



## **LEBANESE REPUBLIC**

### **COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION (CDR)**

## **GREEN, AGRI-FOOD TRANSFORMATION FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY - GATE LOAN NO. 9576-LB**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

### **THIRD-PARTY MONITORING AGENT (TPMA) - FINAL**

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## **1. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The Republic of Lebanon represented (The Borrower) represented by the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) as a representative to the Borrower will implement the Green, Agri-food Transformation for Economic Recovery (the “**GATE**” or “**Project**”), funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD or the World Bank or the Bank). The total project cost is Two Hundred Million United States Dollars (US\$ 200,000,000).

GATE Project aims to improve the resilience of farmers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Lebanese agri-food sector. The project is designed to facilitate access to finance, support climate-smart investments, and restore critical infrastructure services to sustain and enhance the agricultural value chain. Through targeted interventions, it seeks to increase agricultural productivity, strengthen food security, and promote sustainable economic growth. The project is structured into key components focusing on value chain investments, infrastructure development, enabling regulatory improvements, and knowledge management.

The Project is structured into five main components, each designed to strengthen the resilience of Lebanon’s agri-food sector and support farmers and SMEs.

### **Component 1: Climate Smart Investments in Agri-food Value Chains (US\$71 million):**

The objective of this component is to provide access to finance to strengthen the resilience and improve the competitiveness of farmers and SMEs involved in agri-food value chains. The component will promote climate smart practices, create higher value addition, improve links between farmers, agribusinesses and markets, and unlock diversification opportunities. The project will finance activities specifically designed to benefit women and seek to contribute to reducing some of the gender gaps identified in terms of access to finance, inputs, markets, technical capacity building activities, improved confidence and negotiation skills as well as addressing social norms through a carefully designed behaviorally informed outreach campaign,

also targeting men. It will be structured across two subcomponents: Subcomponent 1.1. Development of climate smart value chains; and Subcomponent 1.2. Support to agri-food SMEs.

**Component 2: Climate-Smart Infrastructure and Services for Agri-Food Sector Development (US\$100 million):**

The objective of this component is to restore service delivery, build operational capacity and ensure the sustainability and climate-resilience of public infrastructure underpinning the agri-food sector. It will be structured across two subcomponents: Subcomponent 2.1. Improving rural community infrastructure for agriculture; and 2.2. Restoring access and protecting agency-managed infrastructure and services underpinning agriculture.

**Component 3: Improving the Enabling Environment and Restoring Support Services (US\$21 million)**

The objective of this component is to restore and strengthen the capacity of sector institutions to support the recovery and transformation of the agri-food sector.

**Component 4: Project and Knowledge Management (US\$8 million)**

This component will support the coordination and management of the implementation of the project. It will finance overall project management, including inter alia: (a) coordination among different stakeholders; (b) monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including reporting climate benefits to the MoE to comply with the Paris Agreement reporting requirements; (c) project Environmental and Social Standards (ESS); (d) hiring of a gender specialist; (e) project fiduciary administration, internal controls, and audits; (f) communication and information activities, and (g) the establishment and maintenance of a grievance mechanism (GM) and a citizen's engagement mechanism. timely communication of results. This component will also finance a third-party monitoring (TPM) mechanism, as well as timely communication of results. In addition, the project will recruit a Service Provider (NGO) specialized in child labor prevention and response and who will be responsible for supporting the project in preventing, mitigating, monitoring, and responding to such risks during implementation. It will finance the development of an action plan to combat child labor and a roadmap to improve social protection for farmers.

**Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) (US\$0 million allocated initially)**

This component will have zero funding allocation at the onset and will only be triggered in emergency circumstances; the project will support the preparation of a procedure manual governing the CERC operations.

Each component is designed to work together, ensuring a holistic approach to strengthening Lebanon's agri-food sector and supporting economic recovery.

In order to facilitate project implementation, the CDR is establishing a Project Coordination Unit (PCU), to be staffed by professionals, who will lead or support the achievement of the respective project component objectives.

Subcomponent 1.2 of the Project will be implemented by Kafalat which shall provide loans to eligible agribusinesses to finance investments, working capital, and technical services. Kafalat will maintain a Project Management Unit (PMU), staffed with financial and risk management experts, to handle loan disbursement, monitoring, and compliance with World Bank guidelines.

Subcomponent 2.1 of the Project will be implemented by the Green Plan. This sub-component involves investments in climate-smart infrastructure and services. It will work closely with municipalities and stakeholders to develop and prioritize projects such as hill lakes, road rehabilitation, and irrigation improvements. Green Plan will establish a dedicated PMU to oversee implementation and ensure proper coordination.

Consequently, CDR will be responsible for coordinating with both Kafalat and Green Plan and consolidating fiduciary aspects. While Green Plan and Kafalat will manage their respective components independently, CDR will facilitate alignment and coordination to ensure coherence across the project.

