

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES FOR**  
**THE SOLOMON ISLANDS THRESHOLD PROGRAM**

**I. Introduction**

The Government of the United States of America, via the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) expect to sign a Threshold Program Grant Agreement (Grant) in 2021 totaling US \$23 million to support a 4-year program with the objective of implementing policy and institutional reforms that lead to a reduction in poverty through economic growth in Solomon Islands. The 4-year timeline for this program is expected to begin in April 2021. The Solomon Islands Threshold Program consists of two projects: the Accessing Land for Tourism Investment Facilitation (ALTIF) Project and the Forest Value Enhancement Project (FoVEP).

MCC seeks to award a community engagement Cooperative Agreement or contract under the ALTIF Project to support the delivery of information, public outreach and awareness, training, advisory assistance, and other support to communities that are located nearby registered land parcels with a high potential to attract tourism investment to secure acceptance for a tourism investor's use of land.

**II. Background**

Access to land for investment is a constraint to economic growth in Solomon Islands. While the majority of land in Solomon Islands is governed under customary rules, investors require the certainty afforded by registered (non-customary) land to realize an investment. Yet, even registered land often has insufficient tenure security to attract investment due to historical interests and disputes between communities over land and frequent court challenges to titles resulting in a lack of certainty that discourages investment. To ensure successful lasting investment outcomes an investor and community must agree on how to work together, so that the investor has, and maintains, social license, which is defined as ongoing acceptance by the community of an investor's presence on (settlement of) the land as legitimate and often includes a sharing of benefits generated from the investment with the community.

The ALTIF Project seeks to build the government's capacity to identify registered land parcels that have a high potential to attract tourism investment, **assist investors to obtain secure access to registered land with landowners and neighboring communities (via social license)**, and facilitate investments on that land by outside tourism investors through financial close.

*Relevant ALTIF Project Activities*

As it relates to land and community engagement issues, the ALTIF Project, as a whole, will engage in four activities described below that will be implemented by two Implementing Partners. One Implementing Partner will focus on investor-facing activities and the other Implementing Partner (which will be awarded this Cooperative Agreement/contract) will focus on the following community-facing activities:

- a. Identify registered land parcels that have the physical characteristics, represent locations that are desirable for tourism investment to permit successful investment. Once a registered land parcel that possesses these characteristics is identified, ALTIF will assist the government to market the parcel to potential tourism investors.

- b. Provide information and educate investors, landowners and communities on the need for social license to obtain access to the targeted registered land parcel(s) and ensure tenure security.
- c. Support the investor and one or more communities nearby targeted land parcels as the parties work together to establish social license by providing advice and facilitation support.
- d. Where necessary to achieve social license, and only in such cases, support a community in realizing its ambition to secure the customary land rights of the community and its members through whatever formal mechanism they deem appropriate. This could include, for example, supporting the community to record land via the Customary Land Records Act.

### *Implementation and Evaluation Partners*

MCC expects to engage three organizations (Implementing Partners) to implement the activities described above. The first organization will be responsible for the land identification and investor facing activities (Activity 1, and the investor-facing aspects of Activities 2 and 3). This Implementing Partner will demonstrate experience and expertise in land identification approaches in Solomon Islands and tourism investment promotion in the Pacific region.<sup>1</sup>

Under this Terms of Reference, MCC will select an Implementing Partner under this Cooperative Agreement/contract to complete the community-facing activities (Activity 4 and the community-facing aspects of Activities 2 and 3). This Implementation Partner will demonstrate extensive experience working with communities in Solomon Islands on issues related to land, stakeholder engagement, community governance and decision making, and gender equality and social inclusion. The Implementation Partner will also demonstrate experience and skill in assisting communities to build their knowledge of and ability to make decisions in an inclusive manner, ensuring that interests of a broad section of the community are taken into account, as this is critical to the success of this work.

