

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to Conduct the End-line Evaluation of the Samburu Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA) Project

Project title	Empowering Communities for Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Change Mitigation in Isiolo County
Commissioning organization	Merti Integrated Development Programme (MID-P)
Funding/programme	UNDP, through the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP)
Type of assignment	End-line (final) project evaluation: Individual consultant or consulting firm
Duration	15 working days
Application deadline	12 th October 2026

1. Background and Context

1.1 The organization and the landscape

Merti Integrated Development Programme (MID-P) is a local non-governmental organization registered with the NGO Coordination Board (registration no. 218/051/2002/071/2652, 17 July 2003). It is headquartered in Isiolo Town, with a field office in Merti, Isiolo County, and envisions an empowered, just, equitable and resilient society in Northern Kenya.

The Samburu Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA) is a transboundary landscape spanning Samburu and Isiolo Counties. Its vast rangelands support globally significant biodiversity, wildlife migration corridors and pastoral livelihoods, and community conservancies play a central role in conserving natural resources while sustaining local livelihoods. The landscape faces growing pressure from climate change, recurrent droughts, land degradation, invasive species, unsustainable resource use and socio-economic stress, all of which undermine ecosystem health and community resilience.

1.2 The project

UNDP, with funding from the GEF-SGP, supported the SICA Project to strengthen integrated landscape management through community-led conservation and sustainable livelihood approaches. MID-P implemented the project in Isiolo County as Strategic Partner, working with five grantees. The project worked with community conservancies, community-based organizations, women and youth groups, and County Government institutions to promote ecosystem restoration, sustainable rangeland management, climate-smart agriculture, sustainable beekeeping, gums and resins value chains, green enterprises and stronger governance of natural resources.

Project description	Details
Implementation period	2023-2026

Project description	Details
Overall objective	To enhance and maintain socio-ecological resilience of selected landscapes and seascapes through community-based initiatives in selected ecologically sensitive areas of Kenya for global environmental benefits and sustainable development.
Target groups / beneficiaries	Community conservancies, community-based organisations, women and youth groups, pastoral and agro-pastoral households, and County Government institutions.
Intervention locations	Isiolo County.
Grantees	Five grantees
Alignment	Kenya national and county development priorities; UNDP and GEF-SGP strategic priorities; the Sustainable Development Goals (notably SDG 13 Climate Action, SDG 15 Life on Land and SDG 1 No Poverty); and the Convention on Biological Diversity and national biodiversity commitments.

1.3 Institutional arrangements

Actor	Role in the project
UNDP / GEF-SGP	Funder and programme owner. Set the programme framework and approved the results framework, provided strategic and technical oversight, and received project reports.
MID-P (Strategic Partner)	Held the grant agreement for the Isiolo component. Responsible for project coordination, grantee oversight, technical support and capacity strengthening for grantees, financial and programme monitoring, stakeholder engagement, learning and reporting to UNDP/GEF-SGP.
Five grantees	Community-based organizations and conservancies that delivered community-level interventions under individual grant agreements, including restoration, rangeland management, beekeeping, gums and resins, climate-smart agriculture and green enterprise activities, and reported to MID-P.
County Government of Isiolo	Policy and technical partners. Provided technical backstopping, coordination with county plans and linkages to extension and natural resource management structures.
Community institutions	Conservancy boards, grazing and natural resource committees, women and youth groups, and traditional institutions that participated in planning, implementation and benefit sharing.

2. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

2.1 Purpose and rationale

The project has ended. MID-P is commissioning an independent end-line evaluation to meet accountability requirements to UNDP/GEF-SGP, to provide an evidence-based assessment of what the project achieved and how, and to capture lessons to inform future programming and the scaling of community-led conservation in the SICA landscape. The evaluation will follow the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation.

2.2 Intended users and use of findings

Intended user	How the evaluation will be used
UNDP / GEF-SGP	Accountability for results; learning on the grantmaking and strategic partner model; input to future SGP and landscape programming.
MID-P	Institutional learning; improving its role as strategic partner; resource mobilization and design of follow-on programmes.
Grantees	Understanding of their results and capacity gaps; improving sustainability and replication of successful practices; preparing future proposals.
County Government of Isiolo and other state agencies	Informing county natural resource, climate and livelihood plans; identifying practices to institutionalize or scale.
Community institutions and conservancies	Reflecting on results and benefits; strengthening governance and ownership of natural resource management after project support ends.

