



Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Consultancy Services: Assessment of Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), Gender Transformation and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Cattle Corridor of Uganda.

1. Introduction:

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), in partnership with Conservation International (CI) and the Africa Innovations Institute (AfRII), is preparing a proposal document for the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded full-size project titled “Water Security and Catchment Resilience in Uganda’s Cattle Corridor”(GEF ID: 11696). The project aims to enhance sustainable and climate-resilient land and water management practices in Uganda's Cattle Corridor. Details about this project can be found [HERE](#).

2. Background

Uganda’s cattle corridor, spanning 17 districts in Central and Eastern Uganda, supports approximately 40% of the country’s livestock population. Despite its immense potential, the region faces significant challenges, including underperforming SMEs in Agro-processing and value addition, gendered barriers to asset ownership, market access, and decision-making, as well as declining natural resources and erratic livelihoods due to drought and land degradation. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive, evidence-based study to map the current SME landscape, explore gender transformation pathways, and identify resilient livelihood strategies.

This assignment will assess the SME's potential and opportunities and gender-specific challenges, identify barriers to equitable water access, and integrate gender-responsive strategies into project planning and implementation. The analysis aims to generate actionable recommendations to enhance inclusivity, empower women, and ensure that project interventions effectively close gender gaps in water security and livelihoods adaptation resilience. Additionally, the gender studies will align with COP16 decisions, contributing to comprehensive frameworks for addressing drought and land degradation while advancing Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets and promoting the inclusive participation of vulnerable gender groups. This background sets the stage for consultancy services aimed at addressing the project's adaptation interventions and transforming the cattle corridor into a thriving, equitable, and resilient region.

3. Objectives

The main objective of the consultancy is to understand gender-specific challenges, identify barriers to equitable water access, conduct an SMEs assessment, and integrate gender-responsive strategies into project planning and implementation. Specifically, the consultancy will perform:

- i. **SME Assessment** - Conduct a detailed mapping and profiling of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to evaluate their business performance, identify growth constraints, and analyze financing gaps. This assessment will involve a comprehensive examination of operational efficiencies, market access challenges, and financial health to provide



targeted recommendations for enhancing SME sustainability and scalability. The consultant will also identify the opportunities for climate-smart Agro-processing techniques and potential entry points for public-private partnerships.

- ii. **Gender Transformation Analysis** - Examine gender-differentiated roles, control over assets, and decision-making within households and enterprises, and identify successful gender-based interventions and barriers, assess gender empowerment, structural discrimination, gender norms, gender mainstreaming, and equity and equality in program access and outcomes for all gender groups. The consultant shall highlight intersectional factors such as age, disability, and socio-economic status, and propose mechanisms to engage men and youth in supporting gender equality.
- iii. **Sustainable Livelihoods Appraisal** - Undertake a comprehensive sustainable livelihoods appraisal involving documenting existing livelihood portfolios, including crop, livestock, and off-farm activities, and assessing their resilience to climate and market shocks, identifying and recommending scalable livelihood models and value chains that can enhance economic stability and sustainability for communities. The consultant shall identify and recommend practical ways to diversify agriculture, strengthen value chains, integrate Indigenous Knowledge, and promote sustainable livelihood models to improve community economic stability.
- iv. **Develop Recommendations** - Propose gender-transformative approaches, and develop strategic interventions that enhance gender empowerment, reduce structural discrimination, and integrate gender-responsive practices into livelihood and SME development initiatives and recommend scalable livelihood models and value chains to enhance the resilience and sustainability of SMEs and community livelihoods in the face of climate and market shocks. The consultant shall provide a roadmap for institutional capacity-building, knowledge sharing, and policy advocacy to sustain gender-responsive and resilient livelihoods development.

4. Scope of the work

The consultant will be expected to:

- Undertake a thorough desk review of policies, previous studies, and secondary data on SMEs, gender transformation and sustainable livelihoods in the Cattle Corridor.
- Design and deploy mixed-methods research, including quantitative surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews in the districts of Kole, Pader, Kitgum, Mityana, and Rakai Districts.
- Engage stakeholders such as district local governments, private sector actors, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and financial service providers. Participatory and Gender-Sensitive Approaches:



- Spatial Analysis: Where feasible, the consultant shall incorporate spatial analysis techniques, including GIS mapping or geo-referenced data, to identify geographic disparities in SME development, resource access, and livelihood vulnerability.
- The consultant shall apply a participatory approach that ensures a meaningful inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in the analysis and design of solutions. Intersectional factors such as age, socio-economic status, and disability shall be explicitly considered throughout the process.
- Perform statistical analysis to draw actionable insights.
- Facilitate a validation workshop with key stakeholders in Kampala to review findings, gather feedback, and ensure consensus on actionable recommendations.

Note: The scope of work outlined above serves as a guiding framework. The consultant shall submit a detailed methodology as part of their technical proposal, clearly describing how the assignment will be conducted and accomplished, including proposed tools, sampling strategies, ethical considerations, and timelines.

5. Deliverables, timelines and payment

The assignment will take a maximum of three (3) weeks beginning from July 28, 2025 up to August 18, 2025 as detailed below.

Expected output	Timeline	Format	Installment payment (%)
Inception report and data collection tools	July 28, 2025	Word doc	30
Draft report	August 11, 2025	Word doc	40
Validation workshop (online)	August 15, 2025	PowerPoint + Minutes	
Final report	August 18, 2025	Word doc	30

6. Reporting

The consultant will report to Africa Innovations Institute (AfrII) or designated project manager. Regular weekly check-ins will be organized by the designated project manager to monitor progress, provide guidance, and address any challenges. The consultant shall be responsible for reporting on activities, sharing updates, and raising any issues during these sessions throughout the consultancy period.

All reports shall be professionally formatted and submitted in both editable (Microsoft Word) and PDF formats. The final report shall include an executive summary, policy and legal framework, methodology, key findings, conclusions, and practical recommendations. Annexes



shall include relevant tools, datasets, transcripts, and other supporting documentation, where applicable.

7. Required Qualifications and Experience

The consultant should possess:

- A Master's degree in either Sociology, Gender Studies, Rural Development, Economics, or closely related fields.
- Extensive experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative field research in agribusiness, gender and sustainable livelihood
- At least 5 years of experience in evaluating agribusiness and SME sectors, as well as designing gender-transformative and sustainable livelihood programs.
- Proven experience working in Uganda or similar contexts, particularly in cattle corridor areas.

8. Submission instructions

Interested consultants or teams should submit applications both hard and soft copy of your complete, detailed bid including team CVs and two samples of relevant past work by **Monday 21st July 2025 at 11:00am (EAT)**, in a sealed envelope to the following address:

Plot 1544, Koire Close, Off Old Kiira Road, Bukoto Tel: +256768 229 363; and as pdf by Email to:

procurement@afrii.org copy to info@afrii.org

Subject line: "Consultancy - SMEs, Gender Transformation and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Cattle Corridor"