Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Sustainable Forests & Livelihoods (SUFAL) Project
Bangladesh Forest Department
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Of

Selection of Consulting Firm for Vulture Conservation Program
(Package # SD 46)

SUFAL

Sustainable Forests & Livelihoods (SUFAL) Project

Credit No: 6325-BD

Abbreviations:

AIGAs - Alternative Income Generating Activities

BFD- Bangladesh Forest Department

BNVRC- Bangladesh National Vulture Recovery Committee

BVCAP - Bangladesh Vulture Conservation Action Plan

CBD COP 12 – 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

CMC – Community Management Committee

IUCN- International Union for Conservation of Nature

MoEFCC- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

NSAIDs – Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug

RSC- Regional Steering Committee

SAVE- Saving Asia's Vulture from Extinction

ToF - Trees Outside Forests

VCT - Vulture Conservation Team

VSZs - Vulture Safe Zones

1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has received IDA loan of US$175.00 million and GOB contribution of US$3.90 million for a period of 5 years (01 July 2018 to 30 June 2023) to implement Sustainable Forests & Livelihoods (SUFAL) Project. The overall objective of the project is to improve collaborative forest management and in increase access to alternative income generation activities for forest dependent communities in targeted sites. This will be achieved by: (i) improving public sector management of forest resources and increasing participation of communities in forest conservation and restoration and, (ii) reducing direct dependence and exploitation of forest resources by offering alternative livelihood sources to dependent communities and improving the enabling environment for trees outside forests. Together, these will result in the eventual improvement of forest cover and ecosystem functions, coastline protection and increased employment opportunities for some of the poorest and most vulnerable communities, including women and small ethnic communities. Project will implement a number of activities which are grouped under following four components:

Component-1: Strengthening Institutions, Information Systems and Training
Component-2: Strengthening Collaborative Forests and Protected Areas Management
Component-3: Increasing Access to Alternative Income Generating Activities (AIGAs) Forest Extension Service & Trees Outside Forests (ToF)
Component-4: Project Management, Monitoring, and Reporting

This project is designed to contribute in improving organizational effectiveness by adopting improved policy and regulatory framework including infrastructural development, management information system up gradation, capacity building of BFD officials and investing in degraded and denuded forest restoration and building green belt along the cost. This project will finance tree cover improvement in the ToF areas technology transfer, training, research and innovation support and engage forest dependent communities in collaborative forest management practices. By and large the project will enhance wildlife and PA management practices and thereby improve forest conservation and wildlife protection in the country.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

About 99.9% vulture populations have disappeared from the South-Asian countries over the last couple of decades. Populations of the White-rumped Vulture and other resident Gyps vulture have declined drastically in Bangladesh and now consist of about 260 individuals. Fatal effects of diclofenac and other veterinary drugs on scavenging vultures are the main reason for this severe decline .

With the major threats still persevering in South Asia, governments of Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan-the four range vulture countries- signed a Regional Declaration reconfirming their support on regional cooperation and national actions to conserve Asia's vultures. The declaration came out of a regional process facilitated by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) at the CBD COP 2012, and a Regional Steering Committee (RSC) was formed in 2013 with the role of initiating dialogues on trans-boundary Vulture Safe Zones (VSZ) and bi-lateral conservation initiatives and policies, banning of diclofenac and other toxic NSAIDs completely from the vulture food chain, establishing breeding centers and increasing the number, size and effectiveness of national Vulture Safe Zones and oversee all other vulture conservation activities. The aim is to develop and foster

active partnerships amongst Governments, research institutions, civil society, private sector and international organizations to further accelerate vulture conservation in different region.

The Saving Asia's Vulture from Extinction (SAVE) is also another international consortium looking to assist in saving the region's threatened vulture species in liaison with the RSC. SAVE brings together experts, and conservationists from around the world to coordinate and assist in vulture conservation work of the member countries of RSC. Bangladesh has been a member of both the RSC and SAVE.

One of the major decisions of the RSC was the formation of national committees in respective member countries. Following that decision, the Bangladesh National Vulture Recovery Committee (BNVRC) was formed in 2013 under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The BNVRC aims to provide policy guidance, advocacy, monitoring and supervision of the national vulture conservation initiatives. Since the inception of the BNVRC, the committee has held eight meetings and adheres to specific Terms of Reference. The BNVRC has influenced, among other pivotal decisions, in formation of the two Government endorsed Vulture Safe Zones (VSZ) of the country on December 2014 totaling 47,380.44 sq km; banning of ketoprofen in the two VSZs in 2017; initiated the process of country-wide banning of ketoprofen in 2019; and most importantly the approval of the Bangladesh Vulture Conservation Action Plan (BVCAP) for 2016-2025.

