



Ministry of National Planning Housing and Infrastructure
Republic of Maldives

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – REGION 2

(Reference: MV-MONPI-326930-CS-CQS)

MALDIVES URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE PROJECT

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the consultancy is to develop a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment for the Regional Development Plan for Zone 3 & 4.

B. BACKGROUND

The Maldives' National Spatial Plan (NSP) (2020-2040) is intended for creating competitive, environmentally sustainable and resilient regions that are aligned with development plans. It is based on the fostering of economic growth in urban centers outside of Greater Malé, which is intended to produce a more spatially balanced distribution of economic opportunities, while at the same time reducing congestion in the capital and bolstering overall national economic growth.

Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (MNPHI) has developed the NSP which identifies 3 Regions with 6 zones that includes 21 Island Clusters. The Island Clusters are categorized to 4 clusters based on the population levels. The main and densely populated area is located in the Greater Male' Region. Population Level 1 Cluster (P1) where a group of islands among which a core island(s) can be identified based on its existing population, economic and social services, with a target population of 50,000. Population Level 2 Cluster (P2) where a group of islands within a radius of 35km, and is outside the Population Level 1 Cluster, with a target population of 25,000. Population Level 3 Cluster (P3) where a group of islands within a radius of 20km, with an existing population of less than 10,000 and a target population of 15,000. Zones are clusters of islands with a specific region. Breakdown of Zonal distribution is provided below.

Under project component 2.1 of Maldives Urban Resilience and Development (MUDRP) project, Regional Development Plan for Region 2 is currently under the development. This consultancy works is built upon the aforementioned regional development plan for Region 2.

REGION 1	Zone 1	Upper North	3 Administrative Atolls Haa Alifu, Haa Dhaalu, Shaviyani
	Zone 2	Lower North	4 Administrative Atolls Noonu, Raa, Baa, Lhaviyani
REGION 2	Zone 3	Upper Central	4 Administrative Atolls Kaafu, Alifu Alifu, Alifu Dhaalu, Vaavu
	Zone 4	Lower Central	5 Administrative Atolls Meemu, Faafu, Dhaalu, Thaa, Laamu
REGION 3	Zone 5	Upper South	2 Administrative Atolls Gaaf Alifu, Gaafu Dhaalu
	Zone 6	Lower South	2 Administrative Atolls Gnaviyani, Seenu

C. OBJECTIVES OF ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of this consultancy assignment is to develop a strategic environmental and social assessment (SESA) for the previously mention regional development plan for Region 2. The prime objective of the SESA is to ensure that strategic social, environmental and climate change concerns are appropriately and adequately integrated into the regional development plan.

The main objectives of the SESA include the following;

1. Identify, describe and assess the significant social and environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the regional development plan.
2. Identify, describe and assess the environmental, social, and climate change-related constraints that will bear upon the implementation of the regional development plan for Region 2;
3. Identify, describe and assess the opportunities for the regional development plan for Region 2 to contribute to enhancing the state of the environment, socio-economic status of communities, building climate resilience and promoting low carbon development.
4. Propose strategies for avoiding and/or minimizing potential negative social, environmental and climate change impacts and optimizing the positive impacts.
5. Identify and assess the institutional capacity of the local government authority (LGA), island and atoll councils for successful implementation of the regional development plan for Region 2.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

The successful constancy firm is expected to conduct two separate studies namely (i) Scoping Study and (ii) Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA). The scoping study is expected to collect, analyze and set the decision context for the SESA study. The SESA study is expected to be comprehensive and more relevant to the local

context and the implications of the Regional Development Plan on the biophysical and socio economic environment of the corresponding region.

SCOPING STUDY

The main objective of the scoping study is to collect the baseline data and identify the relevant legal and policy framework, key stakeholders and important aspects to be considered in the SESA study. This pertains to environmental, social and climate change related issues in the respective region. Furthermore, the scoping study would enable to make recommendations for impact assessment methodologies to identify, assess, analyze and mitigate the environmental, social and climate change related risks and impacts. The following aspects should be covered in the scoping study.

1. Overview of the Regional Development Plan, its policy, institutional and legal framework

- Identify policy, institutional and legal framework relating to urban planning and development with particular attention to institutions/entities responsible for environment and climate change issues relevant to the implementation of the regional development plan for Region 2, as well as the relevant environmental, social and climate change policy and legislation.
- Describe how the SESA will be linked to the existing planning frameworks for national and regional environmental and social management and climate change adaptation/mitigation.

