
Request for Proposal

Consulting Services for a Landscape Study on
Financial Interventions for Women-Led Enterprises in
Nepal

Date: 14th February 2025

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CLIMATE
POLICY
INITIATIVE

ABOUT CLIMATE POLICY INITIATIVE (CPI)

CPI is an analysis and advisory organization with deep expertise in finance and policy. Our mission is to help governments, businesses, and financial institutions drive economic growth while addressing climate change. CPI has six offices around the world in Brazil, India, Indonesia, Kenya, the United Kingdom, and the United States. CPI is known as a leader in tracking sustainable investment trends, identifying innovative business models, and supporting the solutions that can drive a transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy. We are unique in our focus on finance, our ability to get the right people to the table, and our analytical rigor.

CPI works on advancing sustainable, climate-resilient economies by informing policy, providing data-driven insights, and structuring financial solutions. It focuses on strengthening the effectiveness of climate finance and ensuring that it supports actions that lead to meaningful environmental and societal change. One of CPI's primary goals is to identify and unlock financing for climate resilience projects, particularly for countries like developing economies and communities like women that are most vulnerable to climate impacts. Women are often central to local social networks, and their leadership can create strong community-driven approaches to climate resilience. By empowering women in leadership roles, entire communities can benefit from more inclusive decision-making that incorporates diverse perspectives on resilience strategies. Nonetheless, women-led enterprises (WLEs) in developing countries often face barriers in accessing capital due to systemic discrimination and biases in financial institutions thereby limiting their ability to scale up their climate-resilient initiatives. In many regions, women lack access to resource markets, mentorship, and technical expertise necessary to grow successful enterprises. This can hinder their potential to lead large-scale solutions for climate resilience.

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Nepal, with its diverse geography from low-lying plains to the towering Himalayas, is among the most climate-vulnerable nations globally. The country faces increasing climate threats, including floods, landslides, erratic rainfall, and glacial melting, disproportionately impacting rural communities—especially women, who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods.

Forests, covering nearly 40% of Nepal's land, play a crucial role in climate resilience by supporting biodiversity, regulating water cycles, and acting as carbon sinks. Women, as primary stewards of forests and natural resources, provide vital ecosystem services such as sustainable land management, water conservation, and biodiversity protection. Their traditional knowledge and community-led conservation efforts are instrumental in maintaining ecological balance.

WLEs and other women-led or women-engaging enterprises—such as cooperatives, forest user groups, and self-help groups—particularly in agriculture, renewable energy, eco-tourism, handicrafts, and forest-based products such as medicinal herbs, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and sustainable timber, contribute significantly to both economic resilience and environmental sustainability. These enterprises not only generate livelihoods but also promote sustainable forest management, helping to mitigate climate change and prevent deforestation. Despite their critical role, women-led businesses face systemic barriers, particularly in accessing finance, as only 26% of women in Nepal have property rights. While government initiatives like collateral-free loans exist, they remain insufficient to bridge the financing gap.

Unlocking financial access for women-led enterprises is crucial to scaling their impact in addressing climate vulnerabilities, advancing economic empowerment, contributing to climate and development goals, and strengthening local resilience.

As part of effort to enhance access to finance for WLEs in Nepal, prepare them to attract impact and commercial capital, and monetize the ecosystem services being provided by such enterprises, CPI, in partnership with ForestAction Nepal (FA-N) and Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS) is implementing the Climate Action Financing through Women and Social Enterprises (CaFiN) project. This work is carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada. The project aims to understand constraints and opportunities in financing women led/women-benefitting grassroots organizations in agriculture and forestry sector in Nepal, while examining the feasibility of a tailored financial intervention through a dedicated facility that could serve as a model for similar projects across Asia.

CPI is seeking a qualified consulting firm to conduct Landscaping study of the WLEs ecosystem in Nepal, including:

- Identification, mapping and segmentation of WLEs in agriculture, forestry and social sectors along with ecosystem services being provided by the enterprises.
- Maturity and need assessment of WLEs to access financial Interventions like project preparation facility (PPF), payment for ecosystem services (PES) or hybrid- PPF+PES.
- Mapping of financial ecosystem to enhance financial flows to WLEs through the financial interventions.
- Development of monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) methodologies for PES and other financial interventions tailored to WLEs in Nepal.