## **2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

**The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR - *hereinafter referred as Client*), acting as executing agency for and on behalf of the GOL, intends to engage a Consulting Firm as a Third Party Monitoring Agent (TPMA) to carry out an independent verification on the execution of the project including verifying and confirm that selection criteria and processes and use of funds are done in full compliance with the Legal Agreement (between the Government of Lebanon and the World Bank) and the Project Operational Manual (POM).**

## **3. SUB-COMPONENTS COVERED BY THIS ASSIGNMENT**

**Subcomponent 1.1: Development of climate smart value chains (US\$20 million).** The objective of this subcomponent is to strengthen farmers' organizations (cooperatives and associations), boost climate smart agricultural production and promote farmers' horizontal linkages with other smallholders and vertical linkages with buyers/off-takers,<sup>1</sup> thus enhancing their participation in value addition. Support to farmers' organizations will include technical assistance, training and matching grants.

Specifically, the component would finance: (a) a gender-sensitive communication campaign, to encourage existing organizations of small- and medium-size agricultural producers of crop and livestock products to engage in collective action to generate aggregation and collect beneficiaries' feedback; (b) competitively selected service providers to administer the matching grants, assist producers with the preparation and implementation of climate-informed business plans, provide training to farmers' organizations members on business and financial management, governance, and when relevant, technical assistance to link formalized producer groups to off-takers under the coordination and leadership of the General Directorate of Cooperatives (GDC); (c) matching grants to finance the climate-informed business plans of

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<sup>1</sup> Off-takers could be private firms and/ or individuals such as brokers, traders, exporters, wholesalers, supermarkets, specialized distributors, processors, restaurant chains, school feeding programs, hospital food supply, among others.

eligible farmers' organizations and farmers; and (d) fairs and exhibitions dedicated to the climate-smart and organic production. The training of the group members to enable them to adopt the specifications and standards of the off-taker or target market would be provided through Subcomponent 3.1.

***Climate Smart Matching Grants.*** The objective of the matching grants is to finance climate-informed business plans to strengthen the resilience and competitiveness of farmers and farmers' organizations. Existing farmers' organizations (cooperatives and associations) and individual farmers will be supported to identify common user assets, infrastructure or services, develop joint climate informed-business plans, and apply for a one-time Climate Smart Matching Grants (MG) of up to US\$35,000 per group and up to US\$5,000 for individual farmers. Specifically, the MGs would be available for cooperatives and other groups of farmers, to meet the market requirements of off-takers/buyers and for the adoption of climate smart agricultural practices. The eligible investments for the matching grants would include, inter alia: greenhouses, solar panels, small scale processing units, improved irrigation systems, improved on-farm wastewater and solid waste (for example, composting) management, energy-efficient processing equipment, greenhouses, storage and cold storage, agricultural machinery, cooler tanks, small scale dairy equipment, food quality and safety equipment, certification and other investments for value addition and market access. Contributions from applicants will also be requested, representing a minimum of 20 percent of the total investment, which can be provided in-kind or in cash. Such contribution will be lower for women's groups, at 10 percent minimum. To improve resilience to shocks of smallholder farmers, applicants will be incentivized to contribute to a health insurance plan. The MGs would be awarded following a transparent mechanism to ensure compliance with technical, financial, social, and environmental parameters detailed in the POM together with the eligibility criteria. For crop producers the use of biopesticides, in line with Pest Management Plan (PMP) prepared as part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) of the project, will be used as prioritization criteria. The selection process will be carefully developed to ensure equal access to opportunities for vulnerable groups, including women and youth.

**Subcomponent 2.1. Improving rural community infrastructure for agriculture (US\$28 million).**

The objective of this subcomponent is to improve rural community infrastructure to support agri-food development. It will focus on financing water storage with a capacity below 100,000 m<sup>3</sup>, small community- and farmer-led irrigation networks to increase resilience to water scarcity exacerbated by climate change a climate smart rehabilitation of agricultural roads and other demand-driven agricultural subprojects to improve livelihoods of agricultural communities and increase climate resilience. The subcomponent will be implemented by the Green Plan in close coordination with respective unions of municipalities or individual municipalities, MoA and MoEW. Operation and maintenance (O&M) will be the responsibility of the unions of municipalities or individual municipalities.

**Unions of Municipalities or individual municipalities and associated stakeholders<sup>2</sup> will develop and promote investment proposals (Community Infrastructure Subprojects) for project support.** Fund allocations will be regionally balanced, identified and prioritized through an inclusive participatory process, with subprojects evaluated against a set of eligibility and selection

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<sup>2</sup> Where Municipalities have not been aggregated into Unions

criteria, which will be identified upon initiation of the project. Indicative criteria will include the following: (a) the degree of food insecurity and poverty; (b) the level of agricultural activity; (c) synergies with Component 1; (d) climate co-benefits and environmental sustainability; (e) commitment to sustainable O&M arrangements; (f) local ownership as expressed through co-financing commitments by unions of municipalities or individual municipalities; and (g) alignment with the priorities set forth in MoEW's updated "National Water Sector Strategy of 2020" and "Recovery Roadmap of the Water Sector of 2022".