2. Description of key stakeholders, their interests and concerns

- Identify key stakeholders - groups and institutions, environmental agencies, climate change related institutions, non-governmental organisations, representatives of the public and others, including those groups positively or negatively affected by the implementation of the regional development plan.
- Review records of any national/regional public consultation processes that may have been undertaken as part of the regional development plan for Region 2 preparation process, if available. Based on this review and on additional consultations, identify key stakeholders' interests, concerns and aspirations with respect to the proposed regional development plan for Region 2 under consideration and propose a plan for systematic and structured stakeholder engagement under the SESA.
- Carry out consultations with the identified stakeholders and reflect the outcomes of these discussions in the SESA findings and recommendations.

3. Description of key aspects to be addressed in the SESA

- Identify the key environmental, socioeconomic and climate change issues that should be addressed in the SESA study– i.e. the key development plan-

environment/climate change and social interactions that need to be given special consideration and emphasis in light of:

- potential significant impacts on the coastal and marine environments, contributions to greenhouse gas emissions (in relation to national emissions), and risks relating to climate vulnerability associated with the implementation of the proposed plan;
- social impacts, notably from the perspective of physical and economic displacements, resettlements, livelihoods, employment generation, poverty reduction, social equity and inclusion, and impacts on women and other vulnerable groups.
- key opportunities for the proposed development plan to make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability, climate resilience, low carbon development, and improving the living conditions of the people in the respective zones.

4. Recommendations on specific impact identification and evaluation methodologies to be used in the SESA study

- Describe impact identification and evaluation methodologies that could be used in the SESA study. Special attention should be given to identifying those environmental and social interactions that will require quantitative analyses as well as those for which qualitative analyses is required.

5. Finalize scoping report and disseminate findings with key stakeholders:

- Prepare a succinct scoping report covering the outcomes of the above tasks.
- Conduct a consultation workshop with key stakeholders to validate the findings of the scoping study. Ensure consultations are inclusive of women and vulnerable groups.

SESA STUDY

The SESA study will be based on the results of the scoping phase (following approval of the scoping study report) and include an environmental and social baseline study, the identification of environmental, social and climate change constraints and opportunities, the identification and assessment of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts, and an assessment of the institutional capacities to address the environmental, social and climate change challenges identified and conclusions and recommendations. The following aspects should be covered in the SESA.

1. Environmental and Social baseline study

- Describe the current state of the environment in the coastal and marine areas of the Study area in terms of key physical, ecological, cultural and socio-economic characteristics (focusing on those key environmental and social components identified in the scoping study), in order to better

understand the key issues identified through the scoping study.

- Describe trends and pressures on important coastal, marine and terrestrial, and environmental components, to the extent possible, and how such trends and pressures will change under the implementation of the regional development plan for Region 2.
- Describe trends and pressures on social aspects included but not limited to education, employment, gender issues, and how such trends and pressures will change under the implementation of the regional development plan for Region.

2. Identification and evaluation of environment and social related risks, constraints and opportunities

- Identify, describe and assess the environmental, social and climate change factors that can affect (positively or negatively) the effectiveness and sustainability of the implementation of the regional development plan for Region 2.
- These factors may include the availability of physical, natural, human and social resources necessary for the realization of the plan's objectives, as well as the current and projected effects of climate change.
- Assess how the regional development plan for Region 2 could respond to these constraints and opportunities. Similarly, and as relevant, the study should assess whether the proposed plan, includes an adequate response in terms of adaptation to climate change in view of identified vulnerabilities.
- Assess how the regional development plan for Region 2 could respond to these constraints and opportunities in terms managing the social risks. Similarly, and as relevant, the study should assess whether the proposed plan, includes an adequate response in terms of management of social risks.
- If the plan is not adequately responsive to environment, social and climate change issues, assess how they can be strategically addressed via proposed revisions to the Regional Development Plan 1.
- Determine the gender difference of the impacts (how impacts are experienced differently) and difference based on social factors such as disability, age.
- Determine whether there are existing constraints due to social status such as women, old age and disabilities.

3. Identification and evaluation of impacts

- Describe potential environmental and social risks and impacts of implementing the plan, including the positive or negative contribution to greenhouse gas emissions (if significant relative to national emission levels), population displacements and resettlement, poverty reduction, benefit-sharing, social inclusion and gender equality.
- The significance of these impacts should be determined in proportionate to the

nature and extent of the risks and impacts, the views and concerns of stakeholders and the sensitivity of the environment. In doing so, the potential cumulative impacts of implementing proposed regional development plan should be identified.