- Determining possible payment structures and mechanisms for financial interventions like PPF, PES, hybrid-PPF+PES.
- Recommend action plan for implementing financial interventions for WLEs in Nepal.

1.1. Summary of deliverables

- Consultancy Inception report and proposed work plan.
- Project interim report including:
 - Ecosystem mapping of WLEs.
 - Maturity and need assessment of WLEs to access financial Interventions.
 - Mapping of financial ecosystem for WLEs.
- Project final report including interim report and:
 - MRV methodologies for financial interventions for WLEs.
 - Payment structures and mechanisms for financial interventions.
 - Action plan for implementing identified financial intervention.
- Periodic real-time updates on project progress and insights gathered.

1.2. Duration of consultancy

The assignment will span 150 days, from the contract signing until August 15, 2025. Project delivery details are outlined in Section 5.2.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

The following broad activities are to be undertaken under the study:

INDICATIVE TASKS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES
Identification, mapping and segmentation of WLEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map existing women-led enterprises and community-based activities in Nepal that contribute to ecosystem services, specifically in sectors such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forest Produce: Collection, processing, and sustainable management of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). ○ Agriculture: Sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural practices that enhance ecosystem services, such as soil conservation, water retention, and biodiversity preservation. ○ Livelihood Generation: Activities that promote sustainable livelihood practices while conserving ecosystem services such as value chain activities linked to forest produce and sustainable agriculture. ○ Social Activities: Initiatives that empower women and communities through sustainable resource management and conservation practices. • Segment the WLEs according to their activities, size and level of maturity, access to finance and existing/potential ecosystem services being provided/could be explored. • Identify key stakeholders relevant for the identified WLES, including value chain entities, NGOs, community-based organizations, and support organizations engaged in these activities. • Document existing practices, challenges, and opportunities for integrating PES frameworks into these women-led enterprises.

INDICATIVE TASKS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES
Maturity and need assessment of WLEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear criteria to assess the eligibility of the identified activities and enterprises for inclusion into PES and other financial intervention models. • Categorize eligible activities based on the type of ecosystem services they provide, such as carbon sequestration, water quality improvement, soil conservation, and biodiversity enhancement. • Evaluate the identified WLEs/activities on their current and potential impact and viability of business models related to ecosystem services to justify their inclusion for financial intervention program.
Financial Ecosystem Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the current financial ecosystem and identify financial institutions, intermediaries, and funding mechanisms that can support PES/other financial interventions implementation for WLEs. • Recommend strategies to strengthen financial linkages and improve access to finance for WLEs participating in PES/other financial interventions. • Determine appropriate financial partners like banks, microfinance institutions, and impact investors and nature of capital provided by them to support each level of value chain in WLEs ecosystem in Nepal for PES/other financial interventions.
Development of Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose robust MRV methodologies tailored to the context of WLEs in Nepal. • Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) and measurable outcomes for tracking the delivery of ecosystem services. • Recommend tools, technologies, and best practices for accurate and transparent MRV implementation.
Determining Payment Structures and Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine appropriate, equitable, transparent, and accessible payment structures that incentivize and support WLEs to participate in PES programs/other financial interventions.
Recommendations and Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a detailed set of recommendations for implementing PES/other financial interventions for identified WLEs in Nepal. • Develop an actionable roadmap outlining steps for integrating PES/other financial interventions, including timelines, key stakeholders, and necessary resources. • Identify potential challenges and mitigation strategies for successful PES/other financial interventions.

3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

3.1. Eligibility

- This Request for Proposal (RFP) outlines the requirements for an open and competitive bidding process. This RFP is intended for firms only; individual consultants are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants must have prior experience in WLEs and PES. Proposals from applicants without prior experience with WLEs and PES experience will not be considered.

3.2. Submission Deadline

Proposals will be accepted until **6 pm IST** on **03rd March 2025**. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.

3.3. Submission Requirements

The proposal should give the CPI all the information they need to assess your bid, detailed information is provided in section 4 and summarized below.

- Relevant information about the service provider and contact details.

