**Committee for Environmental Protection   
under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan**

**Center for implementation of investment projects**

Tajikistan resilient landscape restoration project (TRLRP)

**Terms of reference**

**Facilitating organization to support the Common Interest Groups (CIGs).**

**Package reference: TRLRP-CS-CQS-15**

Sub-component 2.4:

- «Landscape restoration and Livelihoods».

1. **Background information**

Government of the Republic of Tajikistan is implementing the "Tajikistan resilient landscape restoration project" (TRLRP), funded by the World Bank Group (WBG). The project is part of the RESILAND CA+ regional program, which includes projects in Tajikistan (IDA country), Uzbekistan (IDA country), and the Kyrgyz Republic (IDA country).

The project will be implemented over a five-year period under the direction of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP). Land degradation in Tajikistan, as noted in previous sections, is broad-based and encompasses multiple land uses and sectors. The project's landscape management approach recognizes the multiple drivers of degradation, but also recognizes that any approach must be pragmatic and consider the challenges and constraints in the Tajikistan context. Thus, while the project will support sustainable land management in a number of sectors, they were chosen for strategic reasons. The project decided to support (a) forestry and specially protected areas as these are relatively under-resourced, and (b) pasture management and climate-optimized agriculture as opportunities to promote sustainable landscape management in key land uses. In addition, Joint Forest Management (JFM) support for Pasture User Union (PUU) and rangeland management will help in advancing the country's efforts to manage resources more sustainably. The project will have a regional level of access, namely (i) improved connectivity and integrity of natural resources across borders, (ii) improved sustainability of key regional infrastructure affected by land degradation (e.g., roads and railroads), and (iii) improved sustainability of transboundary communities benefiting from more productive landscapes and livelihood opportunities.

The project will be implemented by the Center for Implementation of Investment Projects (CIIP) of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP).

The Project will implement field activities in Khatlon Region (Kabadiyan, Shahritus and Nosiri Khusrav), Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) (Vanj, Rushan, Shugnan and Murghab) and Sogd Region (Ayni, Gorny Matcha and Penjikent city).

**Component 1. Strengthen Institutions and Policies, and Regional Collaboration.**

This component will finance consulting services, goods and equipment to support the strengthening of national institutional policies and legal frameworks, developing of knowledge and skills of government, communities and other stakeholders for landscape management, and improving the capacities of government partners to operate effectively. Under this component, financing will be provided for activities to support regional collaboration efforts, to contribute to landscape restoration that benefits both Tajikistan and the wider Central Asia region with which the country shares and contributes critical resources and infrastructure.

**Component 2. Enhance Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods.**

Overall, this component will finance works, consulting services, non-consulting services, goods, and grants. Both government institutions and communities will implement a range of landscape restoration investments. To support the selection of investments, assistance will be provided for landscape restoration planning. All planning will encourage women’s leadership, will follow citizen engagement mechanisms, and will be based on good practice principles for a landscape approach when reconciling different and often competing land uses.

**Sub-component 2.1. Forest Restoration and Sustainable Forest Management.**

The FA will lead on the technical aspects of this subcomponent, while the financial and procurement management responsibilities will remain with CEP. This subcomponent includes the following key activities:

* Conducting National Forest Inventarization;
* Preparation and implementation of forest management plans for eight State Forest Management Entities (SFMEs) and one fruit tree nursery;
* Carry out afforestation works, fuelwood plantations and natural forest regeneration.

**Sub-component 2.2. Integrated Pasture Management and Restoration.**

The Pasture Reclamation Trust under the Ministry of Agriculture will lead on technical aspects of this subcomponent, while the financial and procurement management responsibilities will remain with CEP. This subcomponent includes the following key activities:

* Geobotanical surveys and pasture inventories;
* Establishment of forage seed demonstration plots;
* Development and implementation of Pasture/Livestock Management Plans for Pasture User Unions.

**Sub-component 2.3. Protected Area Management and Biodiversity Conservation.**

This subcomponent will be technically led by State Institution of the Specially Protected Natural Areas (SISPNA), as part of CEP. This sub-component includes the following activities:

* Preparation and implementation of priority specially protected natural areas management plans for Tajik National Park (TNP) (bordering the Kyrgyz Republic), Zorkul State Nature Reserve in GBAO (bordering Afghanistan), National Yagnob natural park in the Zarafshon river sub-basin (bordering Uzbekistan), and Tigrovaya Balka State Nature Reserve in Khatlon region (bordering Afghanistan).

**Sub-component 2.4. Landscape Restoration and Livelihoods.**

The project will provide sub-grants to villagers/farmers organized as Common Interest Group (CIGs) to implement small- scale livelihood investments based on existing Village Development Plans and actions. Suitably qualified organizations will be contracted to facilitate formation of Common Interest Group (CIGs). The Center for Implementation of investment Projects (CIIP) Committee for Environmental Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan (CEP) will provide the technical lead for this subcomponent and oversee the management of sub-grants to beneficiaries. Under this subcomponent, the project will support crop land-based livelihoods—climate-smart crop production practices and technologies—through sub-grants for sub-projects to groups of village residents, farmers that form Common Interest Group (CIGs).

