



## Terms of Reference

Online regional facilitator for a Community of Practice on:  
***Strengthening social inclusion in REDD+ implementation in Africa***

## **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, economic and social development and stability of the environment.

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.

The 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 UNREDD-AFF partnership”* supported by the Switzerland contribution to UNREDD Africa Technical Assistance. The overall goal of the project is to strengthen African countries' capacities and knowledge through UNREDD's REDD+ specific expertise and the convening power of AFF, its 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 objectives, 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. The current activity will contribute to the first project's objective by strengthening capacities and facilitating knowledge exchange among African forestry stakeholders for more inclusive and sustainable REDD+ interventions in African countries.

## **1.1 BACKGROUND**

In the recent past, African countries have been receiving increasing attention for their potential contribution to nature-based solutions to the climate crisis and biodiversity loss. Although REDD+ remains the most heavily invested carbon project category worldwide, only 21% of REDD+ credits have been issued

for Africa. More specifically, it has been observed that the social, economic and environmental potentials associated with the successful implementation of REDD+ are yet to be realized for many African countries. One of the key prerequisites for countries to access the REDD+ finance regardless of funding sources and markets targeted is a set of social and environmental measures in place to reduce and mitigate potential risks and promote co-benefits associated with the implementation of activities that lead to mitigation outcomes. Moreover, promoting inclusive and sustainable societies are considered key elements in achieving Sustainable Development Goals and for enhancing human well-being to which REDD+ also aims to contribute.

Social and gender dimensions of REDD+ aim to ensure that forest-related projects and jurisdictional programmes do not harm the environment or communities, particularly the most vulnerable groups like the poor, minority groups, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women. This is important because of the intricate ways that interventions in the forest and land use sector affect people, livelihoods, and the environment. Furthermore, the increasing demand for high-integrity carbon credits, which could potentially attract higher prices, is also linked to clearly defined interventions that adhere to core international standards on Indigenous Peoples community and women's rights, gender equality, inclusive participation and governance, in addition to enhancing the living standards and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities while also advancing sustainable management of the environment.

One of the four key elements of the Warsaw framework for REDD+ readiness is the Safeguard Information system (SIS). In that context, REDD+ countries have developed approaches to safeguards based on their national circumstances. The national safeguard systems usually integrates the requirements under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including the Cancun Safeguards, but also other safeguards policies and procedures from various entities providing funding for the three REDD+ phases: readiness, implementation, and result-based payments. Put together, these differentiated Safeguard approaches constitute a good database of information on the design, implementation and associated results of REDD+ activities as well as their contribution to sustainable development, including improving stakeholders' engagement, livelihoods, benefit-sharing, respect and protection of rights among others.

In this regard, Communities of Practice (CoPs) can serve as an efficient and easily accessible way for peer-to-peer sharing of countries' knowledge, experiences, expertise and lessons learned for strengthening different aspects of social inclusion for sustainable REDD+ in Africa.

## **1.2 RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE WORK**

In the context of the 2024 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 one **regional expert to moderate an online Community of Practice (CoP) on “Strengthening social inclusion in REDD+ implementation in Africa”**. The CoP will be hosted on UN-REDD Howspace platform and will involve one week webinar series and one week web-based interactions. The **online moderator is expected to encourage / engage and guide stakeholders to attend the webinar series and the web-based discussions and share** their knowledge, experiences and best practices on their national REDD+ process as it relates to social inclusion and related aspects. At the end of each session, the moderator will synthesize views, lessons and recommendations to be posted on the CoP’s Howspace, easily accessible to all community members.

The CoP will be structured around the following topics:

- The full and effective inclusion of historically marginalized groups including, women, youth, local communities Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities.
- REDD+ benefits, incentives and sharing mechanisms.
- Effective multi-stakeholders and cross-sectoral platforms in national REDD+ governance systems
- Social inclusion and high integrity carbon credits.

The event will also provide a platform for sharing of knowledge products tailored to better address specific capacity needs of African countries.