- ii. How your proposal and services will meet the project objectives, in reference and alignment with the project scope and deliverables, and in line with CPI's Strategic Recommendations
- iii. A timeline, indicating the different stages, milestones, and contact with CPI – adequate review periods should be included.
- iv. An overview of expertise and experience on the topic of Women-led enterprises and Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) sector including references to previous work carried out in Nepal.
- v. Details of the organization and proposed project team - please include relevant experience and expertise and limit CVs to three pages per person; indicate the project lead, the role of each team member and time commitment. The core project team must include:

Position	Qualification	Experience
Team Leader	Masters (Forestry/ Environment Studies/ Management/ Economics/ Public Policy)	15+ Years
Expert 1: Environmental/ Natural Resource Economist	Masters (Environment/ Natural Resource/ Economics)	10+ Years
Expert 2: Women-led Enterprise Building Expert	Masters (Gender Studies/ Management/ Economics/ Public Policy)	5+ Years
Expert 3: Finance Expert	Masters (Management/ Finance/ Economics/ Other relevant)	5+ Years

4. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The objective of the proposal evaluation process is to evaluate the bids to select an effective and best fit landscaping consultant at a competitive price. The evaluation of bids shall be undertaken by CPI, whose decision in this matter shall be final.

The competitive bids shall be evaluated in the following stages:

1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification)
2. Technical proposal
3. Financial proposal

4.1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification)

The evaluation for pre-qualification will involve validating the documents submitted in the prescribed format. Documents without valid proof will be invalid and will not be considered for eligibility. CPI reserves the right to accept or reject proof of credentials at its sole discretion without having to give reasons to the bidders thereof. Only those bidders meeting the eligibility criteria through the documents submitted in the prescribed format shall be considered for further stages of evaluation.

S. no.	Eligibility criteria requirements	Supporting documents required
1.	The applicant should have been in operation for at least five years as on the date of RFP. In case the applicant is the result of a merger/acquisition, at least one of the merging companies should have been in operation for at least five years as on date of RFP.	Certificate of Incorporation or other equivalent documents
2.	The applicant should have completed at least one PES or PES-like project/ assignment and one survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains	Self-certified statement indicating name of the project/ assignment, name of the client for whom the work was completed and date of completion. Copies of the satisfactory work completion certificate by the client should be enclosed.
3.	The applicant should not have been blacklisted or debarred by any national or subnational government or multilateral or bilateral or public institution as on the date of the RFP.	Self-declaration certified by authorized signatory of the applicant
4.	The applicant should have had a permanent or representative office in Nepal for a minimum two years.	Self-declaration certified by authorized signatory of the applicant, along with supporting documents like lease agreement, electricity bills, etc.

The applicants need to comply with the aforesaid eligibility criteria. The applicants are required to provide proof for each of the points for eligibility evaluation. Technical bid not accompanied by relevant proof documents from the clients will not be considered for evaluation.

Any assumptions made by the applicants in response of this RFP will be at their own risk and costs. CPI will not be liable for any such assumptions / representations made by the applicants. CPI reserves the right to disregard the applicant who does not submit sufficient proof of their credentials as prescribed in eligibility criteria. CPI's decision regarding accepting or not accepting applicants will be final.

4.2. Scoring methodology for Technical Evaluation

S.No	Description	Maximum Obtainable
i)	Approach and Methodology	30
a.	Appreciation of the scope of work	10
b.	Robustness of methodology	15
c.	Work plan and clarity of how timelines will be adhered to	5
ii)	Experience of Proposed Team	40
a.	<p>Team leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have Post Graduate qualification in Forestry/ Environment Studies/ Environmental Engineering/ Watershed Management/ Management/ Science/ Economics/ Public Policy • Should have minimum 15 years of overall experience with minimum seven years of relevant experience • Should have completed at least one assignment in terms of relevant experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No assignment: 0 marks ◦ 1-3 assignments: 5 marks ◦ More than 3 assignments: 10 marks • Specific relevant experience in Nepal (at least one project): 5 bonus marks 'Relevant experience' means gender-centric research and development of economic activities and enterprises, development and implementation of payment for ecosystem mechanism, development and/or valuation of ecosystem service valuation, land use and tenure rights, and use of natural resources. 	15
b.	<p>Expert 1: Environmental/ Natural Resource Economist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have Post Graduate qualification in Environment Studies/ Environmental Engineering/ Watershed Management/ Natural Resources/ Economics • Should have minimum 10 years of overall experience with minimum seven years of relevant experience ('relevant experience' as defined previously) 	10
c.	<p>Expert 2: Women-led Enterprise Building Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have Post Graduate qualification in Gender Studies/ Management/ Economics/ Public Policy • Should have minimum seven years of overall experience in research studies, policy advocacy, program development and implementation, and operation of collectives related to gender-focused economic activities 	10
d.	<p>Expert 3: Finance Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be a Chartered Accountant or Chartered Financial Analyst or equivalent or have a Post Graduate qualification in Finance, Economics/ Other relevant) • Should have minimum seven years of overall experience in public finance, banking/lending operations, investment banking, credit rating, financial analysis and strategy. 	5
iii)	Credentials of the Proposer	35