2.3 Evaluation objectives

Overall objective: To independently assess the performance, results and sustainability of the SICA Project, including MID-P's performance as Strategic Partner, and to generate evidence-based lessons and recommendations to inform future conservation and community development programming in the SICA landscape.

Specific objectives:

1. Assess the extent to which planned outputs and outcomes were achieved against the approved results framework, indicators, targets and baseline values.
2. Assess project performance against the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (contribution) and sustainability.
3. Assess MID-P's performance as Strategic Partner, including its relationships with grantees, UNDP/GEF-SGP and other partners.
4. Examine how gender equality, youth and social inclusion, disability inclusion, safeguarding, human rights and environmental sustainability were addressed.

5. Identify lessons learned, good practices, innovations and approaches with potential for scale-up or replication.
6. Provide practical, forward-looking recommendations for MID-P, UNDP/GEF-SGP, grantees and county institutions.

2.4 Scope

- **Time frame:** the full project implementation period, 2023-2026.
- **Geographic coverage:** the Isiolo County component of the project. The evaluator is expected to cover project locations in Isiolo County only, and not Samburu County, unless MID-P advises otherwise at inception. Final sites will be agreed during inception to ensure all five grantees and the main intervention types are represented.
- **Thematic coverage:** all project outcomes and outputs, including ecosystem restoration, sustainable rangeland management, climate-smart agriculture, beekeeping, gums and resins value chains, green enterprises and natural resource governance.
- **Target groups:** women, men, youth, persons with disabilities, conservancies, community-based organisations, pastoral and agro-pastoral households, and county institutions.
- **Out of scope:** activities in Samburu County and other UNDP/GEF-SGP projects in the landscape, except where needed to assess coherence. The evaluation is not a financial audit.

3. Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

The questions below are the key questions for the evaluation. The evaluator will refine them, with an evaluation matrix of indicators, sources and methods, during the inception phase for agreement with MID-P and UNDP/GEF-SGP.

Criterion	Key evaluation questions
Relevance	• To what extent did the interventions respond to the priorities and needs of local communities, conservancies, county governments, women and youth? • To what extent did the project design respond to the biodiversity, climate and livelihood challenges of the SICA landscape?
Coherence	• How well did the project complement county plans, national policies, UNDP/GEF-SGP priorities and other conservation initiatives operating in the landscape? • Were there areas of duplication or opportunities for greater synergy?
Effectiveness	• To what extent were planned outputs and outcomes achieved against the results framework? • What factors enabled or constrained achievement? • Were there differences in results across grantees, intervention types, communities, and gender or age groups?

Criterion	Key evaluation questions
Efficiency	- To what extent were financial, human and technical resources used efficiently to deliver the intended outputs and results? - How efficient were implementation, management, coordination and partnership arrangements, including their effect on transaction costs and bottlenecks? - Were activities delivered within planned timelines and budgets, and what caused delays or cost variations? - Where feasible, did the project show value for money, and could alternative delivery approaches have achieved similar results at lower cost or in less time?
Impact/contribution	- What observable higher-level changes have occurred in biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, climate resilience and community livelihoods during the project period? - To what extent has the project contributed to changes in governance, institutional and community capacities, coordination, participation and ownership in natural resource management? - How plausibly can observed changes be linked to the project's interventions, and what other contextual, institutional, environmental or socio-economic factors influenced them? - What unintended positive or negative effects have emerged?
Sustainability	- To what extent are results and benefits likely to continue after funding ends, and what factors support or undermine this? - To what extent have approaches, capacities and practices been institutionalized in government institutions, grantees, community organizations and other partners? - To what extent has the project strengthened local ownership and the financial, institutional and technical capacities needed to sustain results? - What mechanisms, partnerships, financing arrangements or exit strategies exist to sustain, scale up or replicate successful interventions while maintaining environmental and social sustainability?
Cross-cutting issues	- To what extent were gender equality, youth inclusion, social inclusion, safeguarding and environmental sustainability integrated into design, implementation and monitoring? - To what extent did the project promote meaningful participation and equitable access to benefits for women, youth, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups, in line with leaving no one behind? Were persons with disabilities consulted and what barriers did they face?