The approved BVCAP provides a framework for sustainable conservation of Bangladesh's vultures, by providing long-term and short-term activities under several thematic areas. The thematic areas include the overall and proper management of the VSZs; removal of all drugs harmful to vultures and promotion of vulture safe drugs; continuation of important monitoring and research activities on vultures and initiation of ex-situ efforts for conservation. The plan incorporates knowledge accumulated from previous vulture conservation projects and activities, as well as important learnings from initiatives at the forefront of vulture conservation around the world. With the guidance of the BNVRC and BFD, the activities of the action plan will be implemented by related agencies.

Several timely and groundbreaking initiatives have been undertaken in vulture conservation in Bangladesh under the guidance of the BNVRC, and adhering to the important decisions of the RSC, suggestions from SAVE. The milestones achieved by Bangladesh in vulture conservation is considered exemplary. Bangladesh was the first country to have government approved VSZs, through gazette notification, as well as becoming the first country to ban the harmful drug ketoprofen in the VSZs and initiate the country-wide banning of the drug.

Other conservation actions includes the formation of the community based Vulture Conservation Teams (VCTs) for the management of the VSZs, established the Vulture Feeding Station that provides supplemental safe food to vultures, formed the Vulture Rescue Center that has rescued, rehabilitated and released 50 vulture since its establishment in 2016. Conservation efforts have also reached out to two of the largest pharma-companies and engaged the private sector. The vulture conservation initiative has provided the formulation of safe drug, Meloxicam and in terms the companies provided subsidies on the drugs. Large scale awareness campaigns have taken place throughout the country to engage general public and local communities and meloxicam was distributed for free to local pharmacies and vets. Furthermore, regular undercover pharmacy surveys were conducted. The results of the last survey show that there is no presence of diclofenac in the market, and ketoprofen has

decreased from the baseline while meloxicam has increased. Along with this, to verify the results of the pharmacy surveys, a study is being conducted to understand the prevalence of vulture toxic drugs in potential vulture food by collecting and analyzing the liver samples from cattle carcasses.

Along with all this, Bangladesh kept in touch with the international vulture conservation community by organizing the 7th and 8th RSC meeting, and the 7th SAVE meeting.

In 2019, at the 8th BNVRC meeting at MoEFCC, it was decided that a proposal to be submitted for the implementation of the BVCAP to SUFAL. The proposed project now looks to continue the momentum created in the past years and initiate the activities of the Bangladesh Vulture Conservation Action Plan. The proposed project will work on the major thematic areas of the BVCAP and implement the important activities for the long-term protection of the vulture species of the country. The SUFAL project will support the overall management of the VSZs using a community based approach and the VCTs, protect the vulture hotspots, provide food, rescue and rehabilitate vultures, ban ketoprofen in the country, reach out to a wider range of private sectors, conduct large scale awareness activities, continue key research, play a role in formation of more vulture friendly national and international policies and be the leader in vulture conservation of the region.

3. OBJECTIVES OF ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of this assignment is the effective implementation of key activities of the BVCAP through local communities and government bodies for the overall conservation of vulture species of Bangladesh, and plays a leading role in conserving the vultures of South Asia region.

The specific objectives of the BVCAP are:

1. Proper and overall management of Vulture Save Zones through VCT Team and relevant institutions.
2. Reduction of harmful NSAIDs and promotion of safe alternative NSAIDs through private sector involvement and relevant institutions.
3. Conduct large scale awareness activities for knowledge dissemination and public engagement.
4. Ensure safe food for threatened vultures in the VSZs through community-based Vulture Feeding Station.
5. Ensure the proper rescue, treatment and rehabilitation of sick/injured vultures.
6. Continue research, conduct survey in & outside the VSZ and execute monitoring for vulture conservation.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The main tasks of the Consultant are, but not limited to the following:

1. Assess the performance of Vulture Conservation Team (VCT) and find out the scope of new VCT, feeding station and implement the already formed management modality through VCT for the vulture Safe Zones (VSZ) and linking with local CMC & BFD local offices in accordance with respective Divisional Forest Officer.
2. Maintain Vulture Feeding Station through VCT in coordination with the Divisional Forest Officer and ensure regular supply of cattle by engaging VCT.

3. Identify vulture nesting & roosting trees within the forest areas and demonstrate protection measures along with BFD staffs & VCT to protect the identified trees and habitat of the key hotspots.
4. Identify vulture nesting & roosting trees outside the forest areas
5. Country wide advocacy along with Forest Department, Department of Livestock, Faculty of veterinary, Drug Administration, drug dealer/ seller and relevant stakeholders for countrywide banning of Ketoprofen & other harmful NSAIDs (production, selling, use and storage) & expedite the banning process with the relevant ministries and administration.
6. Organize Pharma group and pursue pharmaceutical companies to produce and promote Meloxicam and also to take active part in vulture conservation and production of guideline for the Pharmas.
7. Assess the status of all NSAIDs present in the market through undercover pharmacy survey following standard International methodology
8. Develop awareness modules, carryout regular awareness programs along with the BFD in the VSZ areas and **produce short video documentaries on vultures and vulture conservation for awareness purpose in coordination with BFD.**
9. Organize awareness program for the school/college children and day celebration on the "International Vulture Awareness Day" along with the BFD & production of community materials.
10. Organize VCT to help rescuing injured Vultures and rehabilitate them to Vulture Rescue Centre in collaboration with BFD.
11. Build capacity of BFD, assess, monitor and report the status of existing nests along with population status

5. TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE (TRAINING)

The Firm will propose details regarding knowledge Sharing and/or mass Awareness training/campaign for the proposed activity.

