



## Terms of Reference for Quality Assurance Plan in Malawi

**Date:** March 2023

**Location:** Malawi

<b>Assignment title</b>	Quality Assurance Plan for LIFE-AR Delivery mechanism in Malawi
<b>Reporting to</b>	The Director of Environmental Affairs, Ms. Tawonga Mbale-Luka. However, for operational matters to Yamikani Idriss, Environmental Officer, Environmental Affairs Department <a href="mailto:idrissyamikani@gmail.com">idrissyamikani@gmail.com</a> and Sejal Patel, Researcher, International Institute for Environment and Development <a href="mailto:sejal.patel@iied.org">sejal.patel@iied.org</a>
<b>Deadline of assignment</b>	2 months after start date
<b>Duration of assignment</b>	Maximum 40 days (to be defined by the expert in their work plan)
<b>Assignment overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Developing a comprehensive QA plan which will include all aspects of the initiative and ensure effective implementation at every stage</li></ul>
<b>Application overview</b>	Please send your financial and technical proposal to Yamikani Idriss, Environmental Officer, Environmental Affairs Department <a href="mailto:idrissyamikani@gmail.com">idrissyamikani@gmail.com</a> , Sejal Patel, Researcher, International Institute for Environment and Development <a href="mailto:sejal.patel@iied.org">sejal.patel@iied.org</a> and <a href="mailto:lifear.iied@gmail.com">lifear.iied@gmail.com</a> by the end of day 19th April 2023.

### 1.0 LIFE-AR project background

To overcome the pressing and unprecedented challenge of climate change, the least developed countries (LDCs) require a long-term focus to ensure that resilience and adaptation are consistently built over time. To date, climate responses have often been short-term, projectized and sectoral with climate action defined and led externally and not by LDCs or local communities. This is limiting long term sustainability and the building of LDC systems for inclusive planning, cross-sectoral and cross-level coordination, and resourcing. Business as

usual climate finance transfers to LDCs have proved inadequate and expensive due to the cost of channelling finance through intermediaries. There also remains a gap in knowledge and a lack of an evidence base of what is working in practice to deliver long-term climate-resilient development at scale.

In response, the LDCs have launched their 2050 Vision for a climate resilient future: all countries to be on climate-resilient development pathways by 2030 and deliver net-zero emissions by 2050. One initiative to support LDCs in achieving this vision is called the LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR).

LIFE-AR is an LDC-led, LDC-owned initiative with the objective of developing long-term climate adaptation interventions and investments that reach local level, strengthening national institutions, domestic systems and capabilities, and further refining National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), National Determined Contributions (NDCs) and wider national efforts to build resilience and address poverty by 2050.

Front Runner Countries (FRCs) will lead and manage the establishment and implementation of LIFE-AR in-country, promoting a shift away from business-as-usual practice, and set the direction for the delivery of the LDC Vision, pioneering approaches consistent with their national priorities and contexts; and generating learning for other LDCs, development partners and global finance architecture. Front Runner Countries will develop a **Programme of Work** which will set out how each front runner will take the LDC 2050 Vision forward through delivery of the LDC Offer and Principles (table 1), building on existing institutions, systems, and capabilities in country where feasible.

Components	LDC Offer	Corresponding LIFE-AR Principles
Coordination	1. We will work with the whole of society to achieve a low-carbon, climate-resilient future	<i>Working together on a shared and equal platform</i> organisations will use a whole of society approach and ensure active and informed participation from across government, civil society, private sector, development partners, local communities, and academia where feasible, when delivering the LDC Vision.
Finance	2. We will develop strong climate finance architecture, with at least 70% of flows supporting local-level action by 2030.	<i>Delivering 70% finance supporting local level action on the ground by 2030.</i> Organisations will spearhead and pilot approaches to ensure support reaches local level, and supports investments that have been prioritised by those most vulnerable to climate impacts
Planning	3. We will integrate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience into our national and local development objectives	<i>Investing behind integrated climate planning -</i> Organisations will develop and support integrated resilience, mitigation, and adaptation planning over the long term embedded within government planning and budget systems at national and local levels.

Capabilities	4. We will strengthen our climate capabilities, institutions, knowledge, skills, and learning	<i>To working at the pace and direction of LDCs-</i> The initiative will be LDC-led and driven, where the LDC Chair will set the direction at the international level, and front runner countries will lead the overall process in country, with an aim to build LDC institutions and capabilities over the long term.
Governance	5. We will create more inclusive governance of climate decisions that are centred on gender transformation and social justice.	<i>To leave no country and no one behind-</i> justice and equity will be at the heart of the collaboration with particular attention given to the needs and perspectives of the most vulnerable and marginalised across society, and those often left behind.

*Table 1: Five components of the LDC Offer and corresponding LIFE-AR principles to deliver the LDC 2050 Vision for a climate resilient future.*

As FRCs complete establishment of their National Platforms, conducting the situational analysis and designing delivery mechanism, developing a **quality assurance plan** for the delivery mechanism is the next key step in the process. The comprehensive QA plan will include all aspects of the initiative and ensure effective implementation at every stage.