a.	<p>Experience of PES or PES-like projects/assignments*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have completed at least one PES or PES-like project/ assignment (pre-qualification) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No PES or PES-like project/ assignment: 0 marks ◦ 1-2 PES or PES-like project/ assignments: 5 marks ◦ More than 2 PES or PES-like project/ assignment: 10 marks • Specific experience of PES or PES-like projects/assignments in Nepal (among projects cited above): 5 bonus marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No such project/ assignment in Nepal: 0 marks ◦ 1-2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 2 marks ◦ More than 2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 5 marks <p>* projects/ assignments with completion certificates duly signed with mentioned dates and stamped by procurer authorities would be considered</p>	15
b.	<p>Experience of survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have completed at least one survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains (pre-qualification) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No such project: 0 marks ◦ 1-2 such project: 5 marks ◦ More than 2 such projects: 10 marks • Specific experience of survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains in Nepal (among projects cited above): 5 bonus marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No such project/ assignment in Nepal: 0 marks ◦ 1-2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 2 marks ◦ More than 2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 5 marks <p>* projects/ assignments with completion certificates duly signed with mentioned dates and stamped by procurer authorities would be considered</p>	15
c.	<p>Permanent office in Nepal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposer/ consortium partner should have a permanent office in Nepal for at least two years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Permanent office in Nepal for < 2 years: 0 marks ◦ Permanent office in Nepal for 2-5 years: 3 marks ◦ Permanent office in Nepal for >5 years: 5 marks 	5

4.3. Financial Evaluation and Financial Scores

The financial evaluation will be conducted based on the financial bid submitted by each applicant in USD. The financial bid shall be a lump sum bid inclusive of all expenses. Any applicable government taxes will be reimbursed on actual. The financial proposals shall be evaluated based on total lump sum charges offered by the applicant.

The financial evaluation would involve the following steps:

- The technically qualified applicant who bids the lowest will be given a financial score of 100.
- The financial scores of other bidders for the project shall be computed as follow:
Normalized financial score of bidder A = $100 \times \frac{\text{Lowest offer quoted by the Qualified bidder (INR)}}{\text{Offer quoted by bidder A (INR)}}$.

4.4. Overall Evaluation

- Bids will be evaluated as per Combined Quality Cum Cost-based System (QCBS). The Technical bids will be allotted a weight of 80% while financial bids will be allotted a weight of 20%.
- A combined score for an applicant will be arrived at according to the following formula:

Combined score of applicant= 80%* [technical score of applicant out of 100] + 30* [Normalized financial score of applicant]

- The applicant obtaining the highest total combined score as evaluated above will be ranked H-1 followed by proposal securing lesser marks as H-2, H-3, etc. The bidder securing the highest combined marks and ranked H-1 shall be recommended for award of contract.

5. KEY DATES:

5.1. RFP Timelines:

RFP TIMELINE	DUE DATE
Request for Proposals published by CPI	14 th Feb 2025
Questions submitted to CPI	19 th Feb 2025
CPI responds to questions	21 st Feb 2025
Deadline for Proposal Submission	3 rd March 2025
Award of Project by	10 th March 2025
Commencement of Project by	15 th March 2025

5.2. Project Delivery Timelines:

Deliverable	Timeline	Payment (%)
Submission of Project Inception Report	30 days	20%
Submission of Interim Report	90 days	30%
Submission of Final Report	150 days	50%

6. PROJECT PAYMENT

- 6.1 Payment for this assignment will be made by **CPI Global** in USD as per the payment schedule mentioned in "Section 5.2 Key Deliverables."
- 6.2 Payment will be made after submission of the deliverable(s) in adherence to the specified timeline and acceptance in accordance with the requirement under the project requirement by the CPI Team.