MCC will engage a third Implementing Partner to provide Cross-Cutting Program Support (CCPS) services which will provide a broad array of services across the program. These include the support of government direction of the land identification and investment facilitation process (as a cross cutting element over all land activities and all investment facilitation activities) through a Facilitated Government Reform (FGR) process where the state institutions participate in a tourism task force and establish topic specific problems solving teams to resolve complex issues that inhibit the realization of tourism investments in the Solomon Islands.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the Tourism Task Force and FGR Implementing Partner engage in reform activities related to establishing and maintaining social license agreements between investors and communities, as this activity is key to the investment facilitation component of ALTIF. In that case, the Community Engagement Implementing Partner will be required to provide input and cooperate to achieve needed reforms as may be determined by the Tourism Task Force.

It will be vital that all Implementing Partners coordinate their public outreach and awareness messages and work together to communicate a shared vision to all stakeholders. For example, as it concerns the establishment of social license, the Implementing Partners must coordinate on how social license will be achieved and how benefits may be shared. Key to this work will be establishing reasonable and uniformly understood expectations among the stakeholders and managing those expectations in a

---

<sup>1</sup> The land identification and investor-facing Implementing Partner will be a Public International Organization.

<sup>2</sup> The Cross-Cutting Support Services (CCPS) Contractor will provide support related to Facilitated Governance Reform, active program monitoring, communications, and meeting and administration.



It is vital that the selected Community Engagement Implementing Partner develop a deep understanding of each community, its governance structure, and membership to achieve social license agreements that are long lasting. The Implementing Partner must develop trust among community leadership and members by acting as an honest broker and providing realistic and reliable information on opportunities for collaboration with a tourism investor and the benefits that may come from such collaboration. Implementing Partner efforts to engage with a community should be contextually driven and locally led, placing an emphasis on the deep understanding of the community.

The Implementing Partner will be responsible for the following tasks related to community engagement, in addition to normal administrative and monitoring and evaluation tasks required under the Cooperative Agreement/contract:

- a. **Complete public outreach and awareness activities at a grassroots level** by informing one or more communities located nearby a registered land parcel targeted for tourism investment about the possibilities for tourism investment on such lands. The Community Engagement Implementation Partner will prepare communities for possible investor activities by collaborating with key stakeholders in a community to inform each community as a whole about the Project activities, how the Project may support the community (and the investor) in reaching agreements on use of land for tourism investment purposes, and what benefits might accrue to a community should an investment occur. The Community Engagement Implementation Partner should use its knowledge of an individual community to contribute to the process of identifying which community in proximity to potential registered land parcels has a robust governance structure and is most suitable for maintaining social license over the long term.

As part of this activity, MCC expects the Community Engagement Implementation Partner, in cooperation with Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) and Provincial government representatives, to:

- assist the investor facing Implementation Partner to determine which community(ies) has an interest in the targeted land and what is the membership of that community(ies);
  - hold meetings with leaders and members of the community(ies), as needed, to explain that a nearby registered land parcel has been targeted for tourism investment purposes and explain the process of investment promotion;
  - explain the potential opportunities that exist for cooperation with a tourism investor that might lead to benefits for the community(ies) and its members; and
  - help set reasonable expectations for the outcome of any tourism investment and how it may benefit the community(ies) and its members and then manage those expectations.
- b. **Work with one or more community near targeted land parcels to inform community members of the specific details of a potential investment on nearby land, the possible role that the community may play to realize the investment opportunity, and how such investment may impact community members.** After an investor shows interest in a particular registered land parcel, the Community Engagement Implementation Partner, working with SIG representatives, will prepare the community for interaction with the investor in cooperation with MCT. The Implementation Partner will need to identify an entry into each community that promotes trust and confidence among the leaders and members. The Implementation Partner should provide information on the type of investment under consideration, and work to set community expectations for the benefits that may accrue to the community from any such investment, in line with investor expectations. The Implementing Partner will help to align investor and community interests and establish a mutual responsibility between

the investor and the community for the long-term maintenance of any social license agreements and benefit streams that will accrue to the parties. This work will require coordination with the investor-facing Implementing Partner, to ensure that messaging is consistent and that expectations of a community and the investor are uniform.