**Yearly calls for proposals from unions of municipalities and individual municipalities will be issued at the governorate level in the first three years of project implementation, supported by an extensive communication campaign.** Pre-screening of proposals will be conducted by the Green Plan (GP), according to GP's technical rules and regulations, and validated with local communities, mainly the concerned municipality. A technical evaluation committee, consisting of representatives from the MoA, MoEW, governorates, farmers, civil society, and the private sector, will assess whether the selected sites meet the pre-established selection criteria and validate them with local communities, mainly the responsible municipality; the committee will be convened within a maximum of two weeks after the call, with whoever is present, to approve the selection.

A strategic approach will be adopted for implementing investments under sub-component 2.1, focusing particularly on hill lakes as a key example of this component, to address regional disparities intensified by recent conflicts in Lebanon. This approach relies on a comprehensive framework for prioritization across regions, guided by carefully selected criteria. These criteria prominently include conflict impact indicators, alongside factors such as public or private ownership, shared water sources, water quality, water rights, accessibility to water sources, and potential environmental impacts. Additional important criteria include slope stability, potential for expansion, the number of beneficiary farmers, the proportion of women and youth among farmers, geographical proximity of agricultural lands, and local communities' readiness to manage and maintain infrastructure. Priority Interventions - contains the list of hill lakes identified by the Green Plan based on previously received requests, accompanied by evaluation criteria specifically targeting investments in conflict-affected areas. This framework aims to enhance transparency, equity, and effectiveness in resource allocation and project implementation.

This subcomponent will finance: (a) consultancy services, including feasibility studies, engineering designs, as well as the preparation of Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs); (b) communication campaigns, information and consultations; (c) the selected Community Infrastructure Subprojects; and (d) institutional strengthening of relevant institutions, such as irrigation and water user associations, which assume system operation, maintenance and management responsibility for hill lakes and associated irrigation distribution networks.

**Strengthening rural infrastructure is expected to generate substantial co-benefits for climate change adaptation and mitigation.** By enhancing local agricultural infrastructure, the project will improve the resilience of rural communities to climate-related shocks, such as extreme weather events and water scarcity. Hill lakes, for instance, add a source of irrigation water that can be

used to supplement rainfed production – thereby making it more resilient - and investing in modernizing irrigations systems is critical for reducing groundwater pumping, which is a driving factor of groundwater depletion which is exacerbated by climate change. Climate smart rehabilitation of agricultural roads will provide stone-paved side ditches to drain water away from the pavement, preferably to improve water collection and water-harvesting to irrigate farms, plants, and trees, and for animal and livestock drinking while trees planting along the road, especially on side slopes prone to landslide will improve resilience to erosion and contribute to a carbon sink. Moreover, the prioritization of environmentally sustainable interventions will reduce the sector’s carbon footprint and promote low-carbon development, producing climate change mitigation co-benefits.

**Subcomponent 2.2. Restoring access and protecting agency-managed infrastructure and services underpinning agriculture (US\$72 million)** The objective of this subcomponent is to restore access to essential services and protect infrastructure underpinning the resilience and competitiveness of agri-food systems. Adopting a systems perspective, interventions will aim to ensure basic system functionality through investments in the rehabilitation of existing public infrastructure and the lowest possible level of complexity of interventions in the underpinning systems. This approach will allow to balance the risk of ineffective isolated investments with implementation risks linked to complexity. It also maximizes the use of available resources and avoids investments in new infrastructure in the current context.

**The subcomponent’s scope will include infrastructure rehabilitation in the following sectors identified as critical to the continued viability of the agri-food sector:** agency-managed irrigation schemes, rehabilitation of farmers’ exhibition centers, wastewater management (WWM), and solid waste management (SWM). The scope of investments will be commensurate with the effectiveness of restoring the functionality of the smallest viable service area applicable to the specific service or infrastructure, such as irrigation perimeters and wastewater management networks.

**The subcomponent will adopt a framework approach by which all investments will undergo an assessment to validate the technical, economic, social, and environmental performance of each subproject.** Eligible investments will have to meet the following criteria: (a) investments focus on rural areas, in particular poorer areas, and directly benefit the agri-food sector providing a service; (b) interventions targeting the rehabilitation, reactivation, and protection of existing infrastructure assets, preventing further deterioration and loss of public assets from neglect; (c) priority investments supported by national sectoral strategies and masterplans; (d) resilient system design supported by sustainable O&M plans; (e) complexity of investment is aligned to institutional capacity to reduce implementation risk; and (f) subprojects are validated through inclusive stakeholder consultations.

This subcomponent will finance: (a) consultant services for feasibility studies, engineering designs and supervision, ESIA’s, and O&M action-plans related to selected subprojects; (b) communications and community consultations; (c) technical assistance and capacity building of relevant agencies; and (d) the selected Public Infrastructure Subprojects.

