



Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Consultancy service: Consultancy to Assess the Resilience of Livelihoods, Gender dynamics and MSMEs in the Shea Landscape of Northern Uganda.

Duration: 6 Weeks

Reporting To: African Innovations Institute (AfrII) and Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE).

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), in partnership with Conservation International (CI) and the Africa Innovations Institute (AfrII), is preparing a proposal document for the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded full-size project titled **“Building a Climate-Resilient and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Shea Landscape of Northern Uganda”** (GEF ID: 11701). The project aims to enhance the sustainability and resilience of the Shea landscape in Northern Uganda, through integrated land management, a strengthened natural resource governance system, and increased access to financing for inclusive climate-resilient livelihoods of the resident communities.

2. Background

The Shea landscape in Northern Uganda is a critical source of income, nutritional security and environmental services for rural households. However, the Shea landscape of Uganda is a fragile ecosystem in the semi-arid savannah and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as erratic rainfall patterns, frequent droughts and floods. The landscape continues to experience degradation and loss of the Shea trees and associated forest resources, due to increasing human population and poverty, leading to cutting of Shea and other indigenous trees for charcoal production, firewood, tool handles and timber, and through unsustainable clearance of land for

agricultural expansion. Whereas women constituted the biggest proportion of Shea nut actors, they still face significant gender-based challenges, including limited access to resources such as land, finance, information markets, and technology, as well as social and cultural barriers. Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) engaged in value addition and trade are under-developed, constraining broader economic resilience.

This assignment will assess the potential and opportunities for MSMEs within the Shea value chain, while examining gender-specific challenges and barriers to equitable participation and access to resources. It will integrate gender-responsive strategies into project planning and implementation. The analysis aims to generate actionable recommendations to enhance inclusivity, empower women, and ensure that project interventions effectively address gender gaps in economic participation, value chain benefits, and livelihood resilience. This work aligns with key GEF focal areas, including Land Degradation, through the promotion of sustainable land and resource use; Biodiversity, by supporting conservation-friendly production systems; and Climate Change Adaptation, through the development of climate-resilient livelihoods and value chains. It also supports GEF's cross-cutting priorities on gender equality, sustainable livelihoods, and inclusive value chain development.

3. Objectives

The objective of the consultancy is to understand gender-specific challenges, identify barriers to equitable participation in the Shea value chain, conduct an MSME assessment, and integrate gender-responsive strategies and livelihood opportunities into project planning and implementation. In addition, the consultancy will examine how gender norms and inequalities intersect with climate risks, shaping women's and men's differential vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities within the Shea sector. Specifically, the consultancy will:

- i. **MSME Assessment** - Conduct a detailed mapping and profiling of MSMEs across the Shea value chain, assessing their operational efficiency, financial health, growth drivers, service linkages, challenges and opportunities. The assessment will provide targeted recommendations to enhance sustainability, scalability, and competitiveness. It will also identify high-potential MSMEs to support increased commercialization of Shea nuts,

promote cooperative and inclusive value chain models, explore climate-smart agro-processing opportunities, and highlight entry points for public-private partnerships.

- ii. **Gender Transformation Analysis** - Examine gender roles, control over assets, and decision-making within households and enterprises in the Shea value chain, with particular attention to how these dynamics shape climate vulnerability and resilience. The consultancy shall identify successful gender-based interventions and barriers, assess gender empowerment, structural discrimination, prevailing gender norms, and the extent of gender mainstreaming, equity, and equality in access to programs and outcomes for all gender groups in the Shea value chain. The analysis will highlight inter-sectional factors such as age, disability, and socio-economic status, and propose mechanisms to engage men and youth as active partners in advancing gender equality and strengthening adaptive capacity to climate change within the Shea value chain.
- iii. **Sustainable Livelihoods Appraisal** - Undertake a comprehensive appraisal of existing and potential livelihood strategies, including those linked to Shea nut collection, processing, and trade, as well as other crop, livestock, and off-farm activities through a gender responsive lens. The consultant will assess how men and women differ in resilience to climatic, economic, and social shocks based on asset access, labour burdens, decision making power and coping mechanisms. The consultant will also identify scalable, inclusive models and value chains that can enhance economic stability of all community members. The consultant will recommend practical approaches to diversify agriculture, strengthen value chains, and integrate Indigenous Knowledge ensuring sustainable, resilient and equitable livelihoods for both genders.
- iv. **Develop Recommendations** - Develop actionable, gender-transformative, MSME and livelihood-friendly, and climate-smart recommendations aimed at enhancing income, equity, and adaptive capacity. Propose strategic interventions that promote gender empowerment, reduce structural discrimination, and integrate gender-responsive practices into MSME and livelihood development. Recommend scalable livelihood models and value chains to strengthen the resilience and sustainability of MSMEs and communities facing climate and market shocks. The consultant shall also outline a

roadmap for institutional capacity-building, knowledge sharing, and policy advocacy to support sustained, inclusive, and climate-resilient development.

4. Scope of Work

The consultancy will be conducted in selected Shea-producing landscapes in Northern Uganda.

