



## TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY

**Organization:** Wetlands International Africa

**Project:** Mangrove Capital Africa

**Title:** Hiring of consultant/group of consultants to conduct socioeconomic study for livelihood options development in targeted communities of Yawri Bay Marine Protected Area landscape, Sierra Leone, including an assessment of stakeholders operating in this Landscape.

**Duration:** 2 months

### 1. Introduction and Background:

Wetlands International Africa, through the Mangrove Capital Africa (MCA) project, is implementing a range of community-based mangrove restoration and conservation interventions in the Yawri Bay coastal landscape, in Sierra Leone. The Yawri Bay Marine Protected Area (MPA) is ecologically significant and comprises mangrove forests that support the livelihoods of surrounding communities through fishing, agriculture, wood collection, and other vital ecosystem services including coastal protection.

The area is also ground where several civil society organizations (CBOs), NGOs, and private sector actors are known to be operating. However, there is limited coordinated information on who these actors are and the nature of their activities. Moreover, how their work supports or hinders mangrove conservation, coastal management, and community livelihoods is unknown.

In order to effectively design and implement targeted livelihood interventions that support both conservation and community resilience, a comprehensive socioeconomic assessment is required. Hence, wetlands International Africa intends to recruit the service of a consultant/group of consultants to undertake a baseline assessment study of the community livelihoods in Yawri Bay MPA Landscape. This study will also include a clear and comprehensive overview of the development partners in the landscape, their roles, impacts, and potential areas for collaboration or intervention.

Thus, the purpose of this assessment is to provide a baseline data on the current livelihood activities, identify desired and feasible livelihood options, establish the cost-benefit evidence of the identified livelihood options and evaluate community dependence on mangrove resources.

The findings will serve as the reference point for assessing future changes and impacts resulting from livelihoods interventions. It will also inform project planning, partnership and policy engagement.

### 2. Objectives of the Study:

- To assess current livelihood practices and income sources of targeted communities in Yawri Bay.
- To identify communities' desired and feasible livelihood options that align with conservation goals, taking into account the level and nature of community dependence on mangrove resources.
- To collect baseline socio-economic data to inform future impact assessments.
- To provide evidence of the cost-benefit for sustainable livelihoods interventions
- To identify and map all active stakeholders (CBOs, NGOs, private sector) operating in the Yawri Bay landscape, the types of programs and activities they are implementing and analyze their interactions
- To evaluate how these stakeholders' activities positively or negatively affect mangrove conservation, coastal ecosystem health, and local livelihoods.

- To identify potential areas for collaboration, synergy, or mitigation of conflicting activities and provide a stakeholder engagement and communication plan to improve collaboration and coordination mechanisms.

### **3. Geographical locations and target population:**

The livelihood baseline assessment and operating stakeholders' overview will be conducted in selected communities found in Yawri Bay Marine Protected Area landscape

### **4. Scope of Work:**

Through a participatory consultative and field-based process, the contractor will conduct the livelihood baseline assessment using a well-established methodology. Because not all communities in the landscape can be supported with livelihood interventions, field assessments should be conducted in key communities within the Yawri Bay landscape. The Contractor will be required to design a method to measure differences between the supported target groups and unsupported groups of communities in the project area.

The assessment will identify the strengths of the populations regarding educational skills, knowledge and work experience. It will also assess the wealth (income, expenditures basket); source of incomes (employment, auto-employment, remittances), type of employment (formal / informal markets), access to services (finance, health, education); household coping strategies and mapping of institutions and programs that can support livelihood development and create economic opportunities.

The consultant should also assess gender roles and youth involvement in livelihood activities and analyze seasonal patterns of income and resource use. He/she should document community perceptions on alternative livelihoods and barriers to change.

Regarding the assessment of stakeholders operating in the landscape, the consultant/group of consultants will be required to conduct desk review of existing reports and records of organizations operating in the region. This will be fine-tuned with a field-based stakeholder mapping in all target communities within Yawri Bay. This last will include interviews and consultations with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Private sector actors (e.g., fishing, aquaculture, tourism, logging) and Government agencies (local councils, NPAA, EPA, etc.).