## 2.0 Purpose of the quality assurance plan

The Quality Assurance plan will be used as a systematic management and assessment procedure or system to monitor performance and to ensure achievement of quality outputs of the LIFE-AR. Quality assurance will aim to give stakeholders, including development partners, confidence about the management of quality and the outcomes achieved during implementation of LIFE-AR. The implementation of the QA plan will also provide an opportunity for subsequent monitoring of, and learning from, the initiative.

Key objectives of the quality assurance plan are noted below:

- To develop quality checks of the LIFE-AR delivery mechanism and measure its performance.
- To enhance transparency, equity (social inclusion) and accountability
- To strengthen societal and donor confidence in quality implementation of the initiative.
- To provide quality information to beneficiaries and stakeholders

This plan should be considered an initial iteration of quality assurance, which will be built on and developed through the initiative. It should identify an initial set of key minimum standards that can develop, be strengthened and increase over subsequent years. The plan should therefore also consider cost and complexity and potential cost and complexity as the quality assurance strengthens, and potential ways to institutionalise the quality assurance checks into the institutional systems.

## 3.0 Scope of Work/Assignment summary

The specific focus of the assignment is to:

- i. Develop a quality assurance system (manual) which will guide in the implementation of LIFE-AR in Malawi as well as internal and external assessment of the performance of delivery mechanism
  - This should include an overarching picture of QA, highlighting what quality assurance checks should be taken at every stage, by who, and the 'institutional home' of each check/mechanism including:
    - Within the different structures within the LIFE-AR platform
      - Management and coordination
    - Within the process of designing the delivery mechanism (including MEL processes – tracking results and learning and changing accordingly)
    - In the implementation of the delivery mechanism (e.g., LIFE-AR principles and objectives-based decision criteria for investments)
      - Supporting a performance-based element to the investments taken under the delivery mechanism
      - Community level QA and how to reflect accountability to local communities
    - Data – what QA are being put in place
  - Include cross-reference to quality assurance in the PIU manual
- ii. Establish benchmarks/ minimum standards and performance measures in line with the principles of LIFE-AR.
- iii. Prepare a system for quality (performance) monitoring and learning
- iv. Identify potential risks to the LIFE-AR delivery mechanism, and develop a risk management plan to mitigate these risks.
- v. Identify capacity building needs for implementing the initiative through the delivery mechanism, and develop a capacity building plan to address these needs.

The global LIFE-AR initiative is developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the running of LIFE-AR. It will be expected that there will be overlap between the global SOPs and the Malawi LIFE-AR quality assurance framework. The consultant will be expected to liaise with global SOP staff and ensure alignment with the global SOPs.

The QA framework should be informed by the core principles of LIFE-AR and of the locally led action principles. For the LIFE-AR core principles, see: <https://www ldc-climate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/LIFE-AR-Partnership-Compact-for-the-LDC-2050-Vision.pdf> and <https://www ldc-climate.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/LDC-Group-Vision-1.pdf>

For the Locally Led Adaptation Principles, see <https://qca.org/reports/principles-for-locally-led-adaptation-action/> and <https://www.iied.org/principles-for-locally-led-adaptation> and <https://www.wri.org/initiatives/locally-led-adaptation/principles-locally-led-adaptation>

The consultant will conduct desk reviews (research) of current global and regional trends in quality assurance of locally led programs to develop benchmarks. The consultant will conduct field work via key informant interviews, focus group discussions and other relevant means, to assess quality assurance implementation to identify areas to strengthen, gaps to address and future quality assurance process needs.

## 4.0 Process to develop Quality Assurance Plan

The process will be Government-led through the LIFE-AR technical focal point, supported by the LIFE-AR in-country team (based in EAD), and with IIED support. In line with the principles of LIFE-AR and moving away from business-as-usual approaches, the assignment will be

undertaken through a process that seeks to embed knowledge in existing national institutions and that builds existing capabilities by involving LIFE-AR task team, government staff, academia and local communities.

The LIFE-AR technical focal point and LIFE-AR in-country team will lead on:

- Setting the direction and scope of the work
- Approving the ToR
- Reviewing the output draft and final reports
- Providing key documentation of the initiative

## 5.0 Outputs

The outputs expected from the exercise include, but are not necessarily limited to (as these may change or be updated as work progresses and more clarity on findings and outcomes progresses):

