



Tender:

Feasibility study for a planned project on securing the water catchment through community protection of the Dzalanyama Forest Reserve in Malawi

For more than one hundred and twenty years, NABU (The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union) has been promoting the interests of people and nature, drawing on its unwavering commitment, specialised know-how and the backing of 820,000 members and supporters. NABU is Germany's oldest and largest conservation NGO with its Headquarters based in the capital and 15 regional branch offices in almost every federal state of Germany. As ecosystems and species know no borders, NABU is committed to conservation also internationally, with geographical foci on Africa, Asia and Russia.

The Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) is dedicated to protecting Malawi's remarkable biodiversity and ecosystems for over 70 years. WESM was established in 1947 as a Non-Governmental Organization. In the early days, the aim was to protect wildlife, especially larger mammals. In the 1950's and '60's, WESM was active in the establishment of reserves and parks such as Lengwe, Majete, Mwabvi and Nyika. It also successfully campaigned for tighter hunting controls. WESM has nine branches in all the three regions of the country and a secretariat.

Both NABU and WESM are the respective national partners of the worldwide BirdLife network and share values and goals of BirdLife International.

NABU and WESM are seeking a well experienced expert or expert team for conducting a feasibility study for a planned project "Securing the water catchment through community protection of the Dzalanyama Forest Reserve in Malawi".

Please send your offers electronically and as one pdf by 30th September 2021 to wesml@wesm.mw and vacancy@NABU.de

The submitted offers should not exceed 10 pages.

Terms of Reference

Feasibility Study

1. BACKGROUND OF THE PLANNED PROJECT

Dzalanyama Forest Reserve functions as the main catchment area for the water supply of the capital city of Malawi. It is the source of Lilongwe River. The forest and its resources contribute to food security and economic growth at national level as well as to water resource conservation. In recent years however, there has been a rapid increase in population and economic growth in the surrounding area of the forest reserve, especially Lilongwe city. This has led to devastating deforestation and forest degradation mainly through firewood collection and charcoal production.

However, the logging of trees for charcoal and poaching in the watershed threaten Lilongwe's water supply, lead to the loss of the forest's biodiversity and also exacerbate the poverty situation of local communities in the long term through loss of important ecosystem functions. Due to a weak executive, the government hardly enforces the existing laws.

In order to reduce the degradation and deforestation for charcoal and poaching in the watershed that threaten Lilongwe's water supply and in the long term the loss of important ecosystem functions, NABU and WESM are planning a project with the following four components:

- 1) Establishing community management structures for the forest areas and resources
- 2) Improving the income situation of communities through alternative income opportunities and access to microfinance models
- 3) Switching to energy-saving stoves and alternative fuels
- 4) Establishing an eco-touristically attractive environmental education and visitor centre for schools and other local visitors with excursion opportunities into the forest

The project primary target groups will be local leaders, village natural resources committees (VNRCs), the Dzalanyama conservation association, schools and the community members who live in areas bordering the reserve at large. The departments of forestry and national parks wildlife, the police and NGOs working in and around the forest reserve are a secondary target group.

2. COLLABORATION OF NABU AND LOCAL ORGANISATION

Nature conservation and sustainable development in developing countries are the cord of relationship between The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) and local organisations. Both organisations are partners at the worldwide BirdLife network and share its values and goals. In the framework of this project, WESM and NABU thrive to promote conservation/ restoration and sustainable development for the integration and implementation into country's policies and strategies.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PLANNED PROJECT

The general objective of the planned project is to reduce pressure on Dzalanyama forest reserve so it can preserve and restore its ecosystem functions. The project will establish sustainable structures to manage the forest resources and contribute to reducing the root causes for poverty of the communities living around and off the forest. It will do so by:

- Improving income through alternative livelihoods and access to microfinance
 - Facilitating mind-set change of Village Natural Resources Committees (VNRC) and communities on alternative livelihoods.
 - Enabling individuals and groups to establish enterprises
 - Linking individuals and groups to micro finance institutions
- Decreasing pressure on the resources of the forest reserve through the promotion of energy saving stoves and alternative fuels
 - Raising awareness on the more efficient use of (natural) resources with the communities
 - Enabling each household within the target area to decide on energy saving fuels efficient options in making and use of rocket stoves, briquettes making and management
- Strengthening the capacities of community management structures for forest areas and resources
 - Facilitating trainings of VNRCs and community volunteers(champions) on leadership, governance, monitoring and conflict resolution
 - Promoting the establishment and management of community forest areas on customary or private lands
 - Facilitation of forest stakeholder coordination
- Establishing an eco-touristically attractive environmental education and visitors centre
 - Facilitating of stakeholder consultations for the possible long term management of the center
 - Facilitating of participatory site selection and design process for the centre
 - Construction of education and visitors centre
 - Establishing a management plan for the education and visitor center

4. SCOPE OF THE PLANNED PROJECT

The target area of the project is communities bordering Dzalanyama forest reserve within 5-10 km radius in Lilongwe, Dedza and Mchinji districts.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The overall objective of the assignment is to assess the feasibility of the planned project in terms of planning, organizational structure, approach and viability of planned activities as well as target groups and stakeholders to be involved.