The scope of work will include:

- Undertake a thorough desk review of policies, previous studies, and secondary data on MSMEs, gender transformation and sustainable livelihoods in the Shea landscape
- Design and deploy mixed-methods research, including quantitative surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews in the districts of Otuke, Pader, Agago and Kitgum Districts explicitly investigating how climatic, economic, and social shocks affect men and women differently, and how these gendered dynamics shape livelihood responses and resilience.
- Engage stakeholders such as district local governments, private sector actors, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and financial service providers.
- The consultant shall incorporate spatial analysis techniques, including GIS mapping or geo-referenced data, to identify geographic disparities in MSME development, resource access, and livelihood vulnerability.
- The consultant shall apply a participatory approach that ensures a meaningful inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in the analysis and design of solutions. Intersectional factors such as age, socio-economic status, and disability shall be explicitly considered throughout the process.
- Perform statistical analysis to draw actionable insights.
- Facilitate a validation workshop with key stakeholders in Kampala to review findings, gather feedback, and ensure consensus on actionable recommendations.

Note: The scope of work outlined above serves as a guiding framework. The consultant shall submit a detailed methodology as part of their technical proposal, clearly describing how the assignment will be conducted and accomplished, including proposed tools, sampling strategies, ethical considerations, and timelines.

5. Deliverables

The consultant will deliver the following:

- Inception report detailing refined methodology, workplan and data collection tools
- Draft data collection instruments (survey, FGD and KII guides)
- Interim briefing to stakeholders after fieldwork
- Draft assessment report with preliminary findings, maps and case studies
- Final report including:
 - Livelihood resilience profiles and gap analysis
 - Gender roles matrix and barriers analysis
 - MSME landscape mapping and business environment diagnostics
 - Prioritized recommendations and an intervention roadmap
- Presentation of report to the PPG task force team for validation.

6. Timeline and payment schedule

The assignment is expected to commence on August 27, 2025 and end on October 6, 2025, lasting a maximum of 6 weeks as detailed below.

Expected output	Timeline	Format	Installment payment (%)
Inception report and data collection tools	September 3, 2025	Word doc	40
Draft report	September 24, 2025	Word doc	30
Validation workshop (online)	October 1, 2025	PowerPoint + Minutes	
Final report	October 6, 2025	Word doc	30

7. Reporting

The consultant will report to Africa Innovations Institute (AfrII) through the PPG coordinator of the Shea project development process based at AfrII. Weekly check-in will be done through emails, virtual meetings and phone calls to track progress, provide guidance and address challenges. All deliverables shall be submitted in electronic format (both Word and PDF) and editable excel files for data. The final report will include an executive summary, background, objectives, methodology, key findings, conclusions and recommendations. Annexes will include data collection tools, datasets and other supporting documents.

8. Required Qualification and Experience

The consultant should possess:

- Advanced degree (Master or PhD) in either Sociology, Gender Studies, Rural Development, Economics or closely related field
- In-depth experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative research in Agribusiness, gender dynamics, and sustainable livelihoods
- At least 5 years of experience in evaluating agribusiness and MSME sectors as well as designing a gender-transformative and sustainable livelihood programs
- Proven track record in rural value chain analysis, GESI assessments with participatory methods and profiling agro-processing enterprises and finance linkages
- Extensive experience and track record in engaging and working with both field and national stakeholders (Government, NGOs, CBOs, research institutions, academia and private sector)
- Proficient in statistical analysis software especially SPSS and STATA
- Experience in qualitative data analysis with expertise in qualitative coding
- Ability to write technical reports for multiple audience

9. Proposal Documents to include

- a. Signed cover page on bidder's letterhead with the bidder's contact information.
- b. Technical Proposal.

- i. Corporate Capabilities, Experience, Past Performance, and 3 client references. Please include descriptions of similar projects or assignments and at least three client references.
 - ii. Qualifications of Key Personnel. Please attach CVs that demonstrate how the team proposed meets the minimum requirements listed in this TOR.
 - iii. Technical Approach, Methodology and Detailed Work Plan. The Technical Proposal should describe in detail how the bidder intends to carry out the requirements described under the Scope of Works.
- c. Detailed Financial Proposal.

10. Evaluation Criteria: In evaluating proposals, AfrII will seek the best value for money considering the merits of the technical and costs proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Score (out of 100)
Does the proposal clearly explain, understand and respond to the objectives of the project as stated in the Scope of Work?	15
Does the proposed program approach and detailed activities and timeline fulfill the requirements of executing the Scope of Work effectively and efficiently?	15
Does the bidder's past performance demonstrate recent proven experience doing similar work?	30
Does the bidder and the proposed personnel have the specific technical expertise for the assignment?	20
Costs proposed are reasonable and realistic, reflect a solid understanding of the assignment.	20

11. Submission instruction

Interested Consultants or Team should submit application both hard or soft copy of your complete detailed bid including team CVs and two samples of relevant past work by **August 25, 2025 at 4:30 pm (EAT)**, in a sealed envelope to the following address:

Plot 1544, Koire Close, Off Old Kiira Road, Bukoto Tel: +256768 229 363; or as pdf by Email to: procurement@afrii.org copy to info@afrii.org

Subject line: “Consultancy - Resilience of Livelihoods, Gender dynamics and MSMEs in the Shea Landscape of Northern Uganda”

Confidentiality

All proprietary information provided by the bidder shall be treated as confidential and will not be shared with potential or actual applicants during the solicitation process. This includes but is not limited to price quotations, cost proposals and technical proposals.

Gender consideration – Africa Innovations Institute is an inclusive non-discriminative institution committed to gender equality and promoting inclusivity. Women are encouraged to apply

Prohibited practices and institutional policies- The offerors should ensure that they comply with AfrII, CCD-MWE, and CI-GEF policies on anti-corruption, anti-terrorism and other prohibited practices (https://www.conservation.org/docs/default-source/gef-documents/prohibited-practices.pdf?sfvrsn=f1e1d9f3_0)