- 5.1 **Commencement meeting** to discuss the assignment, scope, context, and answer any questions.
- 5.2 **Work plan** to be submitted two weeks after commencement of the assignment. This should include a list of literature that will be reviewed, a list of stakeholders that will be consulted, and a draft interview schedule for the conversations with stakeholders (this might involve a number of different versions according to stakeholder type). These would then be discussed in a check-in call to be held on the day following submission of the workplan. The LIFE-AR technical focal point will have final sign-off responsibilities on the work plan.
- 5.3 **Desk review and consultation activities** to be undertaken to develop an understating of current global and regional trends in quality assurance of locally led programs and to develop benchmarks. Consultations via key informant interviews, focus group discussions and other relevant means to then assess current quality assurance implementation in order to identify areas to strengthen, gaps to address and future quality assurance process needs as the initiative develops – particularly in the context of the different components of the delivery mechanism and with the provision of investments in the pilot regions.
- 5.4 **Draft Quality Assurance plan** to be submitted to the LIFE-AR technical focal point and the IIED focal point four weeks after commencement of the assignment for review and sign off. It will also be circulated to all members of the LIFE-AR task team for comments.
- 5.5 **Consultations on the Draft report** output to be undertaken with key stakeholders to gather external feedback on the report. These stakeholders may include the LDC Malawi LIFE-AR advisor (Stella Gama), and the members of the National Climate Change Steering Committee and Technical Committee. A second round of consultations with the same stakeholder groups might be necessary if major or substantive issues are brought up which require further discussion.
- 5.6 **Final Quality Assurance plan** to be submitted. The report considered final only when the final report has gone through all stages of production, including the integration of all feedback and comment given on the draft report, the undertaking of satisfactory copy editing (the quality of which is decided by the LIFE-AR technical focal point), and it has

been laid out in the LIFE-AR format, as defined by the Malawi LIFE-AR technical focal point. The Malawi LIFE-AR focal point will have the final sign off on the report.

## 6.0 Time Frame

The consultancy shall be undertaken over a period of forty (40) days within a two (2) month period, starting April 2023. The workplan will be delivered within one week after the commencement of the assignment. The final duration of the individual activities and thus submission of outputs shall be defined as part of the Consultant's work plan.

Both parties recognise that the achievement of this timetable depends to a large extent on the good cooperation among stakeholders being consulted, the timely provision of adequate information to the consultant and the timely feedback to the consultant on report and recommendations.

Any modification of the work plan (time schedule) due to a substantiated request by either party shall be mutually agreed upon in writing.

## 7.0 Reporting Requirements/Project Organization

The management of the consultancy will be organized as follows:

- 7.1 The Consultant shall report to the Director of Environmental Affairs, Ms. Tawonga Mbale-Luka. However, for day-to-day technical matters, the consultant will report to LIFE-AR Focal Point, Yamikani Idriss and IIED support Sejal Patel, including for interpretations and obligations.
- 7.2 However, for financial or operational matters, the Consultant shall be supervised by the Valentine Lecluse, IIED.
- 7.3 The Environmental Affairs Department, in partnership with IIED, will work together to support the consultancy processes.

## 8.0 Consultant's skills, experience and other requirements

- Proven experience as a quality assurance manager or relevant role
- Thorough knowledge of methodologies of quality assurance and standards within national development and planning systems, financial systems, and governance systems (particularly in devising procedures and mechanisms for supporting inclusive and equitable governance)
- Ability to analyse and clarify current procedures, standards and specifications across the delivery mechanism and to devise, consult and adapt, and agree on quality procedures, standards and specifications to be implemented, including the related monitoring, testing and inspection mechanisms (including tracking, documenting, and reporting procedures)
- Experience developing or updating procedures for capture, investigation, and documentation of complaints
- Ability to write management and technical reports
- Ability to determine, identify, and where relevant, to deliver, training and capacity building needs of different stakeholders
- Excellent numerical skills and understanding of data analysis/statistical methods (e.g. Six Sigma)
- Excellent analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making skills

- Good knowledge of MS Office and databases
- Excellent communication skills
- Great attention to detail and a results driven approach
- Excellent organizational and leadership abilities
- Reliable and Trustworthy
- At least master's degree in business and public administration, economics, or other relevant field
- Experience in climate change, environment, and development organisations or projects preferred
- Certification of quality control is a strong advantage (ISO 9000 etc.)
- Based in Malawi

## 9.0 Consultant's Inputs

The Consultant shall be required to provide the following:

- Professional personnel (with relevant qualifications and experience) in Accounts/Financial Management
- Own transport for the period of the exercise
- Own Secretarial services, including materials
- Own office facilities

## 10.0 Support from the LIFE-AR technical focal point and IIED

The LIFE-AR technical focal point and support IIED staff shall provide the following inputs to support the Consultant in undertaking the assignment:

- Relevant documents related to the assignment and LIFE-AR project.
- Any other information required for the exercise in the agreed time.

## 11.0 Initiating the process

The successful expert will be contracted on a consultancy contract. IIED, as interim LIFE-AR fund managers will be managing the contract.

IIED will need to receive a financial and technical proposal on the assignment before the Consultant can be contracted.

**Please send your financial and technical proposal to Yamikani Idriss, Environmental Officer, Environmental Affairs Department [idrissyamikani@gmail.com](mailto:idrissyamikani@gmail.com), Sejal Patel, Researcher, International Institute for Environment and Development [sejal.patel@iied.org](mailto:sejal.patel@iied.org) and [lifear.iied@gmail.com](mailto:lifear.iied@gmail.com) by the end of day 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**

The process will kick off with a commencement meeting.

## 12.0 LIFE-AR Reference Materials

LIFE-AR 10 years strategy  
LDC Group Vision - see