The specific objectives are:

- To analyse the current situation in the area relevant to the project taking into account former projects/ interventions and their impacts.
- To identify potential risks and challenges to the project implementation
- To conduct an in-depth target group mapping and description

- To develop recommendations for amendment of the project (activities, target groups, budget, impact matrix/ indicators for impact measurement) and for the success of the project.
- To analyse the proposed project implementing partners with regards to capacity and suitability.
- To identify, also based on the above, planning gaps, additional stakeholders and improve the organizational structure of the intended project.
- To account for project feasibility to donors, government bodies, stakeholders and other interest groups.

6. SPECIFIC TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The specific tasks of the assigned expert include amongst others:

- Analysis of existing documents/ literature.
- In-depth briefings at the beginning of the mission with WESM and NABU Headquarters.
- Situational analysis focussing on overall project setting, current problems and needs of the target groups (community and government), threats to the area, forest resources, flora and fauna, current and former intervention with regards to conservation and sustainable development, suitability of planned measures for reaching planned objectives, alignment with national policies and strategies taking into account analysis on context micro, meso, macro level.
- Assessment and analysis of identified target groups (details to be supplied by WESM/ NABU) through on-site interviews and focus groups discussions with target groups and stakeholders regarding composition of target group, their background (gender, income situation, occupation, ethnic/ religious grouping, knowledge and capacities on project topics...) illustrated in a table.
- Analysis of external factors, risks, preconditions and potential activities to increase sustainability for the project.
- Assessment of the general feasibility of the project, with a focus on scope, objectives, activity planning, structure (incl. local organisation as implementing organisation), approach etc.
- Assessment of project planning following DAC criteria (see Annex 1) and guiding questions (see Annex 2).
- Identification of indicators for impact measurement for planned activities.
- Development of clear recommendations on how to amend the project's content and planning following questions such as
 - What concrete amendments can be made on the basis of the analysis' results and the evaluation according to the DAC criteria for the concept of the project in the specific context?
 - Which planned components are not suitable and/ or sustainable and for what reasons?
 - Which components, if any, are missing in the project concept in order to sustainably achieve the planned objectives in the long term?
 - Do the assumptions on impacts and sustainability underlying the project concept seem plausible and viable for the project concept; how might they need to be adapted?

- Which baseline data are recommendable as a basis to be included in the project logic (impact matrix)?

7. METHODOLOGY

Local organisation can supply literature and other background material if required (national strategies/ policy papers, background papers, documents from preceding projects etc.).

- The feasibility study needs to critically assess the planned project (project approach/ goals, theory of change, target groups, stakeholders to be involved, measuring results and impacts, opportunities and risks) using OECD DAC criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/49756382.pdf>). Crucial questions that need to be addressed by the feasibility study can be found in Annex 1.
- The study should present the context on several levels (micro-, meso-, macro-) and should also include essential baseline data relevant to the project (e.g. as an appendix). If the planned project approach includes structure-building effects at the meso level, data on the existing structures (institutions, networks, umbrella associations, etc.) must also be collected.
- Concrete recommendations for adjustment of the project concept, target groups and measures are expected.
- The feasibility study report should not exceed a maximum of 30 pages. All products and services must be written in English and submitted in Word format, the final report has to be submitted in addition in pdf format.
- Some of the field interviews might need local languages' or a local translator (can be arranged by local organisation).

The final report needs to contain:

- An executive summary presenting core findings
- Introduction (purpose and objective, short presentation of expert/s)
- Methodologies (data collection) applied, interviewees(list) and consulted documents (list)
- Analysis (incl. context, capacities of the project, capacities of local organisation, project-relevant needs of the target group, stakeholders)
- Final evaluation according to the OECD DAC criteria
- Recommendations for adjustment of project (amongst others activities, target groups, stakeholders, geographical locations)
- List of conducted interviews and contact information of interviewed people
- CV of experts involved and signed declaration of independence and correctness of the study report

8. DELIVERABLES AND TIMING

#	Deliverables	To be delivered
1.	Submission of a detailed work plan for approval, including travel plans and intended interviews.	By 3 rd working day from commencement
2.	Submission of draft report and interview data.	By working day 12 of project commencement
3.	Submission of final feasibility study of max. 30 pages answering to all listed requirements.	By working day 18 of project commencement

It is foreseen that the assignment will commence in the week from 11 October 2022.

