank in matters related to ESMF application including screening and categorization, TOR, ESMP, IEE and ESIA.
- Review the DFS/ DPR as well as bid documents of each subproject and certify that environmental mitigations, recommended in screening, EMP/ IEE/ EIA, are incorporated in the respective DFS/ DPR.
- Provide guidance to subproject developers in preparing the ESIA (as per WB requirement) for each particular subproject.
- Guide, advise and ensure that the ESCOs/Partner Banks consult affected people/ stakeholders in accordance with ESMF during preparation of specific safeguard document and implementation of mitigations.
- Ensure that ESMP, IEE etc (safeguard instruments) are translated, disclosed, and disseminated to relevant stakeholders as required in the ESMF, support project team to prepare stakeholder engagement plan and E&S commitment plan as per the provision of new E&S framework;
- Support PIU and TRC in assessing Environmental risks and management in subprojects.
- Ensure the environmental safeguard compliance monitoring has been done and reported as per National regulations and the World Bank requirement.
- Support PIU in integrating E&S safeguards in its analytic, knowledge, and regulatory initiatives.
- Any other tasks assigned by Project Manager to support the project with respect to environmental issues.

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- Ensure periodic reporting to the WB and AEPC as per the requirements of ESMF.

5. Performance and Reporting Requirement (Deliverables):

The Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert shall prepare monthly, quarterly, semiannual and annual report that should incorporate the Specific Social Assessment monitoring and capacity building activities.

6. Duration of Service:

The Expert will be assigned for full project period with a provision of renew of contract each year and possibilities of further extension, in case of satisfactory performance. The expert is expected to work in intermittent basis with required travels outside Kathmandu valley within Nepal on project related matters. The contract will be effective only after the effective date of the project.

7. Expert's Required Qualification and Experience:

Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert shall have minimum master degree in environmental science/environment management/environmental/civil engineering or related discipline with an overall of 10 (Ten) years of professional experience in Environmental assessment & management; understanding of the national legislative and regulatory as well as WB Policy and new E&S Framework requirements; and proven report writing skills.

The candidate should also have:

- Proven experience in implementing the international environmental safeguard policies/standards and well conversant with Government of Nepal (GoN) environment related policies, new E&S framework, regulations and guidelines of the World Bank Group;
- Excellent command in Nepali and English language (both spoken and written) and communication skills;
- Knowledge of specific gender issues in renewable energy and sensitivity to local culture and traditions in Nepal;
- Knowledge and/or familiarity with the country's geography and willing to travel/trek to the project sites located in remote part of the country;
- Ability to work well with government officials and community personnel;
- Strong and demonstrated capacity for organization, management with excellent reporting and coordination skills;
- Strong leadership, technical competence and professional skills for timely implementation, coordination and management of activities;
- Ability to work in a team, develop synergies and establish effective working relations with various stakeholders;
- Strong interpersonal and communications skills, resourcefulness, initiative, tact and ability

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to cope with challenging situations;

- The candidate should be able to legally work in Nepal.

8. Facilities and logistics to the expert by the Client:

The Expert shall be provided with the office space, internet facilities, and office furniture. Necessary stationery, printing and copying facilities shall also be provided by the Client.