**Irrigation.** Irrigation subprojects supported under the project will be fully aligned with the National Water Sector Strategy 2020–2035. The subprojects will be identified by the relevant stakeholders according to selection criteria which will be identified upon initiation of the project, and would be approved by the Steering Committee. More specifically, irrigation schemes will be identified by the concerned Regional Water Establishments (WEs), namely, the Litani River Authority (LRA), the North Lebanon Water Establishment (NLWE), the Bekaa Water Establishment (BQWE), the Beirut and Mount Lebanon Water Establishment (BMLWE) and the South Lebanon Water Establishment (SLWE), in coordination with MoEW.<sup>3</sup>

**Wastewater management:** Interventions in wastewater management will include the rehabilitation and expansion of existing wastewater networks and WWTPs which are not operational due to lack of operational budget, and which have significant impact on surrounding agricultural lands, as well as investments for the reuse of treated wastewater in agriculture in existing secondary or tertiary WWTP to reduce the impact on water resources in agricultural areas. Investments in wastewater will be in line with MoEW’s update of the “National Water Sector Strategy of 2020” and in line with the “Recovery Roadmap of the Water Sector of 2022”.

**Solid waste management:** Interventions in solid waste could include the rehabilitation of existing solid waste management infrastructure which will (a) reduce the impact of illegal open dumping on agricultural lands and water resources (groundwater and surface water pollution, as well as clogging of irrigation canals); and (b) increase the supply of compost as an alternative to imported synthetic fertilizers.

**The subcomponent will provide dedicated technical assistance and capacity building to implementing entities.** Support will be demand-based and flexibly tailored to (a) pre-identified needs as listed below, as well as (b) needs revealed during implementation. Pre-identified needs per type of intervention include:

- (a) *Irrigation and Wastewater Management:* Irrigation investments will be accompanied by technical assistance to prevent the risks of water resource deterioration either in the form of depletion overdraft and pollution from non-point agricultural sources; these could include as needed: (i) groundwater information system to monitor saline intrusion along the coastline; (ii) preparation of drought risk management plans and others; and (iii) preparation of groundwater management plans. Furthermore, and in accordance with Law 192/2020, the subcomponent will build the capacity of WEs in providing support to water user associations (WUAs) through their establishment and development into legally recognized, member-based organizations, which are open to municipal membership or partnership. Their main responsibilities will include the operation, maintenance, and management of secondary and tertiary irrigation infrastructure. WUAs will also have a role in allocation and coordinated management of water resources at the user levels.
- (b) Capacity building to the WEs, LRA and local authorities will be provided, as needed, for meeting their responsibilities in the O&M of irrigation and wastewater investments as per their respective legal mandate as well as their financial sustainability. Strengthening the

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<sup>3</sup> If the beneficiaries are autonomous bodies and generate revenues (such as WE) then they would need to agree on potential cost sharing.

legal and institutional capacities of the irrigation sector would include the implementation of wastewater standards and sludge reuse standards in collaboration with MoEW, MoE and MoA.

- (c) *Solid Waste Management*: Promoting the adoption of an integrated approach at the level of solid waste service zone by complementing the on-going efforts for the development of local solid waste Masterplans. This will include support to awareness and communication campaigns, engagement of local communities in the design and implementation of the proposed SWM systems and strengthening the financial sustainability of the solid waste investments. Capacity building will be provided to local authorities to meet their roles and responsibilities in the operation of the investments and to MoE in monitoring the implementation of the solid waste masterplans.
- (d) Technical assistance will also be provided to concerned stakeholders to strengthen environmental governance of the Litani River Basin to prevent further degradation of water and land resources in this basin which are significantly affecting agricultural development.

**The subcomponent will be expected to yield significant climate co-benefits for both adaptation and mitigation.** By improving the resilience and efficiency of infrastructure systems, such as irrigation and wastewater management, the project will enable rural agricultural communities to better adapt to the impacts of climate change. Enhanced water management practices will contribute to more effective use of water resources in the face of increased water scarcity due to climate change – specifically, investing in wastewater plants which would allow for greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction from wastewater, lowering pressure on ground water resources and improve water security against climate change. Moreover, the integration of renewable energy across all interventions will reduce GHG emissions and promote low-carbon development. Improved solid waste management systems will also minimize the release of methane, a potent greenhouse gas (GHG), from landfills and waste disposal sites.

#### **4. REQUIRMENTS**

**Evaluations and assessments.** A survey will be conducted at the start of implementation to establish baseline data and at project closing to evaluate project results in a qualitative and quantitative manner. The project will also carry out a midterm review (MTR). Several additional studies will be undertaken to enhance understanding of key aspects of the project, including:

- i. **Technical audits** of the quality of infrastructure works and their maintenance. A sample of completed subprojects under Component 2 will be visited by teams of engineers to assess the quality of construction and ongoing functionality and address any problematic O&M issues.
- ii. **Beneficiary perception surveys** of the project by a **TPM agency** will be conducted on an annual basis to ensure the satisfaction of the communities with project activities. The results of these beneficiary surveys will be disaggregated by women, youth, and displaced population.
- iii. **Process evaluation.** Teams of qualitative researchers will spend extended periods in a small sample of villages to document the bottom-up planning process and project implementation



to identify good practices that can be shared and potential bottlenecks that need to be dealt with by management. Work will commence on these studies in the second year of implementation so that results are available for the MTR to inform mid-stream corrections, as needed.

The TPMA will be in charge of proofing the efficient and effective implementation of activities (sub-component 1.1 and sub-component 2.1 & 2.2) under the project. The TPMA should validate that the selection of the eligible farmers under sub-component 1.1 and the procurements under component 2 have been made as per legal agreement, POM, and the contracts to be signed.