9. EXPECTED TIME REQUIRED

The time frame for the feasibility study will be approximately 17 working days.

Task	Expected time required
Preparation phase, in-depth briefings (WESM, NABU), studying of documents/ literature, online research, trip planning	2 working days
In-depth analysis of project scope, objective, activity planning, structure, gaps etc. (incl. travels to the site)	6 working days
In-depth analysis of target group, partners (incl. interviews while on site)	2 working days
Writing of interim report	1 working days
Identification of potential indicators and expected impacts	2 working days
Analysis of external factors, risks, preconditions and potential activities to increase sustainability	2 working days
Writing and compilation of final report	2 working days

The area of operation are the communities bordering Dzalanyama forest reserve within 5-10 km radius in Lilongwe, Dedza and Mchinji districts.

10. EXPECTED QUALIFICATIONS OF CONSULTANT

The feasibility study must be carried out by independent expert/s with technical, methodological and practical expertise as well as regional knowledge.

The expert/s is/are expected to have at least a master's degree in forestry, natural resources, environmental science, economics, environmental law, public policy or any related subject.

The expert/s must have extensive experience (at least 8 years) in capacity development and forestry conservation, livelihoods and others related issues especially within the protected areas

systems as well as experiences in feasibility studies and corresponding stakeholder analysis. Knowledge of the project region is required.

Experiences in the following topics are an asset

- Sustainable development, in particular eco-tourism
- Community-based forest conservation and management
- Forest and protected area governance and institutional strengthening
- Protected area/ buffer management
- Community empowerment
- Gender mainstreaming

Very good command of English is a prerequisite, knowledge of local languages of advantage.

11. MANAGEMENT OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The consultant/ team of consultants is/ are responsible for carrying out the feasibility study as well as for time and administrative organisation. A contact to local organisations partners will be established for logistical planning on site.

On-site transport and accommodation in the region as well as contact to potential stakeholders can be organised by local organisation's staff. Travel expenses must be included in the offer.

Documents to be included when submitting an application

Interested offers must include the following documents/information:

a) Technical Proposal

- Profile of the consultant/s including specific experience in providing consulting services, advising governments at policy level on development issues, formulation and implementation of strategies relating to rural development
- Demonstration of experience in providing similar services, indicating names of clients, nature, and scope of work
- Demonstration of adequate understanding of the specified requirements
- Detailed explanation of the approach/methodology of the assignment
- An implementation matrix/work plan with activities and timelines for carrying out the assignment

b) Financial proposal

- Lump-sum for the assignment to be carried out, broken down to clearly indicate any travel costs and daily consultancy fees (daily fee)

c) CV of expert(s)

- Including experience undertaking similar assignments and at least three (3) referees

At WESM, Chifundo Dalireni chifundod@gmail.com is available for further information

12. ANNEX

Annex 1: DAC criteria – guiding questions

Annex 2: Guiding questions for assessment

Annex 1 - DAC criteria

Also refer to <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/49756382.pdf>

a) Relevance:

- *Are the planned activities appropriate for addressing the problem? Which other activities should be conducted?*
- *Does the project approach address a key development problem or constraint in the partner country or region?*
- *Is the approach in line with the needs of the target groups?*
- *What changes are planned to be accomplished by the project?*

b) Effectiveness:

- *What is the most suitable approach to achieving the objectives?*
- *What structure is necessary, which actors should be involved?*
- *Are the measures and the chosen methodology suitable for reaching the objectives? On which level (meso and/or macro level/multi-level approach) should the project focus in order to make it more sustainable?*
- *Will use be made of synergies with interventions supported by other donors or programs? How better to use synergies?*
- *What measures/adjustments does the study recommend with a view to achieving objectives?*
- *What impact logic/impact hypothesis should the project be based on? What could a meaningful logical framework look like, including suitable and informative indicators (presentation of a first rough draft of indicators and baseline data)?*
- *Who should monitor impacts? When? At what intervals? (Impact monitoring)*

c) Efficiency:

- *Can the objectives be achieved in an economically efficient way through the planned project? What would increase economic efficiency?*
- *What financial, institutional and human resources will be needed?*
- *Will it be possible to implement the planned measures within the time allocated for the project and based on the resources that are planned? Please also refer to the Dialogic Change Model in your assessment.*
- *Will it be possible to achieve the desired impacts, and will all that be possible in an economical and efficient manner (in terms of cost-benefit ratio)?*

d) Significance / overarching development impact:

