



TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE CONTINENTAL STRATEGY FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

BACKGROUND

Aquatic biodiversity conservation and the blue economy are critical aspects of sustainable development, encompassing the protection and inclusive management of aquatic ecosystems and the responsible use of ocean resources. However, achieving sustainable outcomes in these areas requires the active involvement and empowerment of women and youth. Women have long played essential roles in coastal communities and possess a deep understanding of the aquatic environment. Yet, they often face numerous barriers and challenges that hinder their participation and contributions.

In this regard, AU-IBAR is implementing a project on “Conserving Aquatic Biodiversity in African Blue Economy”, with support from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The project is supporting the implementation of the African Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) which was endorsed by the African Heads of States and Governments at a Summit held in Addis Ababa-Ethiopia, in February 2020. The Project is designed to enhance the policy environment, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities of African Union member states and Regional Economic Communities to sustainably utilize and conserve aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems.

An important area which the project is addressing is strengthening gender-sensitive workplans to enhance the role of women and youth in biodiversity protection and environmental governance in aquatic ecosystems, which support economic activities and livelihoods of women and youth in AU member states. To address this, AU-IBAR has developed a continental strategy that guides

gender mainstreaming in conservation programmes and initiatives. The Continental Gender Strategy on Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation was endorsed by the Summit of the African Heads of States and Governments in February 2024. The Summit also urged the African Union Commission to support the development of an implementation of the Strategy.

In rolling out the continental gender strategy on aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management, AU member states requested for the Implementation Plan to be developed in order to effectively operationalize the strategy on the continent. This implementation plan is required to facilitate the development of all-inclusive strategies by AU Member States and promote gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management in Africa.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

The overall objective of this consultancy is to develop an Implementation Plan for the effective operationalization of the Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation in Africa, ensuring that gender issues are systematically addressed and effectively mainstreamed in the conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environment management initiatives.

Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the consultancy are to:

1. **Review** the Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation, identifying key priorities, actions and targets.
2. **Analyze existing gender frameworks and strategies in Africa and globally** relevant to aquatic biodiversity conservation to inform the development of the implementation plan.
3. Conduct a desk study to engage with **key stakeholders** at **national and regional levels**, including government institutions, civil society organizations, private sector and women's groups, to gather input on effective gender mainstreaming actions.
4. Develop a **detailed Implementation Plan**, outlining activities, timelines, milestones, responsibilities, and resources required to integrate gender considerations into aquatic biodiversity conservation efforts.
5. Propose a **monitoring and evaluation mechanism** for tracking the progress and impact of gender mainstreaming in aquatic biodiversity conservation.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will be required to undertake the following tasks:

1. **Liase** with project team at AU-IBAR.
2. Develop an **inception** report.
3. Conduct a **desk review** of the Continental Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in Aquatic Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystems Management and relevant gender policies and strategies at national, regional, and global levels.
4. Review selected reports of gender strategies developed for AU member states
5. Engage with **key stakeholders** to understand current gender-related challenges and opportunities in aquatic biodiversity conservation across Africa.
6. Facilitate consultative workshop with relevant stakeholders, including government departments/ agencies, women's organizations, community-based organizations, private sector institutions and development partners, to gather inputs for the implementation plan.
7. Develop a detailed **Implementation Plan**, including:
 - Strategic objectives and activities that align with the Continental Strategy.
 - Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in implementing the plan.
 - Indicators and Key Milestones to be achieved when implementing the plan.
 - Resource requirements, including budget estimates and potential funding sources.
 - Timelines for implementation, broken down by short, medium, and long-term actions.
 - A Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to assess progress and impact.
8. Prepare a **final report** that includes the draft Implementation Plan, key recommendations, and supporting documentation for the successful mainstreaming of gender in aquatic biodiversity conservation.

DELIVERABLES

The consultant is expected to deliver the following outputs:

1. **Inception Report:** Submitted within 7 days of contract signature, outlining the methodology, work plan, and timeline for delivering the consultancy outputs.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement Report** submitted within 25 days: A report summarizing findings from consultations and engagements with key stakeholders, including their input on the implementation plan.
3. **Draft Implementation Plan** submitted within 50 days: A comprehensive draft plan, including proposed actions, timelines, responsibilities, and M&E frameworks.
4. **Final Implementation Plan** submitted within 75 days: A finalized document that incorporates feedback from stakeholders and project coordinators.

5. **Final Report** submitted within 90 days. A report summarizing the entire consultancy process, including recommendations for the next steps and any challenges encountered during the assignment.

QUALIFICATION

The successful candidate should have a minimum of a Master's degree in disciplines related to Strategic Management, Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Social Sciences, Development and Gender studies, Climate Change and Environmental Management, Natural Resource Management, with focus on Gender Mainstreaming or related fields of study.

Experience:

General Experience

1. A minimum of 5 years of relevant work experience in at least one of the sectors - gender and climate change programmes; fisheries and aquaculture, coastal and marine programmes, sustainable aquatic environmental management programmes; integrating gender considerations.
2. Proven knowledge of national and regional institutions of the African Union (AU) including Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with functions on aquatic biodiversity conservation, fisheries and aquaculture and environment management.
3. Proven experience of working with and mobilizing communities (including women and youth) in riparian and coastal settlements.
4. Experience in planning, implementing training and facilitating stakeholders' consultative workshops.

Specific Experience

1. Proven Knowledge on or Experience in supporting or promoting implementation of continental and global instruments, initiatives addressing environmental sustainability, gender considerations and sustainable development;
2. Record of performing similar consultancy and working experience in natural resource management projects at local, national or regional levels in Africa;
3. Some experience working with NGOs on issues of gender. environmental management and conservation of aquatic biodiversity.
4. Some experience with the practical challenges and mechanisms for effective engagement of communities in all-inclusive initiatives for sustainable aquatic resources management in Africa.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

The main expected results of this engagement are:

1. Inception Report.
2. Stakeholder Engagement report.
3. Draft and Final Implementation Plan.
4. Final Report.

EVALUATION & AWARD CRITERIA

The applications will be evaluated on the basis of the relevant technical qualifications, experience and competence of the candidates.

Applications received will be reviewed on the basis of the criteria below:

Criteria for Scores:

Criteria	Scores (%)
Qualifications	15
General Experience	25
Specific Experience	50
Other skills	5
Proficiency in at least 2 African Union languages	5

GENDER MAINSTREAMING:

The AU Commission is an equal opportunity employer and qualified women are strongly encouraged to apply.

DUTY STATION:

This consultancy will be home-based.

DURATION:

The duration of this assignment is **90 days** from the date of signature of the contract.

REMUNERATION AND TERMS OF PAYMENT:

The cost of the engagement is **9000 USD** (Nine Thousand US Dollars). No other payment is envisaged under this assignment.

SUPERVISION AND REPORTING:

The candidate will be under the direct supervision of the Project Team leader with oversight supervision by the Director of AU-IBAR. The team leader will have the responsibility of approval of reports.

APPLICATIONS

Applications must include the following documents:

- i. Detailed curriculum vitae (CV)
- ii. Detailed proposal/ plan on execution of the assignment
- iii. Copies of academic and professional certification documents
- iv. Declaration on exclusion criteria (see format attached)
- v. Identification documents

Application deadline:

The address for submission of applications is: procurement@au-ibar.org.

All applications should be received by 22nd November 2024, midnight Nairobi local time.