The TPMA is expected to provide a team of staff, including a Team Leader, Two Technical Experts, and a Financial Management Specialist, Environmental & Social Safeguards Specialist, as well as a number of field teams. The number and composition of field teams will be planned by the Consultant, in accordance with the workload.

List of Key Experts whose CV and experience would be evaluated is presented below.

### **Key Experts for the TPMA Assignment**

#### **1. Team Leader**

- **Role:** Overall responsibility for leading the TPMA team, coordinating activities, ensuring compliance with TOR, and serving as the main liaison with CDR and the World Bank. Oversees all verification activities and reporting.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - Advanced degree in Engineering, or related field.
  - Minimum 10 years of experience in project monitoring and evaluation, including at least 5 years in World Bank or donor-funded projects.
  - Proven leadership in managing multidisciplinary teams.
  - Experience in Lebanon or MENA region desirable.

## **2. Agricultural/Climate-Smart Agriculture Expert**

- **Role:** Responsible for verification of Subcomponent 1.1 activities related to farmers' organizations, matching grants, and adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices. Provides technical expertise on farm-level interventions.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - University degree (Master's preferred) in Agriculture, Agronomy, Natural Resources, or related field.
  - At least 7 years of experience in climate-smart agriculture, farmers' organizations, and value chains.
  - Familiarity with matching grant mechanisms and capacity building for cooperatives/associations.
  - Knowledge of environmental and social safeguards in agricultural projects.

## **3. Infrastructure / Civil Engineer (Water & Rural Infrastructure Specialist)**

- **Role:** Responsible for technical verification of Subcomponents 2.1 and 2.2, including rural infrastructure (hill lakes, roads, irrigation) and agency-managed infrastructure (wastewater, solid waste, irrigation schemes). Conducts site inspections and ensures compliance with engineering standards.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - Degree in Civil Engineering, Water Resources Engineering, or related field.
  - Minimum 10 years of relevant experience in design, supervision, and monitoring of infrastructure.
  - Experience with World Bank/IFIs procurement and environmental/social standards is a plus.
  - Experience in Lebanon's water/agriculture infrastructure sector is an asset.

## **4. Procurement Specialist**

- **Role:** Reviews and validates all procurement activities under Subcomponent 1.1 and Component 2, in compliance with the World Bank related policies and procedures.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - Bachelor degree in Engineering, Architecture, Legislation, or master in Public Procurement Management.
  - At least 7 years of experience in a similar position in the public/private sector or in internationally financed projects (related to: Procurement, purchasing, supply chain, etc.).
  - Knowledge of the World Bank Procurement guidelines and regulations
  - Experience with agricultural or infrastructure projects.

## **5. Financial Management Specialist / Controller**

- **Role:** Reviews and validates financial flows and use of funds, under Subcomponent 1.1 and Component 2. Detects irregularities and ensures funds are used in line with POM and contracts.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - University degree in Finance, Accounting, Business Administration, or related field (CPA or equivalent is a plus).
  - At least 7 years of experience in financial management and auditing of donor-funded projects.
  - Familiarity with World Bank fiduciary procedures.
  - Experience with agricultural or infrastructure projects.

## **6. Environmental & Social Safeguards Specialist (Cross-cutting Expert)**

- **Role:** Ensures that all activities (both farm-level and infrastructure) comply with Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), Pest Management Plan (PMP), and Gender/Social Inclusion strategies. Monitors safeguards compliance during field verifications.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - Degree in Environmental Science, Environmental Engineering, Social Development, or related field.
  - Minimum 7 years of relevant experience in E&S safeguards monitoring for donor-funded projects.
  - Knowledge of World Bank ESS, environmental management, and social safeguards (including gender, youth, and vulnerable groups).
  - Experience in Lebanon's rural/agricultural context is desirable.

## **7. Data & GIS Specialist**

- **Role:** Manage geospatial data, perform remote sensing validation, and ensure integration of spatial information with project monitoring platforms (GEMS, KoBoToolbox) to strengthen data quality, verification, and reporting.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - Degree in Environmental Science, Environmental Engineering, Social Development, or related field.
  - Minimum 5 years of relevant experience in GIS, remote sensing, and spatial data management for development or infrastructure projects.
  - Strong experience with GIS software (ArcGIS, QGIS), remote sensing tools, and data integration with digital monitoring platforms such as GEMS or KoBoToolbox.
  - Demonstrated ability to produce high-quality maps, dashboards, and visualizations for decision-making and reporting.
  - Experience in Lebanon's rural/agricultural context is desirable.

## **8. Field Monitors (Multiple Teams)**

- **Role:** Conduct site visits, verify implementation progress, collect beneficiary feedback using digital tools (KoBoToolbox, GIS), and report back to core experts. Teams may consist of engineers, agronomists, or social mobilizers depending on the type of subproject.
- **Qualifications & Experience:**
  - University degree in Agriculture, Engineering, Social Sciences, or related field.
  - At least 3–5 years of relevant experience in field monitoring and data collection.
  - Strong familiarity with local agricultural communities and municipalities.
  - Fluency in Arabic; working knowledge of English preferred.

