



## CONSULTANCY SERVICES

ON

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR POLICY CHANGE TO IMPROVE REDD+  
IMPLEMENTATION AND INTEGRATION IN AFRICA: CAPITALIZING ON BEST  
PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNT IN AN EVOLVING ENVIRONMENT

JULY 2023

## **1.0 Introduction**

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a pan-African non-governmental organization with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The purpose of AFF is to provide a platform and create an enabling environment for independent and objective analysis, advocacy and advice on relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to achieving sustainable management, use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources as part of efforts to eradicate poverty, promote gender equality, and economic and social development.

The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) is the UN knowledge and advisory platform on the forest solutions to the climate crisis. The goal of UN-REDD is to help realise forest solutions to the climate emergency by avoiding carbon emissions and fostering carbon sequestration, through the promotion of approaches that ensure the environmental integrity of carbon emissions reductions while supporting non-carbon benefits such as safeguarding biodiversity, supporting local livelihoods, and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples.

AFF in partnership with UN-REDD is implementing a three-year project entitled: *“Strengthening REDD+ implementation in Africa: capitalizing on lessons learned for an evolving environment - a UN-REDD-AFF partnership”* supported by the Switzerland contribution to UN-REDD Africa Technical Assistance. The overall objective of the project is to strengthen African countries' capacities and knowledge through UN-REDD's REDD+ specific expertise and convening power and AFF's network, regional expertise, and local knowledge, thereby increasing political dialogue and policy change, as well as integration of REDD+ across policy sectors and sustainable development strategies. The project is guided by two overall goals, which are to: (i) strengthen African countries' REDD+ capacities and knowledge; and (ii) enhance sectoral policy coordination to guide appropriate REDD+ strategies and decision-making. Through these goals, the project is expected to contribute to improved REDD+ implementation and increased results-based payments in Africa. In addition, the project will also contribute to the AFF's Strategic Plan (2021-2025) and the UN-REDD global knowledge and management workplan for 2023 (and beyond), as well as the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032) and the African Union Sustainable Forest Management Framework for Africa 2020-2030.

## **1.1 Background**

The sixth Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has raised an alarm on the steady increase of human-caused global surface temperature that has reached 1.1°C above the pre-industrial level over the last decade (2010 to 2020). Recent analysis also confirmed the challenges for maintaining the temperature increase below the agreed 1.5°C Paris Agreement target. Among other main contributors, agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) activities are estimated to have a share of up to 22% of these emissions. This is particularly relevant in the African context where the conversion of forests to agriculture and other land uses continues to generate substantial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to the atmosphere, and therefore affecting climate. For instance, the demand for agricultural products to meet rising food security needs of the population in developing world, and especially in Africa, has continued to compromise efforts towards conservation and management of forests, and including their potential for provision of environmental services.

For the first time after 30 years of negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, forests and agriculture are now highly profiled as important sectors for nature-based solutions to limit global warming and achieve the Paris Agreement goals. However, despite recent efforts

to curb tropical deforestation – including reducing demand for deforestation-linked commodities and implementing sustainable production practices, deforestation of primary forests increased by 12% between 2019 and 2020. Recent assessments have shown that globally, and especially in Africa, countries are not making sufficient progress within their AFOLU sector. More specifically, it has been observed that the economic and environmental potentials associated with the successful implementation of REDD+ (Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation including enhancement of carbon stocks from forests and other land uses), known as the most important mitigation mechanism in the AFOLU sector, are yet to be realized for many African countries.

The overall picture of REDD+ implementation in the African countries shows a slow but steady progress with less than five countries reaching phase 3 of the Warsaw Framework where they could be eligible for result-based payments. The identified critical roadblocks for progress are gaps in REDD+ technical knowledge and capacities among REDD+ practitioners and decision-makers, and the need to foster opportunities for peer – to peer learning between countries and at different levels of implementation. Based on the UN-REDD’s knowledge exchange held in 2022, as well as the assessment of REDD+ implementation done by AFF in 44 African countries, the key areas identified for further development of capacity included: understanding and accessing REDD+ finance, trends in carbon rights and markets, social inclusion, deforestation-free agriculture, and development of robust REDD+ governance frameworks /mechanisms for sharing benefits derived from the REDD+ results-based payments. For each of these identified areas, African countries have specific experiences, approaches, and obstacles, irrespective of their performance in terms of REDD+ implementation.

In this regard, documenting innovations or breakthrough achievements on the implementation of REDD+ focusing on the above key areas is considered as an important step for the identification of best practices and lessons learnt that could serve as catalyst for peer-to-peer learning to be facilitated during regional exchanges. The present activity will target UNREDD technical assistance countries from Anglophone and francophone language groups and at different phases of implementing the Warsaw Framework.

