

Terms of Reference (ToR):
Environmental Safeguard Expert (Full Time) for Nepal: Private Sector
Led Mini Grid Energy Access Project (MGEAP)

1. Introduction:

Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) is the apex government body under the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation (MoEWRI), established to promote the use of alternative/renewable energy technology to meet the energy needs in Nepal. The Private Sector Led Mini Grid Energy Access Project (MGEAP), supported by the World Bank, will be implemented by AEPC from February 2019 (tentative). The objective of the project is to increase electricity access and delivery from renewable energy mini-grids (solar, hydro, wind, and hybrid) by mobilizing private Energy Service Companies (ESCOs). The project is designed to support RE mini-grids market by introducing conditions to gradually shift from heavily subsidized to commercial model. The project will support mobilization of credit from participating Banks (PBs) to ESCOs for the development of mini-grid subprojects.

Nepal is one of six countries identified for assistance under the Scaling-up Renewable Energy Program in Low Income Countries (SREP). As one of three programs under the Strategic Climate Fund, SREP aims to demonstrate the social, economic and environmental viability of low carbon development pathways in the energy sector. In particular, the objectives of SREP in Nepal are to: (i) leverage complementary credit and grant co-financing, (ii) bring about transformational impacts through scaling up energy access using renewable energy technologies (RETs), poverty reduction, gender and social inclusiveness and climate change mitigation, and (iii) ensure sustainable operations through technical assistance and capacity building.

2. Background:

The project will involve construction activities that bear potential risk on physical, biological, social and cultural environment of any area. Because of weak geology, rich biodiversity, high dependency of people on natural resources and widespread poverty, the social and environmental impacts are visibly significant, particularly when construction works are undertaken in sub-project areas.

Generally, the environmental and social risks triggered by construction include erosion, loss of forest, biodiversity and agricultural land; effect to water sources due to sedimentation and water logging, displacement/damage of permanent assets and loss of land. These problems are apparent not only during construction but also during operation phase. Hence, proper consideration of all environmental and social factors during the MGEAP's design and implementation is of utmost concern. It is required to undertake environmental and social due diligence to assess the environmental and social implications of developing energy projects. The due diligence shall be conducted based on the National Regulations and the World Bank's safeguard requirement. To achieve these objectives, it is required to prepare relevant environmental and social documents to assess potential impacts.

Hence, AEPC/MGEAP is looking for an Environmental Safeguard Expert to aid the AEPC/MGEAP in the environment and social safeguard related activities.

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3. Objectives:

To support the implementation of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for MGEAP. The Environmental Safeguard Expert shall be responsible for overall management, oversight and monitoring of implementation of environmental measures in the Private Sector Led Mini Grid Energy Access Project during implementation phase.

4. Scope of Services (Activities):

The Environmental Safeguard Expert will be a part of PIU team and will be responsible for day-to-day activities related to the project. S/he should be responsible and take full ownership for the following scope of work:

- Assist in implementing Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) considering various types of subprojects (Micro/Mini-hydro, Solar and Solar/Wind hybrid, grid interconnection);
- Support the environmental screening and categorization process for the subprojects developed by AEPC and proposed by the ESCOs.
- Review IEE or EIA Reports submitted by the ESCOs, ensure adequacy and quality as per approved ToR, and support AEPC in submitting the reports to the Ministry and the World Bank for approval.
- Review the DFS/ DPR as well as bid documents of each subproject and certify that environmental mitigations, recommended in screening, EMP/ IEE/ EIA, are incorporated in the respective DFS/ DPR.
- Provide support to ESCOs in preparing the ESIA (as per WB requirement) for each particular subproject.
- Review safeguards instruments prepared by ESCOs and consultants. Ensure safeguard instruments are integrated in the bidding documents, construction contracts, and subproject operations.
- Assist Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert and PIU in day-to-day activities related to the project including budgeting, planning and design and execution of activity plans.
- Support PIU in integrating E&S safeguards in its analytic, knowledge, and regulatory initiatives.
- Assist in designing and delivering capacity building activities.
- Any other tasks assigned by Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert and Project Manager to support the project with respect to the environmental issues.

5. Performance and Reporting Requirement (Deliverables):

The Environmental Safeguard Expert shall prepare monthly, quarterly, semiannual and annual report that should incorporate the Specific Environmental Assessment monitoring and capacity building activities. He/ She will report to and work under the overall guidance of the Senior Environmental Safeguard Expert and Project Manager.

6. Duration of Service:

The Expert will be assigned for full project period with a provision of renew of contract each year and possibilities of further extension, in case of satisfactory performance. The expert is

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expected to work full time during office hours with required travels outside Kathmandu valley within Nepal on project related matters. The contract will be effective only after the effective date of the project.

7. Expert's required Qualification and Experience:

Candidates should have minimum master degree in Environmental Science, Environmental Engineering, Environmental Management, Civil Engineering or related discipline, and at least 7 years of professional experience in the field of environmental assessments and management, conversant with multilateral donor agency requirements on E&S safeguard effective implementation and their management.

The candidate should also have:

- Proven experience in implementing international environmental safeguards policies/standards (e.g. World Bank, ADB, etc.);
- Excellent knowledge of the English language (both spoken and written) and excellent communication skills;
- Ability to build capacity and train various stakeholders;
- Familiarization with the ESMF document, its requirement and implementation during execution of Mini Grid Works or similar nature work in the past;
- Knowledge of specific gender issues in renewable energy and sensitivity to local culture and traditions in Nepal;
- Ability to work well with Government officials and community personnel;
- Strong and demonstrated capacity for organization, management with excellent reporting and coordination skills;
- Strong leadership, technical competence and professional skills for timely implementation, coordination and management of activities;
- Ability to work in a team, develop synergies and establish effective working relations with various stakeholders;
- Strong interpersonal and communications skills, resourcefulness, initiative, tact and ability to cope with any situation;
- Openness to change and ability to receive/integrate feedback;
- The candidate should be able to legally work in Nepal.

8. Facilities and logistics to the expert by the Client:

The Expert will be provided with the office space, computer with internet facilities, and office furniture. Necessary stationery, printing and copying facilities will also be provided by the Client.