- c. **As needed, work with a community to reinforce inclusive governance structures as they may relate to social license decisions and ensure gender equity in decision making and sharing of benefits related to any investment.** Maintenance of social license over the long term of a tourism investment depends on the understanding and acceptance of benefit sharing arrangements by all members of the community. Female and marginalized community members that are excluded from discussions and decisions related to social license and benefit sharing arrangements will bear the burden of negative outcomes resulting from decisions that do not prioritize the needs of all community members. The increased dissatisfaction and reduced legitimacy of the investor arising in these situations can result in more direct actions to disrupt an investment, leading to the withdrawal of the investor and the loss of benefits to the community. The Implementing Partner will promote inclusivity in community consultations and taking into account the interests of a wide spectrum of community members, such that acceptance of the investor as legitimate is more likely to occur even if all members do not share equally in the benefits from an investment in neighboring land. The Implementing Partner will support SIG involvement in community meetings and consultations to build government capacity (at the National and Provincial levels).
- d. **Coordinate activities and work together with other Project Implementers, including SIG, to manage messaging around a specific investment opportunity to investor/community and set a foundation for honest and equitable agreement on social license issues.** Coordination between the Community Engagement Implementation Partner, the SIG, and other ALTIF Project Implementing Partners on actions and messaging is critical to ensure that an investor and a community have similar expectations and understanding of the investment when seeking to reach agreement on social license related to settlement by the investor of land nearby a community. The community's recognition of any investment and investor as legitimate is vital to the success of any investment. The Implementing Partner will work with other Implementing Partners and SIG to manage the transparent disclosure of information related to a specific proposed investment and the investors intentions to the community. The Implementing Partner will also encourage community representatives to be transparent when discussing the interests of the community members with the investor.
- e. **Provide advice to a community during discussions with investors on social license issues related to a specific investment opportunity. Ensure that the community as a whole is informed of progress in discussions and that community members agree with the process and the outcome.** The Community Engagement Implementation Partner should act as an honest broker, alongside the SIG representatives, advising a community during the discussions with an investor around establishing social license. The Implementation Partner will assist the community to memorialize social license agreements and to establish a mechanism to monitor the fulfillment of the agreement and meeting of expectations on both sides – the investor-facing side and the community facing-side – as this is the key to maintenance of social license, which in turn will support continuity of the investment and benefits to the community.
- f. **Make community members and leaders aware of and/or facilitate needed training, through established training organizations or programs, related to job opportunities and other skills**

**required to take advantage of opportunities presented by the tourism investment.** To fulfill and take full advantage of social license agreements, community members may need to develop tourism related skills and obtain training on a variety of issues. The Community Engagement Implementation Partner should network with donor projects and other training providers to identify and facilitate skill development opportunities for community members.

- g. **Organize and support a selected community to formalize its customary land rights in cases where formalization is needed to reach agreement on social license with an investor.** There may be cases where a community wishes to protect rights in its customary land by formalizing those rights in a manner consistent with the law. One example of such formalization may be the recording of customary land under the Customary Land Records Act. Where the community specifically requests this type of support, the Community Engagement Implementing Partner will inform MCC of this request. MCC will approve the Implementing Partner's support for this work in cases where formalization is vital to reaching agreement on social license with an investor. Where MCC approves such work, the Implementing Partner (in coordination with the relevant SIG government agency) may assist the community in organizing community meetings to decide on boundaries and legal interests in land, completing other related activities, such as land surveying and parceling, and finalizing the legal requirements for formalization of community land rights.
- h. **Undertake other activities as needed to support communities during the public outreach and social license agreement process.** The Community Engagement Implementation Partner should provide additional support to communities and SIG as needed to achieve the objective of establishing and maintaining social license related to a tourism investment on neighboring land. Actions related to supporting a community's ability to monitor and maintain social license are of prime concern. Most any actions that support this objective should be considered reasonable and within the scope of this Cooperative Agreement/contract. For example, when disputes around benefits sharing threaten to upset social license agreements the Implementing Partner should work with the SIG officials to organize consultations and meetings between the community and investor to work out differences and build trust that can help maintain social license. Should questions arise about the appropriateness of any Implementation Partner actions in support of the objective, the Implementation Partner should consult with MCC.