## **1.2 Rationale and purpose of the work**

In the context of the 2023 annual work plan of the AFF-UNREDD partnership project on “ *Strengthening REDD+ implementation in Africa: capitalizing on lessons learned for an evolving environment*” AFF is recruiting **six national experts, one each for Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Republic of Congo, and Uganda** to take stock of progress made on implementing REDD+ in these countries, and identify gaps in implementation and any opportunities that could have arisen or were identified to improve the REDD+ process, and also taking in account progress made through technical assistance offered by UN-REDD. The study is expected to generate knowledge on best practices, key innovative/breakthrough achievements, challenges encountered, opportunities for increasing efficiency in implementation, as well as capacity gaps across different REDD+ practitioners and decision-makers in the selected countries. Further, the key findings from these national consultations are expected to guide sharing of information at planned regional exchanges, involving countries beyond the current UN-REDD portfolio, in order to stimulate peer-to-peer learning between countries well advanced in the REDD+ process and others that have not advanced much. The outcome will also contribute to tailor knowledge products and events to better address specific capacity needs of African countries.

### **Specific tasks**

In each selected country, the expert will:

- (i) Document the existing institutional (including UNREDD and national REDD+ focal points) and policy frameworks and analyse their effectiveness in guiding the implementation of the REDD+ process at the national level.
- (ii) Analyse and document national financing strategies, especially the relevance and efficiency of the national investment plan, in filling the gaps for REDD+ implementation, and scaling up forest-based climate action, including the sustainability of such strategies.
- (iii) Assess the barriers to accessing climate finance at national level and make policy recommendations on how these barriers could be overcome.
- (iv) Evaluate the potential for private sectors investment in forest-based climate actions in the country including options for leveraging both public and private financing mechanisms to support REDD+ implementation.
- (v) Identify options for supporting the national government to engage with local authorities, local communities and the private sector and facilitate the implementation of key environmental and social safeguards in their activities including REDD safeguards,
- (vi) Assess REDD+ stakeholders' knowledge and capacity to produce saleable high-integrity, high-quality carbon credits taking into account associated issues like land, forest, and associated carbon rights and tenure; effectiveness of existing legislation for gauging benefit sharing agreements/mechanisms and ensuring appropriate incentives for an inclusive REDD+ implementation by all stakeholders.
- (vii) Evaluate how the social inclusion is being addressed in selected countries, and considering socioeconomic, institutional, and cultural incentives for strengthening gender responsiveness in national REDD+ process.
- (viii) Document approaches for generating, promoting, and sharing REDD+ benefits and co-benefits, and analyse their contribution to strengthening stakeholders' engagement, commitment and securing the appropriate countries' REDD+ outcomes.

### **1.3 Deliverables**

The experts will be expected to deliver the following at the end of the consultancy period:

- (i) A report of about 40-pages including policy recommendations on how to operationalise some of the key findings to support implementation and decision making for REDD+ implementation on the ground.
- (ii) At least one journal article to be published together with staff at the Secretariat who will get involved in this work.
- (iii) Draft policy brief, and fact sheet to be finalised with the AFF Secretariat
- (iv) A power Point presentation summarising the key findings and policy recommendations to be shared during knowledge exchange events organised by the project.

### **2.0 Minimum qualifications and skills**

The interested applicant should meet the following minimum qualifications and skills:

- (i) Be a forestry professional or a natural resource research scientist with proven knowledge and experience in current and emerging issues in forestry and climate change globally, and especially in the African context.
- (ii) Have good experience in forest, climate change and associated sectoral policies and governance.
- (iii) Demonstrate familiarity and proven evidence with the REDD+ mechanism and processes.
- (iv) Have a good scientific writing skills and have at least written a book chapter and/or published peer reviewed journal papers.
- (v) Have at least a master's degree in any of the following areas: forestry, natural resources management, environmental issues, climate change, or any related area.

- (vi) Excellent written and oral communication skills in English (for Anglophone countries) or French (for Francophone countries); knowledge of both languages is an asset.

### **3.0 Application requirements**

The applicant shall submit the following:

- (i) Cover letter stating how the above qualifications and experience requirements are met.
- (ii) A brief and concise technical proposal / concept note (not more than 4 pages) containing:
  - (a) key results area; corresponding specific activities and the methodological approaches for conducting them.
  - (b) draft work plan (clear deliverables plotted against work weeks for each key results); and
- (iii) Curriculum vitae, of not more than 6 pages, focusing on the most relevant trainings, skills and experiences related to the current assignment.

### **4.0 Duration**

The work is expected to take 1.5 person-month.

### **5.0 Deadlines**

- (i) Applications must be received by the AFF Secretariat on or before **24 July 2023**.
- (ii) Successful applicants will be informed by **31 July 2023**.
- (iii) Consultancy activities must begin no later than **10 August 2023**.
- (iv) The selected consultant will attend and facilitate a methodologies harmonisation workshop that will be held online on **22 August 2023**.

### **6.0 How to apply**

All applications must be submitted by e-mail with the subject line: “Consultancy No: 03-2.1. ***Strengthening capacity for policy change to improve REDD+ implementation and integration in Africa: capitalizing on best practices and lessons learnt in an evolving environment***” to Prof. Marie Louise A. T. AVANA-TIENTCHEU through the following e-mail addresses: [m.avana@cifor-icraf.org](mailto:m.avana@cifor-icraf.org) and copied to Dr Dayamba Djibril ([d.dayamba@cifor-icraf.org](mailto:d.dayamba@cifor-icraf.org)) and Dr Daud Kachamba ([d.kachamba@cifor-icraf.org](mailto:d.kachamba@cifor-icraf.org)) and [exec.sec@afforum.org](mailto:exec.sec@afforum.org).