- *Will the project help achieve broader development impacts? Which ones are those or should be added?*
- *Which objectives and impacts derived from the problem/needs analysis are to be achieved, and for what target groups? Which objectives are missing or which might be omitted?*
- *To what extent will the project have a structural impact, to what extent can it serve as a model, and to what extent will it have a broad-based impact?*
- *Would it be advisable to pursue a multi-level approach (micro, meso and macro levels) in order to increase significance and effectiveness?*
- *To what extent have aspects relating to gender sensitivity, inclusion of persons with disabilities, cultural sensitivity, conflict sensitivity and human rights need to be incorporated in the project's objectives?*

e) Sustainability:

- *Which positive impacts of the project will remain after a first phase without additional external support? How to increase the positive impacts?*
- *How can sustainability of results and impacts be ensured and reinforced (in institutional, economic, social and environmental terms)?*
- *What are the roles and responsibilities of governmental and/or civil society institutions? To what extent will the project be able to build on local potential, institutions and procedures? What measures and instruments are best suited to harness and strengthen local ownership and initiative, participation, and capacity?*
- *Which socio-cultural barriers may impede the planned approach, and how can they be overcome?*
- *What negative consequences and impacts might result from the project implementation? To what extent will it be possible to consider and address these risks in the project/project concept (e.g., Do No Harm approach, conflict-sensitive impact monitoring, etc.)?*
- *What risks are involved in the implementation of the project (personal risk for those implementing, institutional and reputational risk, contextual risk)? How can they be minimized?*

Annex 2: Guiding questions for assessment

1) Purpose, objectives and use of the feasibility study

- *What is the rationale/the specific reason for the feasibility study?*
- *Which approach is to be tested for its feasibility?*
- *Project application/project concept and project implementation?*
- *What is the temporal and geographical scope of the feasibility study?*
- *(sub-) areas/sectors should be particularly investigated?*
- *What previous experience from similar programmes/projects, other studies and analyses, etc. should be used as a basis for the feasibility study?*

2) Methodology

- *Which methods, instruments and resources will be used for data collection and analysis?*
- *Which procedures will be used to gain knowledge?*
- *Which and how many actors with which backgrounds and interests have direct involvement in the information gathering process?*

3) Initial situation and problem analysis (at macro, meso, micro level)

- *What is the (initial) situation in the sector, in the region, in the country? What is the socio-economic, political, cultural context?*
- *What problems have been identified? What are the causes and what impact they have?*
- *What are the causes of these problems and what impact do they have on the living conditions of which population groups?*
- *What needs were derived from the problem analysis? How was/is it determined?*
- *What is the background and history of the planned development measure and its impact logic?*
- *From whom did the project idea come?*
- *What are the socio-cultural obstacles to the approach and how can these be overcome?*
- *What other risks are seen and how can these be addressed?*
- *Are there alternatives to the planned project or its subcomponents?*

4) Project executing agency in the partner country (local organisation)

- *What skills and experience (institutional, technical, personnel, financial) does local organisation have?*
- *What measures are needed to strengthen the organisation and capacity of the local partner?*
- *What self-interest/ownership does LOCAL ORGANISATION have in the success of the project?*
- *What is the relationship between LOCAL ORGANISATION and the target group and other actors?*
- *Are there any convergences or conflicts of interest? How can the interplay be improved?*

5) Target groups and other actors (at micro, meso and macro level)

- *Who is the target group? If applicable, are there different target groups at several levels?*
- *What are the criteria for selecting the target groups? How is the do-no-harm approach taken into account?*

- *What is the composition of the respective target groups? How homogeneous or heterogeneous are they in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, language, capacity, etc.?*
- *What are the specific needs of the target groups and how can these be addressed?*
- *What role do the target groups play in the social context? Which conflicts of interest could arise from the funding vis-à-vis other population groups?*
- *What potential do the respective target groups have, especially in terms of self-efforts and local problem-solving capacities? How can these be strengthened?*
- *Who are the important governmental and non-governmental actors in this sector and beyond? at the project site, in the planned project region, the project country?*
- *What is the relationship to the development strategy of the government in the project/ country?*
- *What interests do the actors have? Are conflicts of interest recognisable? What are the interactions with other projects of the actors? How do they find their way into the project conception?*
- *Do the actors have a common understanding of the problems and the resulting goals of the project?*
- *How strong is the support of the different actors for the project? How can they influence the project? Are there already agreements between actors?*