## **5. SCOPE OF WORK – TASKS OF THIRD-PARTY MONITORING AGENT (TPMA)**

The TPMA will act as an independent verifier of activities under **Subcomponent 1.1** and **Component 2**, ensuring compliance with the Project Operational Manual (POM), the Legal Agreement, and relevant contracts. The tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

### **Task 1: Verification of Beneficiaries and Farmers’ Organizations (Subcomponent 1.1)**

- Review and validate the beneficiary selection process for farmers, cooperatives, and associations to ensure compliance with eligibility and prioritization criteria (including gender, youth, and vulnerable groups).
- Verify that agreements between selected farmers/organizations and CDR are properly signed, documented, and filed.
- Assess whether climate-smart matching grants are awarded transparently and according to POM procedures.
- Confirm that beneficiary contributions (cash or in-kind) are provided as required, with special attention to reduced contribution requirements for women’s groups.
- Monitor adoption of climate-smart practices, including use of biopesticides, improved irrigation, solar energy, waste management, and other sustainable technologies.
- Conduct spot-checks and field visits, ensuring systematic collection of geo-tagged photos, direct beneficiary interviews, and triangulation of field-level observations with implementing partner reports, monitoring data, and other available sources to verify accuracy and consistency.
- Verify financial and progress reports submitted by farmers’ organizations, ensuring consistency with supporting documentation and physical evidence on the ground.
- Confirm that the eligible farmers have opened a bank account to receive the funds from the project (when applicable).
- Check grievance redress mechanisms, confirming that beneficiaries are aware of and able to access the project’s grievance redress system.
- The TPMA will select a sample of minimum 20% of the eligible farmers for review and verification.

## **Task 2: Verification of Community Infrastructure Subprojects (Subcomponent 2.1)**

- Review the process of proposal submission, pre-screening, and selection of infrastructure subprojects by the Green Plan and municipalities.
- Validate compliance with eligibility and selection criteria (food insecurity, poverty level, climate co-benefits, synergies with Component 1, etc.).
- Confirm that Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) and other safeguards are conducted and applied before project approval.
- Verify procurement procedures for works, goods, and services to ensure transparency and alignment with World Bank procurement regulations.
- Conduct site inspections of ongoing and completed works (e.g., hill lakes, irrigation systems, agricultural roads) to confirm that works are executed according to technical designs, contracts, and environmental/social standards.
- Conduct independent materials testing/quality checks (e.g., lab tests of concrete, water quality sampling for irrigation/wastewater) where needed.
- Assess the quality of infrastructure, its functionality, as well as the presence of sustainable Operation and Maintenance (O&M) arrangements by municipalities/unions of municipalities.
- Evaluate long-term O&M capacity, ensuring that budgets, training, and local ownership are in place beyond paper arrangements.
- Verify the works delivered and payments made. Assess physical and financial progress. The TPMA will select a sample of a minimum of 30% of sub-projects for review and verifications.

## **Task 3: Verification of Agency-Managed Infrastructure and Services (Subcomponent 2.2)**

- Review the identification and prioritization of rehabilitation subprojects (irrigation schemes, wastewater management, solid waste management, farmers' exhibition centers) to ensure alignment with sectoral strategies and project criteria.
- Verify procurement and contracting processes, including tendering, bid evaluation, and contract award.
- Validate the technical quality of completed works and functionality of rehabilitated infrastructure through field inspections.
- Conduct independent materials testing and quality checks (e.g., lab tests of concrete, water quality sampling for irrigation/wastewater) as needed.
- Assess the quality of infrastructure, its functionality, as well as the presence of sustainable Operation and Maintenance (O&M) arrangements by municipalities/unions of municipalities.
- Evaluate long-term O&M capacity, ensuring that budgets, training, and local ownership are in place beyond paper arrangements.
- Verify whether capacity building and technical assistance activities (to Water Establishments, Litani River Authority, MoEW, municipalities, etc.) have been implemented as planned.
- Check compliance with environmental governance and safeguards (e.g., wastewater reuse standards, sludge management, solid waste masterplans).

- Ensure climate-smart design principles are applied and that investments yield expected adaptation and mitigation co-benefits.
- Verify works delivered and payments made, and assess physical and financial progress.
- The TPMA will select a sample of a minimum of 30% of sub-projects for review and verifications.

#### **Task 4: Financial and Procurement Verification and Compliance**

- Conduct procurement integrity checks that go beyond document review, including:
  - Comparing awarded contract values with prevailing market prices for similar goods and services;
  - Validating supplier eligibility and independence;
  - Flagging potential conflicts of interest or collusion in procurement and selection processes.
- Confirm that procurement records (tender notices, bids received, evaluation reports, contracts) are properly maintained, complete, and accessible for audit.
- Validate that goods, works, and services procured are delivered in line with contract specifications, including quality, quantity, and timeliness.
- Detect and report any irregularities, delays, or potential misuse of funds.
- Recommend corrective actions where discrepancies are identified.

