



# Mekong River Commission

## For Sustainable Development

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. CONSULTANCY SUMMARY:

<b>Title</b>	International consultant to review gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security in the Mekong Basin
<b>Consultancy/Staff Type</b>	Special Service Agreement (SSA), type (a) One-time assignment
<b>Division</b>	Planning Division (PD)
<b>Duration</b>	40 working days from 17 May 2021 to 31 December 2021
<b>Duty Station</b>	Home-based with possible travel to MRC Secretariat and riparian countries
<b>Reporting to:</b>	The subscriber will be working under the overall management/supervision of the Director and the technical direction of the Chief Basin Planner and the Chief Strategy and Partnership Officer, and in direct working collaboration with the Socio-Economic Specialist, in consultation with the Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
<b>Expected Key Deliverables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note on the approach to undertaking the gender and vulnerability desk review;</li> <li>• Draft report on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security in the Mekong Basin, data availability and data gaps and collection needs related to these issues;</li> <li>• Relevant power point presentations;</li> <li>• Final report on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security in the Mekong Basin, data availability and data gaps and collection needs related to these issues.</li> </ul>

### 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

The Mekong River Commission (MRC) was established by the 1995 Agreement on Co-operation for the Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin, between the governments of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam. The role of the MRC is to coordinate and promote cooperation in all fields of sustainable development, utilization, management and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin.

The MRC Secretariat (MRCS) is the operational arm of the MRC. It provides technical and administrative services to the Joint Committee and the Council to achieve the MRC's mission.

The Planning Division (PD) is responsible for strategic basin development planning, and strategic analysis and planning of issues related to socio-economics, climate change and adaptation, hydropower, navigation and agriculture and irrigation to support basin planning, management and development for sustainable development of the Mekong River.

The MRC has a vision for an economically prosperous, socially just and environmentally sound Mekong River Basin. Various MRC Basin Development Strategies have prioritized social and economic development inclusiveness, within which gender is a key issue. MRC Gender Policy (MRC 2000) has the goal to *mainstream gender perspectives in all MRC development efforts, ensuring that all MRC development*

*programmes benefit men and women equally, in accordance with their different needs, and with the input and equal participation of men and women at all levels.*

The MRC Basin Development Strategy 2021-2030, approved by the MRC Council in 2020, has as one of its five strategic priorities Priority 2 on social dimension, for enabling inclusive access and utilization of the basin's water and related resources. Gender and vulnerabilities feature prominently in this Strategy and are mainstreamed through out the MRC planned areas of work outlined in the first Strategic Plan – 2021-2025. A Gender Action Plan provides guidance for this mainstreaming work together with how the mainstreaming will be monitored in the planning period. The Strategic Plan includes, among its major activities, a study on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security, data and mapping requirements, analysis of data and information on these gender and vulnerability aspects and formulation of policy responses to address the gender and vulnerability challenges and opportunities accordingly.

More concretely as envisaged in the Multiyear Work Plan for 2021-2022 a desk review and analysis will be undertaken, in collaboration with relevant partners, on the multiple gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food and energy security (including indigenous and minority ethnic groups and child labour), to identify specific needs, challenges and opportunities (in understanding and monitoring these aspects?), and to recommend cost effective and priority gender disaggregated data and vulnerability mapping requirements, not the least to complement the Data Generation and Acquisition Action Plan (DAGAP) in implementing the Mekong River Basin Indicator Framework, which has included gender related indicators and gender disaggregated data requirements. The DAGAP is focused on the collection, assembly and transmission of existing gender disaggregated data already held by the Member Countries. SIMVA has also included a gender focused component in the 2018 survey. Where additional monitoring and vulnerability mapping is identified as necessary and agreed, Member Countries may need to make changes to their existing national survey, data collection and processing mechanisms to incorporate the additional disaggregated data requirements, where the MRC can help coordinate and mobilise technical assistance and resources to support countries in making these changes. Once changes have been made the routine collection, processing and transmission of additional gender disaggregated data will occur through the implementation of the DAGAP.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY:**

The specific objectives of this assignment to be achieved by 31 December 2021 are as follows:

- (1) To identify the key gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security in the Mekong Basin;
- (2) To describe and map the poor and near poor water related resource users, their vulnerabilities to and potential benefits from regional and national social and economic development policies and programmes, particularly those related to water resource development plans and projects, and how men and women differ in their vulnerabilities and potential benefits;
- (3) To identify existing regional and national mechanisms to address gender and vulnerability inequalities in the four Member Countries and at basin scale;
- (4) To provide recommendations on cost effective and priority gender disaggregated data and vulnerability mapping requirements to help implement and supplement, if necessary the current DAGAP; and
- (5) To provide recommendations on G&V sensitive engagement mechanism in supporting the MRC Secretariat and the MRC Member Countries in undertaking dialogue and fostering cooperation with relevant partners on these issues.

