Terms of Reference (ToR) for engaging a Consultancy Firm to undertake Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) tasks for the Least Developed Countries Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Title</td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Consultancy Firm for LIFE-AR Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Title</td>
<td>Least Developed Countries Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation (Interim Secretariat)</td>
<td>International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main Client</td>
<td>LIFE-AR Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty Station</td>
<td>Based in a Least Developed Country and experienced in working in Africa and Asia (with frequent travel to LDC front-runner countries (FRCs) i.e., Bhutan, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Malawi, The Gambia, Ethiopia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Requirements</td>
<td>Fluency in English and/or French is essential for this assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>The duration of the assignment is three years with a potential start date of October 2023. The selected consultancy firm will be subject to a six-month probationary period during which the firm’s performance and compatibility with FRCs will be evaluated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of Contract</td>
<td>Consultancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expected Start Period</td>
<td>1st October 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Process</td>
<td>Please share the documents listed in ‘How to Apply’ no later than 8th September with Siân Fedeski, <a href="mailto:sian.fedeski@iied.org">sian.fedeski@iied.org</a> and Leonard Mulase, <a href="mailto:leonard.mulase@iied.org">leonard.mulase@iied.org</a>.</td>
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TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Programme Title: Least Developed Countries Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR)

A. Background

The Least Developed Countries (LDC) Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR) is an LDC-led, LDC-owned initiative to develop a long-term vision for delivering a climate-resilient future. LIFE-AR outlines the ambitious commitments that we LDCs are making together to ensure we leave no LDC behind.
To achieve the vision, LDCs recognised that they must deepen climate knowledge and access predictable, reliable finance from domestic, private and international sources so they can develop their technology and capabilities to support the emergence of:

1. Climate-resilient people living in just, inclusive, happy and poverty-free societies.
2. Climate-resilient economies that are net-zero and prosperous, with vibrant and sustainable growth within ecological limits.
3. Climate-resilient landscapes and ecosystems that are sustainably managed, less vulnerable to climate shocks and stresses, and use nature-based solutions.

The LDC 2050 Vision for a climate resilient future was launched at the UNSG Climate Action Summit in September 2019. Our vision is for Least Developed Countries to deliver climate-resilient development pathways by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050 to ensure our societies, economies and ecosystems thrive. We set out ‘our offer’ of what we will do on our side as LDC Governments to achieve our Vision, as well as ‘our ask’ to the international community. This is summarised in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LDC Offer from LDC Governments</th>
<th>LDC Ask of International Community</th>
<th>Joint Principles of Partnership Compact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordination</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>We will work with the whole of society to achieve a low-carbon, climate-resilient future</td>
<td>Work together to reduce transaction costs and ensure mutual accountability behind LDC leadership</td>
<td>Work together jointly on a shared and equal platform</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Finance</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>We will develop strong climate finance architecture, with at least 70% of flows supporting local-level action by 2030</td>
<td>Provide high-quality, predictable and accessible finance and support the LDCs’ intention of at least 70% financial flows supporting local-level action by 2030</td>
<td>Commit to a shared goal of 70% finance flows supporting action on the ground in LDCs by 2030</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>We will integrate adaptation, mitigation and resilience into our national and local development objectives</td>
<td>Develop your own ambitious strategies for 1.5°C low-carbon climate-resilient pathways by 2020</td>
<td>Invest behind integrated, holistic and ambitious climate planning across whole of society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will strengthen our climate capabilities, institutions, knowledge, skills and learning</td>
<td>Work with us in the long term to strengthen our national and local institutional capabilities</td>
<td>Work at the pace of individual LDCs, aiming to build long-term national and local institutions, systems, structures and capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Governance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will create more inclusive governance of climate decisions that are centred on gender transformation and social justice</td>
<td>Invest in our inclusive climate-resilient net-zero economies and technology</td>
<td>Leave no country and no one behind</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The LDC 2050 vision is guided by the principles of inclusion, participation, justice, equity and leaving no one behind, especially the LDCs and most vulnerable locations. All LDCs aim to graduate from LDC status before 2050; some are on course to achieve this soon. But increasing climate risks present a critical threat to these aspirations and will significantly undermine development efforts.

LIFE-AR is an ambitious programme designed to address the challenges faced by LDCs in adapting to climate change and building resilience. LDCs, characterized by their vulnerability to climate change and limited capacity to respond, require robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems to continuously track and evaluate the outcomes of climate change adaptation and resilience projects. Despite the critical importance of adaptation, only a small proportion of global
climate finance is allocated to support these efforts. Moreover, limited resources reach the local level where interventions can have the most significant impact.