#### **Task 5: Monitoring and Reporting**

- Validate monitoring of the Results Framework, ensuring indicators are accurately tracked and verified through the use of digital tools such as KoBoToolbox and GIS mapping for field verification.
- Conduct quarterly beneficiary perception surveys to capture satisfaction and feedback (disaggregated by gender, youth, and vulnerable groups), incorporating both quantitative scores and qualitative insights through gender-sensitive focus groups.
- Produce **quarterly reports**, including:
  - Summary of activities reviewed and sites visited
  - Findings of financial, technical, and compliance verification
  - Identified challenges, risks, and recommended mitigation measures
  - Gender and social inclusion observations
  - Climate co-benefits and sustainability assessment
  - Results of beneficiary perception surveys.
- Provide rapid alerts and ad-hoc reports to CDR and the World Bank whenever major irregularities, misuse of funds, safeguard violations, or non-compliance are detected.
- Present findings and recommendations to CDR and the World Bank in a timely, transparent, and structured manner (e.g., quarterly review meetings).
- Provide an online Real-time dashboard (with GIS mapping of subprojects and beneficiary coverage) for CDR and World Bank access.

## 6. STAFFING PLAN AND KEY EXPERTS

### Proposed Staffing Plan for TPMA Assignment

Staff No.	Key Expert Position	Area of Specific Expertise	Minimum Qualification & Professional Experience	Estimated Staff Inputs (Person-Months over contract period*)
1	<b>Team Leader</b>	Project leadership, coordination & reporting	Advanced degree; 12+ years exp.; 5+ years WB/donor projects	<b>18 person-months</b> (intermittent over 2025–2028)
2	<b>Agricultural / Climate-Smart Agriculture Expert</b>	Farmers' organizations, climate-smart agriculture, matching grants	Degree in Agronomy/Agriculture; 7+ years exp.	<b>18 person-months</b> (intermittent over 2025–2028, with peak during grants rollout and evaluations)
3	<b>Infrastructure / Civil Engineer (Water &amp; Rural Infrastructure Specialist)</b>	Design, supervision, and monitoring of rural/agricultural infrastructure	Degree in Civil/Water Eng.; 10+ years exp.	<b>18 person-months</b> (regular field visits & infrastructure inspections across subprojects)
4	<b>Procurement Specialist</b>	Procurement compliance	Degree in Engineering; 7+ years exp.	<b>18 person-months</b> (intermittent; intensive during project initiation and contracts award)
5	<b>Financial Specialist / Controller</b>	Financial audit, fiduciary verification,	Degree in Finance/Accounting; 7+ years exp.	<b>18 person-months</b> (intermittent; intensive during grant disbursements and contract payments)
6	<b>Environmental &amp; Social Safeguards Specialist</b>	WB Environmental & Social Standards, gender inclusion, safeguards monitoring	Degree in Env. Science / Social Dev.; 7+ years exp.	<b>18 person-months</b> (on-call across project cycle, focused on ESIA compliance, PMP monitoring, gender/youth inclusion)
7	<b>Data &amp; GIS Specialist</b>	Data and Geospatial Mapping Validation	Degree in Env. Science / Social Dev.; 5+ years exp.	<b>18 person-months</b> (on-call across project cycle, focused on monitoring & validation of data)
8	<b>Field Monitoring Teams (3–5 teams depending on workload)</b>	Field verification, beneficiary feedback, data collection (GIS, KoBoToolbox)	Degree in Agriculture, Engineering, or Social Sciences; 3–5 years exp.	<b>~120 person-months</b> (combined across all teams; continuous rotational field coverage through 2025–2028)

## 7. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The TPMA shall provide independent monitoring, verification, and analytical reports in line with the scope of work. Deliverables will ensure accountability, transparency, and timely feedback for decision-making.

### Key Deliverables

The Consultant shall, after Contract Notification Date (ND), prepare and submit two original copies (along with soft copies) of the following reports in the English language:

1. **Inception Report [D-1]**  
( ND + 1 month)
  - Detailed methodology, work plan, staffing schedule, data collection tools, and reporting templates.
  - Confirmation of coverage for Subcomponent 1.1 and Component 2 activities.
2. **Quarterly Field Verification Reports [D-2.1], [D-2.2], [D-2.3] ... [D-2.11], and [D-2.12]**  
(ND + at the latest 30 days after each quarter)
  - Findings from field visits to infrastructure sites, farmers' organizations, and grant beneficiaries.
  - Verification of physical progress, fiduciary compliance & safeguards performance.
  - Beneficiary feedback and gender/youth participation tracking.
  - Safeguard compliance matrix with WB Environmental & Social Standards, PMP, and gender inclusion targets.
3. **Semi-Annual Consolidated Reports [D-3.1], [D-3.2], [D-3.3], [D-3.4], [D-3.5], and [D-3.6]**  
(ND + at the latest 30 days after each semester)
  - Synthesis of quarterly findings including safeguarding.
  - Analysis of challenges, risks, and lessons learned.
  - Recommendations for corrective actions and improvements.
4. **Annual Verification Report [D-4.1], [D-4.2] and [D-4.3]**  
(ND + at the latest 30 days after each year)
  - Comprehensive review of activities implemented during the year.
  - Assessment of compliance with donor requirements, financial oversight, and safeguard standards.
  - Verification of results indicators for project monitoring.
5. **Ad-Hoc / Thematic Reports (as needed or requested) [D-5.1], [D-5.2], etc.**
  - Deep-dive assessments on specific issues (e.g., pest management, climate co-benefits, social inclusion, or fiduciary risks).
  - Short briefs highlighting best practices and bottlenecks observed during monitoring, useful for replication or corrective actions.
6. **Final Completion Report (at end of assignment) [D-6]**
  - Overall verification of results achieved under Subcomponent 1.1 & Component 2.
  - Assessment of sustainability, impact, and lessons learned.
  - Final recommendations for future programming.