- Those risks and impacts which are significant should be assessed in detail considering:
 - the views and concerns of stakeholders;
 - consistency with international commitments (bilateral and multilateral environmental agreements);
 - socio-economic consequences (especially on vulnerable groups and minorities);
 - compliance with relevant environmental, social and climate change regulations and standards in the country;
 - consistency with relevant environmental, social and climate change objectives and policies of the government of Maldives and their implications for sustainable development.

4. Identification and evaluation of impacts in terms of vulnerability to climate risks

- Identify, as relevant, direct and indirect impacts of implementing the regional development plan in terms of increased or reduced vulnerability to climate variability and climate change (e.g. the construction of new infrastructure in ‘climate-sensitive’ areas such as sheltered coastal zones may lead to population migration to these areas, thus exposing more people to climate risks; on the contrary, sector-wide measures may contribute to increase the population’s resilience to climate change)
- Identify, as relevant, direct and indirect impacts of implementing the regional development plan in terms of social aspects.

5. Stakeholder engagement

- Stakeholders should be engaged throughout the SESA study according to the stakeholder engagement strategy agreed at the scoping phase

6. Identify appropriate institutional arrangements:

- In association with the Local Government Authority (LGA) and Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (MNPHI), identify the optimal arrangements to oversee the implementation of the further assessments and mitigations measures during the implementation stage of the regional development plan. Such an arrangement may include setting up a task force of relevant agencies.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

- Summarise the key environmental and social issues for the implementation of regional development plan, including policy and institutional constraints, challenges and main recommendations.
- Recommend how to optimize positive impacts and make best use of environment- natural resource- and climate change related opportunities, social aspects as well as on how to mitigate adverse effects, adapt to environmental and climate change constraints and manage risks.
- Propose the best alternative scenario and any revisions to the regional development plan.
- Present the limitations of the SESA and its assumptions.
- The recommendations should consider the views presented by stakeholders and explain how these were integrated. In the case of concerns that were not integrated in the final recommendations, the reasons thereof should be given.
- Identify and recommend indicators to be used to measure the implementation of the Regional Development Plan for Region 2 in terms of outcome and impact of respective Regional Development Plan.

E. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULTATIONS AND DATA COLLECTION

- i. All data collected, where applicable shall be gender disaggregated and classified based on age group (youth, adults and elderly).
- ii. All stakeholder consultations shall ensure gender balance in terms of participants.

F. DELIVERABLES

- i. Inception Report: The inception report shall include documents reviewed, work plan and methodology and timeframe and possible risks that might hinder progress and mitigation measures to overcome risks
- ii. Scoping report: The scoping report shall include the aforementioned findings from the scoping study. The following chapters are recommended to be included;
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Relevant Legal and Policy Framework
 - c. Stakeholders and their interest and concerns
 - d. Key Environmental, Social and Climate change related risks and impacts,
 - e. Recommendation for assessing the above identified risks
- iii. SESA report: The SESA report shall include but not limited to the following chapters;
 - a. Environmental and Social Baseline for the Regional Development Plan
 - b. Description of Environmental, Social and Climate Change risks

- c. Assessment of identified risks and impacts and proposed mitigation measures
- d. Stakeholder Engagement
- e. Institutional Arrangements for implementation of the Regional Development plans.
- f. Conclusion and Recommendation

G. DURATION OF CONSULTANCY

This consultancy assignment will approximately take 06 months.

H. KEY EXPERTS REQUIRED

The team will consist of the following experts;

1. Team Leader:

- at least, a master's degree in a relevant area, such as environment, climate change or integrated natural resources management with at least 15 years of relevant professional experience.
- He/she should have broad knowledge in environmental impact evaluation and management, and related institutional strengthening and policy analysis
- He/She should have significant experience in undertaking environmental advisory services, environmental assessments, reporting & capacity building. Prior experience in the preparation of SESAs would be an advantage.
- He/She will have proven experience as team leader in at least 3 assignments. Experience in the sector, country and region will be an asset.

2. Climate Change Specialist:

- At least a Master's Degree climate science;
- At least 5 years of experience in climate vulnerability assessments, climate proofing policies, plans and investments and disaster risk management.

3. Socio-Economist:

- At least a Master's Degree in Social Sciences;
- At least 5 years' experience in social impact assessment, designing and conducting socio-economic surveys, stakeholder consultation and negotiations.