Criterion	Key evaluation questions
	- To what extent were Indigenous and local knowledge, conflict sensitivity, human rights and community priorities reflected in approaches and decision-making? - In this pastoral context, did the design and implementation adequately consider mobility, seasonal livelihood patterns, access to natural resources and the differing vulnerabilities of pastoral and agro-pastoral communities?
MID-P as Strategic Partner	- How effective was MID-P in governance, grant oversight, coordination, technical support, risk management, fiduciary oversight where applicable, monitoring and learning, communication and capacity strengthening? - How effective were MID-P's working relationships with grantees, UNDP/GEF-SGP, county government and other partners? - What should MID-P retain, change or strengthen in future strategic partner roles?

3.1 Assessment against the results framework

The evaluation shall assess project performance against the approved project results framework, including relevant outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets and baseline values. The evaluator shall review the extent to which planned results were achieved and identify any significant variances between planned and actual performance. The assessment shall draw on available monitoring data, progress reports, project records and other credible evidence.

Where baseline values, targets or monitoring data are incomplete, inconsistent or unavailable, the evaluator shall identify these limitations clearly and explain their implications for assessing performance. The evaluator shall not construct unsupported baseline comparisons or infer changes that cannot be substantiated by the evidence available. Where appropriate, the evaluator may triangulate project data with stakeholder perspectives and other credible secondary sources.

3.2 Data quality

The evaluator shall assess the quality, completeness, consistency and reliability of project monitoring data, including data reported by grantees. Findings shall be triangulated using multiple sources of evidence, and any significant data limitations or inconsistencies shall be clearly documented.

4. Methodology

The TOR suggests the approach below. The final design, including tools, sampling and schedule, will be proposed by the evaluator and agreed with MID-P and UNDP/GEF-SGP in the inception report.

4.1 Approach

The evaluator shall apply a mixed-methods approach that is participatory, gender-responsive, culturally appropriate and utilization-focused. Data collection should combine desk review (project

document, results framework, progress and monitoring reports, grantee reports, county plans), a household or beneficiary survey, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and site observation. The methodology shall clearly describe the sampling framework, respondent categories, data collection methods, analytical approaches, triangulation procedures and key limitations.

4.2 Assessing impact and contribution

Given the project's duration and the absence of a robust counterfactual, the evaluation will not attempt to attribute higher-level changes directly to the project. Instead, it shall assess the project's **contribution** to observed changes using contribution analysis or another appropriate theory-based approach. The evaluator shall reconstruct or review the theory of change, test its assumptions against evidence, and consider alternative explanations and external factors.

4.3 Sampling

The evaluator shall propose a final sampling strategy that ensures adequate representation across the five grantees, intervention types and geographical areas. The sample shall include women, men, youth, persons with disabilities, community institutions, government stakeholders and other relevant actors, with the rationale, sample size and limitations stated clearly.

4.4 Gender, disability and human rights

All evaluation products shall address gender equality, disability inclusion and human rights. Data shall be disaggregated by sex, age, disability and, where relevant, location and grantee. At least one member of the evaluation team shall have gender expertise, and the team shall know disability inclusion.

4.5 Ethics and safeguarding

The evaluator shall apply appropriate ethical and safeguarding standards throughout, in line with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct, including informed consent, confidentiality, safe data handling and respectful engagement with communities. The methodology shall explain how personal data, sensitive information and safeguarding risks will be managed, including referral of any safeguarding concern arising in the field. Any required research permits or authorisations are the evaluator's responsibility, with MID-P support.

5. Evaluation Products (Deliverables) and Timeline

Deliverable	Description	Length	Due (from contract signing)	Payment
Inception report and evaluation matrix	Methodology, evaluation matrix, sampling strategy, data collection tools, ethics and data protection plan, detailed work plan and field schedule. Prepared after desk review and preliminary discussion with MID-P, and approved before any fieldwork starts.	10-15 pages, excluding annexes	[Week 1]	20%

Deliverable	Description	Length	Due (from contract signing)	Payment
Draft evaluation report	Findings, analysis, conclusions, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations, organized by evaluation criteria and including an executive summary.	Maximum 50 pages including executive summary	[Week 4]	40%
Validation workshop	Facilitated workshop with MID-P, UNDP/GEF-SGP, grantees, county government and community representatives to present and refine draft findings. Workshop notes to be shared.	One day	[Week 5]	—
Final evaluation report and annexes	Revised report incorporating feedback, with an audit trail of how stakeholder comments were addressed; executive summary (2–4 pages); cleaned datasets and data binder; data collection tools; PowerPoint presentation of key findings and recommendations.	Maximum 50 pages plus annexes	[Week 6]	40%

All reports shall be written in English, submitted in Word format, and shall comply with UNDP evaluation report quality standards. Final payment is subject to written approval of the final report by MID-P.