## Reporting Requirements

- All reports shall be submitted in **English** (executive summaries may also be required in Arabic).
- Reports must be delivered in **both hard copy and electronic formats (Word, PDF, and Excel annexes)**.
- The TPMA will submit reports to the CDR **Project Coordination Unit (PCU)** and share copies with **World Bank**.
- Reports must follow agreed templates (to be finalized in the inception phase) and include evidence such as photos, GPS coordinates, beneficiary lists, and site verification checklists.
- The TPMA must participate in periodic **review meetings** (quarterly and annual) to present findings and discuss recommendations.

## 8. DURATION

It is envisaged that the above services and deliverables will take place during the course of the project duration until 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2028.

## 9. QUALIFICATION OF THE CONSULTANCY FIRM

The consultancy firm shall be a legally registered entity with proven experience in providing independent monitoring, evaluation, verification, and audit services for donor-funded projects, preferably in the agriculture, climate resilience, and rural infrastructure sectors.

### General Qualifications

- At least **5 years of demonstrated experience** in monitoring, evaluation, and verification (MEV) of **international donor-financed projects**.
- Proven track record in working with **international financial institutions (IFIs)** and bilateral/multilateral donors such as IFAD, FAO, UN Agencies, EU, USAID, GIZ, AFD, or others.
- Experience in **Lebanon or the MENA region**, with strong knowledge of local institutions, rural/agricultural systems, and infrastructure development.
- Ability to mobilize a **multidisciplinary team** of experts covering agriculture, engineering, financial management, and environmental & social safeguards.
- Strong capacity in **field monitoring and data collection methodologies**, including use of digital tools (GIS, remote sensing, KoBoToolbox, mobile-based surveys, beneficiary perception tracking).
- Demonstrated ability to prepare **high-quality analytical and verification reports** in English, with clear findings and actionable recommendations.
- Adequate **administrative and logistical capacity** to support field missions across Lebanon (fleet management, safety/security arrangements, data collection systems).

## Specific Experience

The firm should have specific experience in:

1. **Agriculture and Climate-Smart Agriculture Monitoring:** Experience in verifying farmer support programs or similar agricultural initiatives.
2. **Rural and Agency-Managed Infrastructure:** Experience in technical verification of infrastructure projects such as irrigation, wastewater management and other public works.
3. **Financial Oversight and Audit:** Proven ability to review disbursement processes, grants management, and fiduciary compliance under donor-financed projects.
4. **Safeguards Monitoring:** Familiarity with international donor environmental and social safeguards and gender/social inclusion approaches.
5. **Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) Assignments:** At least two completed TPM or independent verification assignments with a total cumulative value of USD 0.5 million, in the past 10 years in agriculture, infrastructure, or similar community-based development projects.

## Team Composition

The firm must demonstrate access to or partnership with qualified experts in:

- Team Leader
- Agriculture / Climate-Smart Agriculture
- Civil Engineering (Water & Rural Infrastructure)
- Procurement Compliance
- Financial Management / Audit
- Environmental and Social Safeguards
- Data and Geospatial Mapping Validation
- Field Monitoring and Data Collection

## Other Requirements

- The TPMA must demonstrate full independence from implementing agencies (CDR, Green Plan, Kafalat, and municipalities) and from any firms potentially bidding for contracts under the project. A declaration of impartiality and absence of conflict of interest will be required at contracting.
- Readiness to mobilize and to deploy the needed teams on short notice across all Lebanese regions.

## **10. ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING**

The TPMA will report to the CDR.

## **11. PAYMENTS**

The Consultant shall allocate and deploy the needed resources and level of efforts from the **Proposed Staffing Plan** during and until the completion of the GATE project, which is on 31/12/2028.

Payment will be due upon approval of CDR of each deliverable submitted by the Consultant, and will be based on the level of effort put for each deliverable (time-based (person-month) contract), which total amount shall be the total Contract Price.

Noting that the total Contract Price shall include all Consultant's expert and staff fees, communication fees, software, computers, site visits expenses, cost of travel, taxes, and all other costs and expenses.

The price for materials testing and quality checks will be paid separately from the Provisional Sum.

## **12. BANK SECRECY DECLARATION**

The TPMA should submit with the offer a signed and stamped declaration, in which, as stipulated in "article (5) of the banking secrecy law dated 3/9/1956 and as stipulated in the resolution of the Council of Ministries no.4 dated 28/4/2020", the Consultant agrees to lift banking secrecy over the bank account used to deposit or transfer public funds related to this Contract, and which will be included as Contract Clause.