LIFE-AR presents a departure from conventional approaches by shifting towards a more effective way of working under the concept of ‘business-unusual’. This entails ensuring that reporting is not a top-down exercise but is led by front-runner countries and tailored to their specific needs, priorities, and capabilities. The initiative aims to foster innovation and incubate ideas in six front-runner countries (FRCs), namely Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Malawi, and Uganda. These interventions strive to generate widespread societal impact by ensuring that at least 70% of climate finance supports local-level action. Additionally, the initiative emphasizes the development of in-country capabilities and the engagement of traditionally excluded groups such as women, youth, and indigenous people in developing solutions and making decisions.

Stakeholders in the initiative include representatives from development partners, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), which provides on-demand technical, strategic, and logistical support to the initiative and serves as the current (interim) Secretariat, LDC chair, LDC Ministerial Group, and LDC advisory and technical groups.

**Front Runner Country Activities**

The following broad activities provide a comprehensive framework through which FRCs will strengthen their resilience, accelerate progress, and drive transformative change in the face of climate change impacts.

1. Establishment of a national platform and associated committees/working groups/teams, responsible for oversight, communications, and reporting.
2. Establishment of finance delivery mechanisms, applicable to context, that commit 70% of funds to the local level.

**Progress to Date for LIFE-AR MEL Work**

LIFE-AR has made significant progress in the development of foundational components. Thus far, the steering team has successfully created a comprehensive MEL reporting framework, a robust theory of change, and a detailed global MEL Plan. The MEL reporting framework serves as a structured and systematic approach to collecting, analyzing, and reporting data throughout the project's lifespan. This framework ensures that all relevant data points are captured, allowing for accurate and consistent reporting on project outcomes and impacts.

Building upon this foundation, the team has also developed a comprehensive theory of change that outlines the logical connections between the project's inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. It provides a coherent narrative of how LIFE-AR's interventions will lead to the desired long-term impacts and serves as a guide for decision-making and resource allocation.

Furthermore, the team has formulated a global MEL Plan that outlines specific monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities to be implemented throughout the lifecycle of LIFE-AR. This plan includes the selection of appropriate indicators, data collection methods, evaluation methodologies, and learning processes. The MEL Plan provides a clear roadmap for tracking progress, assessing effectiveness, and adapting strategies based on emerging insights. However, these documents have not yet been cascaded to the FRCs' levels to reflect specific
LIFE-AR investment concerning climate adaptation and mitigation in those countries investments in those countries concerning climate adaptation and mitigation.

The team is currently seeking an institution that provides expertise on MEL to support the development of performance standards and accountability mechanisms at the country level. This involves working with accountability and transparency institutions to track value for money, adaptation effectiveness, planning and governance systems, transparency, and keeping LIFE-AR on track in line with the principles, requests, and offers. National-level LIFE-AR MEL will be designed within the existing country MEL and reporting systems, contributing to national climate priorities, national reporting, and reporting on global frameworks, including the SDGs, the Paris Agreement commitments, and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The adaptive management processes undertaken by the frontrunners will feed into LIFE-AR Platform oversight and support, ensuring that the LIFE-AR Board can provide flexibility while maintaining high standards for cost control and effectiveness. Aggregated country reporting will contribute to the global theory of change, assessing progress towards the LDC vision 2050.

The overarching LIFE-AR MEL framework will be grounded in the LIFE-AR Strategy and LDC Vision, led by the LDC Group, LIFE-AR Board, and Front Runner Countries. The MEL framework will consist of two complementary levels of reporting: a Platform-level system and country-level systems.

**Platform level MEL**

LIFE-AR (interim) secretariat, currently hosted by IIED, is supporting MEL for LIFE-AR and overseeing the reporting on the global theory of change and indicators to enable reporting on the LDC asks and offers and progress towards achieving the LDC vision and impact. The reports from the FRCs will inform aggregate reporting at platform level with bi-annual and annual reports to the LDC platform, the Board and donors.

The secretariat also works with FRCs to support peer learning within and between countries and at international level, MEL evidence will be a key component to support the LDC learning agenda.

**National Level MEL**

At the national level, FRCs are required to develop Theories of Change to contextualise the problem LIFE-AR seeks to address, the asks and offers based on national circumstances. This is accompanied by a MEL plan that includes performance indicators on institutional systems to enable delivery of the asks and offers. This is a principle-based, institutional performance approach to delivering asks and offers and testing how the business's unusual approaches are applied based on LIFE-AR principles.