6. LIST OF REPORTS, SCHEDULE OF DELIVERIES, PEROID OF PERFORMANCE

Date: T0 = Date of commence of the Contract; M = Month

SL.	Deliverables (which could be developed along the following core information below)	Reporting To	Submission Deadline (T1, T2, ..., TN)
6.1	**Inception Report:** 1. Work plan 2. Assessment of the project objectives 3. Problem identification	Project Director	**T1 = T0 + 1 M**
6.2	**Report on initial field visits in the VSZ :** 1. VCT meetings output 2. Maintaining vulture feeding station 3. Update on SAVE meeting and rescue center 4. Identification report on vulture nesting & roosting trees within the forest areas	Project Director	**T2 = T0 + 6M**

SL.	Deliverables (which could be developed along the following core information below)	Reporting To	Submission Deadline (T1, T2, ….., TN)
	5. Report on demonstration of protection measures 6. Report on VCT meetings, operation of feeding station, awareness campaigns, operation of rescue center, nest monitoring, census and habitat protection. 7. Production of awareness materials eg. Posters, leaflets, etc		
6.3	**Deliverables include:** 1. Identify vulture nesting & roosting trees outside the forest areas 2. Report on BNVRC and VCT meetings, 3. Report on operation of feeding station, school/college programmer operation of rescue center and release, nest monitoring and habitat improvement. 4. Report Vulture Day 5. Report on Meloxicam distribution awareness campaign. 6. Advocacy report 7. Completion of School/College paintings	Project Director	**T4 = T0 + 12M**
6.4	**Deliverables include:** 1. Report on VCT meetings, VSZ management, feeding station, operation station and rescue center. 2. Assessment report on the status of all NSAIDs present in the market 3. Report on Production of one video documentary on full vulture activities 4. Update on SAVE and RSC meeting and rescue center 5. Production of protocol of global linkages.	Project Director	**T6 = T0 + 18M**
6.5	**Deliverables include:** 1. Report on organizing VCT to help rescuing & rehabilitate injured Vultures. 2. Report on BNVRC and VCT meetings 3. Report on operation of feeding station, operation of rescue center 4. Production of report on undercover survey 5. Capacity building report of BFD officials 6. Report on VCT meetings, operation of feeding station, Vulture Day, Meloxicam distribution awareness campaign	Project Director	**T8 = T0 + 24M**
6.6	**Deliverables include:** Final report on overall activities	Project Director	**T10 = T0 + 27M**

7. DATA, PERSONNEL, FACILITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT

The PMU will provide available data and information relevant to the assignment. PMU will also give instruction to the concern local forest division to assist the firm for site assessment, if needed. The firm will arrange field trips, engage crews and officials for survey as needed for collecting necessary data for the assignment.

8. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

The consultant will work in close collaboration with S. K Wildlife Center, relevant Wildlife Management & Nature Conservation Divisions and Divisional Forest Offices within the jurisdiction of the project. The consultant will work in co-ordination with DFO, Sylhet Forest Division, DFO, Sundarbans East Forest Division and DFO, Dinajpur Forest Division. Time to time the firm will inform about the assignment to the DFOs. The consultant will submit deliverables to the Project Director after getting endorsement from the Conservator of Forests (CF), Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle. A nominated officer from S. K Wildlife Center will associate with the consultant. Publication, awareness program and other community materials should be developed under the name of BFD and BFD will be the owner of all deliverables.

9. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The duration of this assignment is up to 30 months

10. KEY PROFESSIONALS

Experience and Qualification of the key professionals:

Sl. No.	Description	Qualification	Experience
1.	Team leader (120 days)	MSc in Natural Resource management/Wildlife/ Environmental Science with international experience.	15 years of experience in leading complex programmes /projects nationally and internationally with at least 8 years in a senior manager role.
2.	Project Officer/ Wildlife Biologist (2 persons - each 18 man month)	BSc/MSc in Zoology/ Wildlife/ Environmental Science. Experience in the field of vulture conservation will be preferred.	3-5 years of working experience on wildlife with especial focus on vulture and vulture conservation.

The consulting firm has to give the clear picture about the organization and support staff of the firm to access the Organizational capability.

(This is not part of ToR but will be reflected in the REOI)

Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

(a) General experience of the Firm(s);

(b) Experience in similar assignments of compatible size, complexity and technical specialty in the required area;

(c) Organizational Capability (Staffing, logistics, financial soundness)