They will be eligible for grants to address degradation issues such as on-farm salination, water-logging, erosion, and low productivity in ways that can increase income for members and reduce degradation impacts and increase climate adaptation.

**2. Objectives of the assignment**

A Facilitated Organization (FO) with experience in similar activities will be hired to work on supporting land-based crop livelihoods, which will support the creation of Common Interest Group (CIGs) and then develop their proposals for project grants, with additional capacity building for Common Interest Group (CIGs) and some ongoing technical support during project implementation. Common Interest Group (CIG) will be eligible for grants to address degradation issues such as sanitation, water-logging, erosion, and low productivity in ways that can increase income for members and reduce degradation impacts and increase climate adaptation.

**Budgets and contributions of beneficiaries.** The parameters for allocating community-level investments in support of farming systems have been developed. The project will use fixed formula-based budgets for investments for each participating village, taking into account the number of households as a whole. They have been tentatively set at 350 US Dollars per household. Project-funded grants per CIG will not exceed $10,000 within one investment. This approach to disbursement has been used successfully in previous Bank projects in Tajikistan. One or another type of beneficiary contribution is considered important to ensure ownership and hence sustainability of the investment. It has now been agreed that beneficiaries will contribute 5% of the total value of the investment plan/ CIG business plan when provided in cash, and 10% when provided in kind. In-kind contributions can be labor and/or materials.

1. **Scope of work:**

The contracted Facilitated Organization (FO) will perform the tasks but not limited to the following with reference to the Sub-grant Operational Manual and other relevant volumes of the Project Operational Manual and Environment and Social Management Framework. In the project areas, 56 jamoats and 265 villages have been selected in which up to 750 Сommon Interest Groups will be formed.

1. Organization and conduct of meetings with local authorities (districts, jamoats), Regional CEP offices, to inform about the objectives of the program;
2. Development and printing of information booklets, brochures, posters about the goals of the project;
3. Conduct meetings with local organizations at the village level, such as mahalla committees or existing CIGs, assess current environmental and socio-economic conditions as needed using participatory methods, e.g., participatory rural appraisal, to help inform the identification of possible investments and to build a common understanding among participants;
4. Review existing village and/or jamoat development plans, pasture and livestock management plans, and Joint Forest Management plans and any other relevant initiatives to identify opportunities to support/coordinate with their objectives and reduce duplication of efforts.
5. In conjunction with any existing PUU/JFM leadership, conduct meetings with the whole village to inform them of the terms for participation and to get a clear demonstration that they are willing to establish a CIG in the village;
6. Conduct an initial assessment of existing CIG in selected villages of the project's districts;
7. Facilitate formation of Common Interest Groups (CIG) of at least 25 households and selection of a head of group (number of beneficiaries at least 50% women) at village level at a general village meeting (with at least 80% participation of households in the village);
8. Provide copies of the minutes of meetings in the villages, a list of all participants in the meetings, and a list of selected beneficiaries of the established CIGs, approved with the head of the PUU/JFM and agreed with the jamoat.Assist CIGs to prepare sub-grant proposals that meet the social-environmental requirements of the project (see also Sub-Grant Operational Manual). The focus of activities proposed will be the adoption of practices such as:

(a) diversification of agricultural/horticultural crops;

(b) improved crop varieties and biotechnology that reduce emissions;

(c) water-efficient crops and varieties and cultivation methods;

(d) erosion control measures such as increasing vegetative cover along the sides of linear infrastructure (roads) and planting of shelterbelts;

(e) harvesting and processing of different crops, including cold storage ;

(f) reduced tillage intensity and cover crops, crop rotation, perennial cropping systems, cultivation of deep rooting species;

(g) inputs of organic fertilizers to soil and processing and application of manure; and

(h) small- scale community-based tourism activities around protected areas.

1. The sub-grant proposals will specify the activities to be implemented within the budget and identify the responsible party for each action, including the technical assistance provider. The plan will identify all activities, including materials and labor, as well as investment needs, implementation responsibilities, targets and indicators.
2. Assist CIGs to carry out the screening process of sub-projects with respect to categorization of Environmental and Social Aspects (E&S) as required by the World Bank Environmental and Social Management Framework (WB ESMF).
3. Assist the CIGs to carry out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) as needed
4. Provide a report to the CEP CIIP on the status of implementation of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments and any anticipated changes to them.
5. Support the development and approval of business plans by PUU/JFM management, coordinate with jamoats, and subsequently submit them to the CEP CIIP for review and approval.
6. Conducting trainings and seminars and provide technical assistance during sub-projects preparation and implementation, including on environmental and social issues, financial management, procurement and, monitoring and evaluation.
7. Promote good relations between the village members and other project partners and stakeholders (e.g., Regional CEPs, local government, local community groups, and institutions such as village organizations, private sector input marketing agents) and help in prevention and resolution of conflicts;
8. Coordination with other projects and programs, and facilitating access by beneficiaries to services not provided by the project where possible ;
9. Contribute to the organization of demonstrations and distribution of information, including the field day programs; publications such as leaflets; videos and broadcasts; exchange visits of farmers.
10. Conduct the final annual meeting of the project CIG beneficiaries at the level of project areas.
11. Keep the Regional CEP (when needed) and CEP CIIP informed of schedule and project plan adjustments;
12. Provide periodic progress reports to the CEP CIIP as mutually agreed; and
13. Otherwise help carry out project in accordance with arrangements outlined in the Sub-Grant Operational Manual other relevant volumes (Financial Management and Procurement) of the Project Operational Manual, and the Environmental and Social Management Framework.
14. **Duration of the assignment**