The second level is the delivery mechanism MEL which focuses on the LIFE-AR investments at the sub-national level and focus will be on how the investments support the achievement of LIFE-AR impact; resilient people, economies and ecosystems, and how the institutional processes and LIFE-AR approaches and offers have been implemented at all levels, making the process iterative (subnational to national and vice versa).

**The objective of the consultancy**

IIED on behalf of the LIFE-AR is seeking services of a MEL firm/institution located in the LDCs to support LIFE-AR front-runner countries on the following:
1. Support the Front Runner Countries to set up robust in-country monitoring, evaluation and learning systems aligned to the chosen delivery mechanism.

2. Support capabilities of Front Runner Countries to deliver on MEL at the national and subnational level.

3. Support FRCs to develop data collection and knowledge management based on agreed systems and tools.

4. Support bi-annual and annual narrative reporting aligned to the LIFE-AR platform reporting to inform aggregate reporting to the LDC platform, the Board and wider LIFE-AR compact signatories.

The institution will assist in developing robust MEL systems, oversee their implementation, and report on progress for effective monitoring, evaluation of interventions, and enhancement of accountability and learning. The MEL systems will play a critical role in supporting evidence-based decision-making and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of LIFE-AR efforts.

B. Scope of Work and Expected Outputs

The scope of work and expected outputs/ deliverables will be the following:

1. Assessment and Planning
   a. Review existing LIFE-AR documents to extract valuable insights, strategies, and recommendations and assess their alignment with the broader goals of addressing climate change through innovative solutions.
   b. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the existing country MEL systems and practices especially those related to climate adaptation and resilience efforts and make recommendations on alignment and coherence so that the proposed LIFE-AR MEL system is building on existing frameworks.
   c. In liaison with respective FRCs, develop and rollout quality assurance framework to ensure the MEL systems are effective, efficient and credible.
   d. For Front Runner Countries that have not developed national theories of change and MEL plans, support the development of the above, detailing how countries will report on asks and offers as well as principles of LIFE-AR in business unusual ways of working.
   e. Develop (indicators, data collection methods, tools, etc.).
   f. Work with the front runner countries to develop the delivery mechanism MEL results framework to support MEL for investment at the local level and alignment with the national theory of change, mapping progress on the LIFE-AR impact (resilient people, economies and ecosystems).
   g. Assess MEL capabilities and functions at FRC level and identify areas of support to enable sustainability through strengthening institutional capabilities to support MEL in the long term.
   h. In liaison with the FRCs develop and/or update detailed MEL plans for LDC front-runner countries aligned to the global LIFE-AR MEL Plan, including a clear framework, methodology, and timeline for data collection, transmission, analysis, and reporting, and a framework for learning and knowledge management.

2. Data Collection and Analysis
   a. In consultation with the technical teams from IIED and FRCs design and disseminate data collection tools and methodologies, aligned to respective FRCs'
theories of change, indicators and means of verification and capturing relevant information on LIFE-AR investments.

b. Train the technical team from LDC front-runner countries including government MEL on data collection and analysis processes to monitor progress, outcomes, and impact of climate adaptation and resilience interventions, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

c. Train the LDC front-runner countries on data quality and accuracy through rigorous data management procedures and data verification processes.

d. Apply appropriate statistical techniques and data visualization methods to interpret and present findings effectively.

3. Monitoring and Reporting:
   a. Establish and closely work with FRCs to roll out a robust monitoring system to track the implementation and performance at LDC front-runner countries as well as a system to integrate all data from front-runner countries for reporting.
   b. Liaise with FRCs to regularly monitor and report on key indicators, progress towards targets, and the effectiveness of interventions.
   c. Work with FRCs to prepare timely and accurate monitoring reports, highlighting achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.
   d. Develop and roll out data dashboards or other visual representations with FRCs to facilitate easy understanding and accessibility of MEL information.

4. Evaluation and Learning:
   a. Identify and analyze emerging trends, best practices, and areas for improvement in climate adaptation and resilience efforts.
   b. Develop and roll out innovative evaluation methodologies to augment already proposed scorecards and self-assessment methodologies as mentioned within the LIFE-AR project documentation.
   c. Determine the extent to which these tools align with the project’s objectives and the need for joint learning and adaptive management.
   d. Facilitate learning sessions and knowledge-sharing workshops to promote cross-stakeholder collaboration and learning from experiences.
   e. Generate actionable recommendations based on evaluation findings to enhance the design and implementation of future climate adaptation and resilience projects.