ANNEXURES

A. Form 1: Pre Bid Query Format

S. No.	Page No.	Section and point No.	RFP Clause	Remarks/query

B. Form 2 : Cover Letter

S.N.	Particulars	Details to be furnished by the bidder
1	Name of the bidder	
2	Location of Registered office/Corporate office and Address	
3	Mailing address & Company website of the bidder	
4	Names and designations of the persons authorized to make commitments to O/o DC(MSME) (copy of POA should be provided)	
5	Telephone and fax numbers of contact persons	
6	E-mail addresses of contact persons	
7	Description of business and business background Service Profile & client profile Domestic & International presence Alliance and joint ventures	

C. Form 3: About the organization and relevant experience

About the organization

[Provide here a brief (two pages) description / profile of your organization for this assignment.]

Experience:

Using the format below, provide information on **each assignment** for which your consultancy firm/agency/company was legally contracted either individually as a corporate entity or as one of the major companies within an association, for carrying out research services similar to the ones requested under this assignment. [The format should be signed by authorized signatory for each assignment]

Assignment name:	Approx. value of the contract (in Rs.):
Country: Location within country: (Name of the Cities/States)	Duration of assignment (months):
Name of Client:	Total No. of staff-months of the assignment:
Address:	Approx. value of the services provided by your consultancy firm/agency/company under the contract (in Rs.):
Start date (month/year): Completion date (month/year):	No. of professional staff-months provided by associated Consultants (if any):
Name of associated Consultants, if any:	Name of senior professional staff of your consultancy firm/agency/company involved and functions performed (indicate most significant profiles such as Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader):
Narrative description of Project:	
Description of actual services provided by your staff within the assignment:	

D. Form 4: Approach and Methodology
 Work Plan (as per below format)

Work Plan											
Sr. No.	Activity	Days									
		15	30	45	60	75	90	105	120	135	150

S. No	Deliverables	Timelines in Days

CVs of proposed Team

1	Proposed Position	
2	Name of Company [Insert name of company proposing the staff]:	
3	Name of Staff [Insert full name]:	
4	Education [Indicate college/university and other specialized education of staff member, giving names of institutions, degrees obtained, and dates of obtainment]:	
5	Membership of Professional Associations:	
6	Other Training [Indicate significant training obtained]:	
7	Countries of Work Experience:	
8	Languages [For each language indicate proficiency: good, fair, or poor in speaking, reading, and writing]:	
9	<p>Work Experience [Starting with present position, list in reverse order every employment held by staff member since graduation, giving for each employment (see format here below):</p> <p>From[Year]:__To [Year]: _____ Employer: _____</p> <p>Positions held: _____</p>	

10	<p>Detailed Task Assigned [List all tasks to be performed under this assignment]</p>
11	<p>Work Undertaken that Best Illustrates Capability to Handle the Tasks Assigned [Among the assignments in which the staff has been involved, indicate the following information for those assignments that best illustrate staff capability.]</p> <p>Name of assignment or Project: _____ Year: _____ Location: _____ Client: _____ Main project features: _____ Positions held: _____ Activities Performed: _____</p> <p>Name of assignment or Project: _____ Year: _____ Location: _____ Client: _____ Main project features: _____ Positions held: _____ Activities Performed: _____</p>

Place:

Date:

Seal and signature of the bidder

F. Form 6: Declaration for not being blacklisted

(To be submitted on the letter head of the Bidder)

To,
Climate Policy Initiative
Mindspace, 575 Market St
4th FL, San Francisco
CA 94105, USA

Sir/Madam,

With reference to the RFP No. ,
We.....
.....

hereby declared and confirmed that we have not been
blacklisted or debarred by any national or subnational government
or multilateral or bilateral or public institution as on the date of the
RFP.

Signature of the Bidder with stamp

Name:.....

Designation:.....

Date:.....