The contract with the selected FO will be awarded for an initial period of 36 months with possible annual extensions depending on the evaluation of Centre for implementation of investment projects (CIIP) of the CEP.

1. **Procedure for management and coordination**

The selected FO will be reporting directly to the Project Coordinator and the Director of the CIIP of the Committee for Environmental Protection.

The FO will be in touch with the agriculture, community development and grants specialists of the CIIP, who will be responsible for the coordination and day-to-day oversight of the management of the CIGs. The FO will also coordinate their work with the regional technical specialists of the CEP CIIP.

The FO will be required to submit monthly, quarterly, annual and final reports on its activities, including physical and financial progress, CIGs efficiency, achievement of results and impacts, and arising issues, in a format agreed with the Centre for implementation of investment projects. Information on the meetings should include lists of participants. Reports should also include prepared materials, including training materials, photos and videos.

The final report should include a detailed analysis and evaluation of each village, including an assessment of forestry and pasture management approaches. A draft final report on the FO's implementation results must be submitted to the Centre for implementation of investment projects (CIIP) no later than 15 days before the end of the contract.

1. **Contribution of the Client**

CIIP CEP is implementing Agency of the project and will directly participate in the implementation and will support the FO with project information, other available data and documents of the project.

Centre for implementation of investment projects (CIIP) provide all relevant project documents, all relevant documentation, including operational manuals, technical reports and progress reports on the implementation of the grant management.

Centre for implementation of investment projects shall review and respond to the reports within 7 working days after sharing.

1. **Expected deliverables**

The final report should include a detailed analysis and evaluation of each village, including an assessment of forestry and pasture management approaches. A draft final report on the FO's implementation results must be submitted to the Centre for implementation of investment projects (CIIP) no later than 15 days before the end of the contract.

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| № | **Title of report** | Deadline for submission from the signing of the contract, days |
|  | Activities |  |
| 1 | Inception report Development and approval by the CIIP/CEP of a detailed work plan with deliverables for each stage and deadlines for implementation. | Within 25 days after the signing the contract date |
| 2 | I Interim progress report - Organization and implementation of meetings with local governments (districts, jamoats) to inform about the aims of the facilitation program for villagers/farmers to establish CIGs at the jamoat level. | Within 35 days after the signing the contract date |
| 3 | II Interim progress report - Conducting meetings with local organizations at the jamoat level (mahalla committees, existing groups) | Within 55 days after the signing the contract date |
| 4 | I Quarterly progress report - Conducting a meeting in each village (269 villages) (with participation of at least 80% of households and livestock of villages), information about pastures, confirming documents on pasture use, forests, number of households and types of livestock. | Within 190 days after the signing the contract date |
| 5 | III Interim progress report - Facilitate the creation of a 750 Common Interest Group (CIG) and the development of village-level business plans. | Within 240 days after the signing the contract date |
| 6 | Quarterly Reports on implementation, including physical and financial progress, CIGs efficiency, achievement of results and impacts, and arising issues, in a format agreed with the Centre for implementation of investment projects | Within 280 days after the signing the contract date |
| 7 | Annual Reports on implementation, including physical and financial progress, CIGs efficiency, achievement of results and impacts, and arising issues, in a format agreed with the Centre for implementation of investment projects | No later than 15 days before the end of each calendar year |
| 8 | A final report on implementation. The final report shall include a detailed analysis and evaluation of each CIG. | No later than 15 days before the end of the contract period |

# The final report should be prepared in Tajik, Russian and English, in electronic format, on a CD and in 2 (two) hard copies, with a full translation or extended abstract in English.

1. **General requirements:**
   * Minimum 5 years of experience and proven success in the facilitation of large-scale participatory processes, and community development (including gender and social inclusion) with a focus on the agricultural sector in Tajikistan. Experience in community-based environmental and natural resource management activities, small-scale agricultural development programs funded by IFIs and/or other international donor agencies, as well as grant making activities to beneficiaries will also be required;
     + At least two previous similar assignments in the CIS or Republic of Tajikistan, pertaining to the improvement and development of the agricultural sector;
     + Capacity to supply and manage equipment, vehicles, materials, and facilities needed to undertake the assignment;
     + A mix of personnel among the organization’s staff to undertake the responsibilities and tasks, with expertise and successful track record in project management, community-based development, sustainable agriculture, participatory processes, environmental management. Expertise in social development, including gender inclusion and with marginal and vulnerable groups is required.