## **1.3 KEY TASKS OF THE REGIONAL MODERATOR**

The key tasks of this assignment are as follows:

- i) Provide relevant inputs to the concept note and proposed programme for the CoP, including topics for the online discussion forum;
- ii) Promote the CoP, identify a wide range of stakeholders and start engaging them on the “Howspace” platform at least one week before the webinar session;
- iii) Work with AFF Secretariat and UN-REDD to tailor discussion topics in line with the thematic area of the CoP as well as the project outcomes.
- iv) Identify and engage a broad range of stakeholders including relevant networks, individuals, and institutions with specific expertise and experiences on REDD+ process and social inclusion, then invite them to participate and enrich the online discussion;
- v) Contribute , in collaboration with AFF, UN-REDD and selected resource persons, to the development

of daily presentations on the selected topics to guide the online discussion;

- vi) Actively guide the discussion to ensure it remains focused on the agenda, address all discussion questions and at the end of each session, draft and post a daily summary note.
- vii) Daily tasks of the CoP's moderator, to be done during the 2 to 3 hours daily sessions starting from the **11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 for 2 weeks** include:
  - a. Welcome participants to the virtual discussion;
  - b. Introduce the topic, prepare, and deliver presentations and/or facilitate their delivery by identified guest speakers and drive discussions to address any open/pending issues.
  - c. Provide encouragement/energizer to drive the discussion when no contributions have been posted, by posing/fielding questions, contacting members directly through the platform, posting complementary content such as documents, websites, and text.
- VIII) Propose and discuss with the CoP members plausible approaches and a strategy to sustain interactions on the platform after the two-weeks' CoP.
- IX) Continue the moderation of the discussions among community's members on the web based Howspace at least two weeks after the end of the webinar series guided by the proposed sustainability strategy.
- X) Document key issues raised, and actions proposed by the CoP members.

#### **1.4 DELIVERABLES**

This assignment aims to deliver the following:

- Useful resources for the e-discussion uploaded and shared regularly.
- Daily summaries of the e-discussions
- A strategy and action plan to sustain interactions and peer-to-peer learning among the community after the CoP sessions.
- Final report of the assignment to be submitted one week after the end of the CoP sessions.

#### **1.5 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS**

The online discussion moderators must have the following qualifications and skills:

- At least a master's degree in forestry or natural resource management with experience in climate change as well as social and economic dimensions of forest resources management, a PhD will be an added advantage.
- At least five years' working experience post Msc in sustainable forest management in the context of climate changes well as in social, cultural and legal rights on forest products and services;

- Good knowledge of environmental and social safeguards in the context of management of natural resources;
- Have proven writing skills with experience in writing technical reports on topics related to sustainable forest management, climate change and forest resources governance.
- Excellent writing and oral communication skills in English. Knowledge of French is an additional advantage.
- Experience in moderating CoPs, climate negotiations, multi-stakeholders’ participatory actions or events are desirable.

### **1.6 DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT**

The work is expected to take one (1) calendar month, commencing on **04 November 2024**. The online regional facilitator will work from own location but be in close consultation with relevant staff at the AFF Secretariat while keeping to an agreed delivery schedule.

### **1.7 DEADLINES**

- (i) Applications must be received by the AFF Secretariat on or before **29 October 2024**.
- (ii) Consultancy activities must begin no later than **04 November 2024**.

### **1.8 HOW TO APPLY**

Please email your application to AFF, attaching: (a) A cover letter stating how you meet the above qualifications and experience requirements; and (b) An updated CV. Indicate the subject line: **“Consultancy: Online regional facilitator for a Community of Practice on *Strengthening social inclusion in REDD+ implementation in Africa*”** to [d.gitonga@cifor-icraf.org](mailto:d.gitonga@cifor-icraf.org) with a copy to [m.avana@cifor-icraf.org](mailto:m.avana@cifor-icraf.org), [exec.sec@afforum.org](mailto:exec.sec@afforum.org). Only successful applicants will be contacted.