#### **IV. Required Expertise**

Organizations interested in the Community Engagement Cooperative Agreement/contract should demonstrate the requisite expertise to implement this work under the MCC Solomon Islands Threshold Program. Specifically, as part of this requirement, MCC is seeking organizations that demonstrate sectoral and technical expertise to support the Project in the following areas:

- a. **Community Engagement Expertise** – personnel with experience working directly with indigenous communities on a variety of issues including use of land and natural resources, governance, conflict resolution, and inclusive consultation approaches.
- b. **Communications and Public Outreach Expertise** – personnel with experience working directly with indigenous communities (preferably in Solomon Islands), often located in rural areas, to educate community members on Project activities, legal issues as they impact on social license negotiations, and gender and social inclusion matters.

- c. **Negotiation, Conflict Resolution and Advisory Expertise in the context of investment preparation** – personnel with experience supporting indigenous communities in negotiations with private operators (e.g., tourism, mining, etc.) and documenting agreements related to land access and benefit sharing.
- d. **Gender and Social Inclusion Expertise** – personnel with experience on gender equity and social inclusion matters around access to land, community governance, and benefit sharing.
- e. **Project Management Expertise** – personnel with the ability to manage a diverse team of experts and be able to integrate content from multiple disciplines and sectors, project management skills, ability to plan missions and coordinate logistics for team members, strong presentation skills, and strategic thinking skills.

*MCC encourages subcontracting and teaming arrangements for any organizations that are not able to fulfill all requirements independently.*

## V. Key Personnel

The following personnel shall be considered Key Staff and subject to MCC approval. Key personnel shall, individually or in combination, possess the skills and experience stated in the section above.

- a. **Team Leader:** The Team Leader should demonstrate no less than 5 years relevant experience working directly with indigenous communities on social license issues related to accessing land or natural resources. The team leader should also have the following skills/experience:
  - University degree in Social Sciences (e.g., Sociology, Anthropology, Development Studies, Women's Studies, Economics, Political Science, Community Development, etc.).
  - Experience and skill in advising communities reach agreements with investors or other groups related to land use or access to natural resources.
  - Knowledge and experience in inclusive governance approaches to community decision making – demonstrated ability and experience in promoting women and youth inclusion in local governance structures and community decision making bodies.
  - Project management experience – managing multidisciplinary teams to achieve multiple objectives.
  - Public outreach experience at a grass roots level – delivering messages to remote communities in language or other manner that facilitates understanding by rural citizens.
  - Demonstrated awareness of and commitment to include social safeguards and inclusive consultation approaches in all project activities.
  - Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English. Written and verbal skills in Pigin and local languages is a plus. The ability to interact constructively with both technical team members, consultants, the general public, and government officials is required.
- b. **Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist:** The GSI specialist should demonstrate no less than 5 years of relevant experience working with indigenous communities on gender equality and social inclusion issues, preferably in Solomon Islands or the Pacific Region. The GSI specialist should also have then following skills/experience:



- University degree in Social Science or related fields (e.g., Sociology, Anthropology, Development Studies, Women's Studies, Economics, Political Science, Community Development, etc.).
- Demonstrated expertise in social and gender analysis and integration including the implementation of projects in a variety of sectors.
- Knowledge of gender-related policies, laws and regulations focused on women's overall status and condition, and the policy and institutional environment in Solomon Islands is preferred.
- Knowledge of and experience working with key national women's organizations, NGOs and relevant government institutions focusing on social and gender issues in Solomon Islands or the Pacific Region. Experience with major donor organizations, especially U.S. donors, is a plus.
- Ability to work with multidisciplinary teams and institutions and interact constructively with technical experts, government officials, people that could be affected by projects, and civil society.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English. Written and verbal skills in Pigin and local languages is required. The ability to interact constructively with both technical team members, consultants, the general public, and government officials is required.
- Familiarity with the social safeguard policies and practices of the World Bank or other international organization is a plus.

Organizations shall ensure that a sufficient number of its staff possess language skills (oral and written Pigin and local language) and Solomon Islands or Pacific Region expertise. The organization will list expected staff by position that will possess these skills and experience. All staff should have computer and other skills normally required for their positions in an international development project.