The work must lead to an assessment of the scale, funding sources, and sustainability of stakeholder activities and identify duplication, gaps, and conflicts among their interventions in order to shape mitigation plan.

### **5. Methodology:**

The consultant will share a detailed methodology with the MCA team that takes into account the following inclusive and participatory approaches using qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, including

- Literature review of existing socioeconomic and ecological reports for the Yawri Bay, as well as the records of organizations operating in this area
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
- Household and stakeholders surveys
- Participatory mapping of stakeholders, livelihood zones and mangrove resource uses.
- Gender-sensitive and inclusive approach to ensure representation.
- Data analysis using appropriate statistical analysis tools
- Data validation workshop with key stakeholders

## **6. Deliverables/expected results:**

The deliverables of the consultancy (to be submitted to WIACO by the Contractor) will include:

For the socioeconomic baseline study for livelihood options development

- Inception Report including workplan and data collection tools.
- Draft Socioeconomic Assessment Report.
- Final Socioeconomic Assessment Report with:
  - Baseline socioeconomic data tables
  - Summary of key findings
  - Recommendations for livelihood interventions
  - Monitoring plan with agreed indicators
- 2 concept notes on livelihood
- Validation workshop report

For the database and mapping report from the stakeholders assessment

- Draft Stakeholder Assessment Report.
- Final Report including:
  - List and profiles of stakeholders.
  - Summary of stakeholder impacts (positive/negative) on mangrove and coastal management.
  - Stakeholders' engagement plan
  - Communication plan for a better coordination and partnerships.
  - Summary of key findings

## **7. Proposed timeframe and Budget**

Duration: It is proposed that the contract will last for 60 days from contract signing.

Key milestones:

- Inception report: within 10 days from contract signing
- Draft report: within 40 days from contract signing
- Final report: within 60 days from contract signing

Budget: To be proposed by the consultant in financial proposal. Consultants should submit a detailed budget including professional fees, travel, per diem, field allowances, survey costs, data processing, workshop costs, and incidental expenses.

- WIACO recommends inclusion of costs for community participation (FGD refreshments, transport), printing, and a small validation workshop.

## **8. Supervision/reporting requirements:**

The consultant will report directly to the MCA Project Manager through email and virtual meetings. Two weekly updates are required to track progress. Submission of all reports should be in both hard and soft copy (word and PDF formats)

## **9. Qualifications and Experience:**

- Academic: An advanced university degree in Social Sciences, Economics, Development, Environmental Studies, or related field.
- Professional experience: Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional job experience in socioeconomic assessments, preferably in coastal or forest communities and in stakeholder mapping or institutional assessments.

- Knowledge of mangrove conservation, coastal management, and community livelihoods.
- Proven experience in planning, implementing and monitoring livelihoods programs
- Strong knowledge of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques.
- Proven ability to write clear, analytical, and actionable reports.
- Experience working in Sierra Leone or West Africa is an advantage.

#### **10. Ethical Considerations:**

- Respect for community customs, norms, and authority structures.
- Informed consent must be obtained from all participants.
- Data confidentiality and privacy must be maintained.
- No harm principle: activities should not negatively impact participants or communities.

#### **11. Evaluation Criteria for Proposals**

- Relevant technical experience (35%) — demonstrated past work on PA co-management, M&E and community assessments.
- Proposed methodology and workplan (30%) — clarity, participatory approach and quality of tools.
- Team qualifications and composition (20%).
- Financial proposal (15%) — value for money and realism.

#### **12. Submission Requirements**

Interested consultants or teams should submit:

- Technical proposal (methodology, workplan, team CVs, past relevant examples).
- Financial proposal (detailed budget with breakdown).
- Two references from previous similar assignments.
- Proposed start date and anticipated duration.

**Submission deadline:** 05<sup>th</sup> October, 2025

**Submit to:** [amsiaka@wetlands-africa.org](mailto:amsiaka@wetlands-africa.org) ; [wsene@wetlands-africa.org](mailto:wsene@wetlands-africa.org)