5. Capacity Building and Support:
   a. Provide training and capacity-building support to LDC technical staff involved in MEL planning (where needed), data collection, MEL processes, and analysis.
   b. Assist in strengthening local MEL capacities by transferring relevant knowledge and skills to project staff and partners.
   c. Offer on-demand technical guidance and support in the planning and implementation of MEL systems, ensuring adherence to quality standards and best practices.

6. Stakeholder Engagement:
   a. Collaborate closely with project stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, local communities, and international development partners, to ensure their active participation and involvement in MEL activities.
b. Foster partnerships and communication channels for sharing MEL findings, promoting transparency, and encouraging collective decision-making.

7. Reporting and Documentation:
   a. Prepare comprehensive MEL reports, capturing all relevant data, analysis, and recommendations in a clear and concise manner.
   b. Ensure timely submission of reports to project stakeholders, funding agencies, and other relevant entities.
   c. Maintain accurate documentation of MEL processes, methodologies, and findings for future reference and knowledge management.

C. Duration of the Work
   a. The duration of the contract shall be for a maximum of six months between October 2023 – March 2024 renewable subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds.
   b. The institution will work closely with the IIED secretariat and technical teams and LDC technical groups from LDC front-runner countries.

D. Duty Station
   c. The institution will undertake a mix of in-country and remote modes of working (overseas and in the LDC front-runner countries i.e., Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Malawi, and Uganda – further FRGs may join the programme in the coming years).
   d. The institution is expected to use its own computers and other equipment required for the task.

E. Require expertise and qualifications

To effectively fulfill the MEL services the LIFE-AR Initiative needs, the institution should possess the following expertise:
   a. Extensive experience and expertise in designing and implementing M&E frameworks, systems, and tools specifically tailored to climate adaptation and resilience projects. Knowledge of various M&E methodologies, data collection techniques, and analysis approaches is crucial.
   b. In-depth understanding of climate change dynamics, its impacts on vulnerable communities, and knowledge of adaptation strategies and practices. Familiarity with climate resilience indicators and the ability to assess and monitor climate adaptation interventions is essential.
   c. Understanding and skills of Gender and social inclusion integration in MEL systems including objectives, indicators, outcomes and impact, focusing on groups that are likely to be left behind especially women, youth, people with disabilities, indigenous people, etc
   d. Proficiency in data management, including data collection, storage, analysis, and interpretation. Expertise in quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods, as well as experience with data visualization techniques, will be beneficial.
   e. Experience in conducting impact evaluations to assess the effectiveness and outcomes of climate adaptation and resilience projects. The ability to design innovative and implement rigorous evaluation methodologies and assess project impact on vulnerable communities is crucial.
   f. Strong skills in engaging with diverse stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, academia, NGOs, and international organizations. Experience in
conducting participatory approaches and facilitating workshops and consultations with stakeholders is valuable.

g. Proficiency in preparing comprehensive MEL reports and communicating evaluation findings and recommendations to different audiences, including policymakers and programme implementers. Strong writing and presentation skills are essential for conveying complex information in a clear and accessible manner.

h. Familiarity with climate finance mechanisms and funding streams is advantageous. Understanding the challenges and opportunities related to accessing climate finance for adaptation projects and monitoring financial flows is beneficial.

i. Ability to provide capacity-building support to project stakeholders, including training on MEL concepts, data collection methods, and result-based management. Experience in strengthening local MEL capacities and promoting learning and knowledge-sharing is desirable.

j. Awareness of the specific context of climate change adaptation and resilience in the least developed countries (LDCs) and familiarity with the challenges faced by vulnerable communities in these regions. Knowledge of international frameworks and initiatives related to climate change adaptation and resilience is advantageous.

k. Willingness to adapt to changing requirements and work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders in a dynamic and complex environment. The ability to provide tailored and context-specific solutions to meet the unique needs of the project is crucial.

F. How to apply:

In order to apply, for this work please submit the following documents:

- A document outlining a track record of providing MEL support within the international development space.
- Key personnel who would be working on this contract.
- A financial case for providing this support.
- A clear implementation plan, with an outline of the approach to be taken during the 6 month probationary period.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS

Please share the above no later than 8th September with Siân Fedeski, sian.fedeski@iied.org and Leonard Mulase, leonard.mulase@iied.org.leonard.mulase@iied.org.