6. Duration and Work Plan

The assignment is estimated at **15 working days**, spread over approximately 6 weeks from contract signing. Given the short duration, MID-P will arrange field logistics in advance (see section 8), and the evaluator is expected to use enumerators or additional team members to cover all five grantees within the fieldwork period. The expected distribution of days is:

Stage	Working days	Output
Desk review, briefing and inception report	3	Inception report and evaluation matrix
Tool finalization, enumerator training, field data collection and consultations	6	Collected and cleaned data
Data analysis and drafting	3	Draft evaluation report

Stage	Working days	Output
Validation workshop	1	Validated findings
Incorporating feedback and finalization	2	Final report, datasets, presentation
Total	15	

7. Evaluator Qualifications and Competencies

This assignment is open to an individual consultant or a consulting firm. In either case, the evaluation shall be led by a Team Leader meeting the requirements below. A firm should propose a team that includes a gender expert and a person with knowledge of disability inclusion.

Education

- Master's degree in Monitoring and Evaluation, Environmental Management, Natural Resource Management, Climate Change, Development Studies, Social Sciences or a related field. Professional training in evaluation or results-based management is an added advantage.

Technical skills and competencies

- Demonstrated expertise in end-line evaluations using the OECD-DAC criteria and the UNEG Norms and Standards.
- Demonstrated knowledge of theory-based evaluation and contribution analysis, gender-responsive evaluation, participatory methods and data visualization.
- Strong knowledge of biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, climate resilience and community-led development in ASAL contexts. Knowledge of GEF-SGP or landscape-level conservation programming is an advantage.
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis using statistical and data management software.
- Excellent analytical, report writing and presentation skills.

Experience

- At least 7 years of experience evaluating donor-funded programmes.
- Completion of 2–3 comparable evaluations in the last five years, preferably of conservation, climate resilience, biodiversity or natural resource management projects funded by UN agencies or similar partners, supported by sample reports or references.
- Demonstrated experience working with pastoralist communities and community conservancies in northern Kenya or comparable settings.
- Experience facilitating stakeholder consultations with communities, government institutions and development partners.
- Proven ability to produce high-quality evaluation reports with evidence-based findings and actionable recommendations.

- Fluency in English. Working knowledge of Kiswahili is required, and knowledge of local languages such as Borana or Samburu is an advantage.

8. Management Arrangements and Logistics

- The consultant will report to MID-P's Program Manager, who will coordinate with UNDP/GEF-SGP. MID-P will form an evaluation reference group to review the inception and draft reports.
- MID-P will provide project documents and data, introductions to grantees and county officials, and community mobilization for interviews and focus groups.
- MID-P will arrange venues for community meetings and the validation workshop, and will help identify local interpreters or enumerators where needed.
- The consultant is responsible for their own equipment, software, professional insurance and, unless otherwise stated above, enumerator and travel costs.

9. Evaluation of Proposals

Criterion	Weight
Understanding of the assignment	15%
Methodology and technical approach	30%
Relevant experience (including sample reports and references)	15%
Qualifications of the consultant or key personnel	10%
Financial proposal	30%
Total	100%

10. Application Procedure

Interested individual consultants or firms should submit the following:

1. A technical proposal showing understanding of the TOR, proposed approach and methodology, and a work plan with timelines.
2. A financial proposal in Kenyan shillings, with a breakdown of professional fees and any field costs not covered by MID-P.
3. Updated curriculum vitae of the consultant or each team member.
4. One or two sample evaluation reports from comparable assignments.
5. Contact details of three references for comparable assignments completed within the last five years.
6. A valid Tax Compliance Certificate.
7. For firms: Certificate of Incorporation and CR12.

Submit applications by email to **midpprocurement@midpkenya.org** with the subject line “Consultancy for Project End-line Evaluation for Samburu Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA)”.

Deadline for submission: 12th October 2026

Annexes (to be provided to the selected evaluator)

- Approved project document and results framework, with indicators, baselines and targets.
- List of grantees, project locations and conservancies.
- Progress, monitoring and financial reports; grant agreements.
- Relevant county and national policy documents.