### **4. EXPECTED RESULTS:**

Based on the above objectives of the assignment, the followings are the key expected outputs of this consultancy:

1. Better understanding for the MRC and its member countries of the key aspects of gender and vulnerabilities in water, food and energy security, who and where the poor and near poor users of water related resources are, how they are vulnerable to and benefiting from regional and national developments, and how men and women differ in these aspects;
2. Discussion among the MRC member countries on gender and vulnerability through workshops, meetings and other exchanges supported;
3. Knowledge in data and information availability, gaps and collection needs on gender and vulnerability in the Mekong Basin;
4. Cooperation opportunities identified between the MRC and its partners and other relevant stakeholders in fostering a better understanding of gender and vulnerability and related data and information collection.
5. Report on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security in the Mekong Basin, data availability and data gaps and collection needs finalized, including mapping the poor and near poor water related resource users, their vulnerabilities to and potential benefits from regional and national social and economic development policies and programmes.

#### **DELIVERABLES AND CONCRETE TIMELINES:**

A tentative schedule of key deliverables is provided below. The exact schedule will depend on the timing of the contracting with the successful candidate, but it is anticipated that the assignment will take place from 17 May through 31 December 2021.

No.	Deliverable	Day	Deadline
1.	Note on the background, approach and methodology to undertaking the gender and vulnerability desk review	5	20 June 2021
2.	Draft report on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security in the Mekong Basin, data availability and data gaps and collection needs related to these issues, and mapping the poor and near poor water related resource users, their vulnerabilities to and potential benefits from regional and national social and economic development policies and programmes	25	31 August 2021
3.	Presentation materials on gender and vulnerability plus workshop attendance	5	16 August 2021
4.	Final report on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, Food and energy security in the Mekong Basin, data availability and data gaps and collection needs related to these issues	5	30 November 2021

#### **6. REQUIRED TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Required tasks and responsibilities for the subscriber are summarized below:

- Review key MRC related documents such as, but not limited to, the Basin Development Strategy 2021-2030, Strategic Plan 2021-2025, MRC Gender Policy, Gender Action Plan 2021-2025, Mekong River Basin Indicator Framework, State of Basin Report 2018;
- Review relevant MRC reports on vulnerabilities such as, but not limited to Social Impact Monitoring and Vulnerability Assessment in various editions, the MRC Council Study on Sustainable Management and Development of the Mekong River including Impacts of Mainstream Hydropower Projects, and other reports/studies on sustainable hydropower

development, ground water use and management, climate change vulnerability, fisheries and other related subjects;

- Review reports and studies by other partners on gender and vulnerability in the Mekong Basin;
- Liaise with relevant partners and stakeholders including Development Partners, Civil Society Organizations, academia, to explore data and information on gender and vulnerability, and cooperation opportunities to better understand gender and vulnerability issues, and capture relevant knowledge, data and information;
- Work with the Socio-Economic Specialist and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist to collaborate and prepare a Note and then draft report on gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security, data availability and gaps, and collection needs, and corresponding power point presentations; and
- Participate in national and regional consultations to ensure Member Countries provide inputs into the review, develop better understanding of gender and vulnerability, and commitment to generating and providing data on gender and vulnerability.

## 7. PAYMENT MODALITY:

Payment will be made upon satisfactory delivery of outputs as follows:

Milestones	Payment proportion	Timeframe
Contract signing	15%	May 2021
Note on background, approach, and methodology for the review	20%	June 2021
Draft report to describe the gender and vulnerability aspects of water, food and energy security including data availability, gaps and collection needs and corresponding power point presentation	45%	September 2021
Final report on gender and vulnerability	20%	November-December 2021

*Note: Consultancy rate is defined by the MRCS consultancy rate policy and the level of consultancy. MRC is a tax-exempted agency for the work done for the MRC. Consultant, in case mission is required, will be covered with a return ticket to and from the assigned duty stations with a daily related subsistence allowance of 75% of the UN for the mission days*

## 8. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS:

Intellectual property rights - IPR: Information, data, database, knowledge resources in the forms of briefings, reports, proceedings, articles, essays, etc. issued by and for the MRCS will be the MRCS property.

Any utility, announcement and disclosure that are without MRCS highest levels of authority' permission is considered illegal and will be charged by relevant local and international legal procedures.

## 9. DECLARATION OF NON-FRAUDULENCE AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA:

The Subscriber shall adhere to the MRC's relevant rules and regulations of the MRC on personal data protection, business exclusion, and fraud prevention and anti-corruption principles, and shall be under strict disciplinary measures should any violation occurs.

## 10. WORKING ARRANGEMENT:

**Communication Line:** The subscriber will be working under the overall guidance of the Planning Division Director and Chief River Basin Planner, and the direct supervision of the Socio-Economic Specialist. Guidance will also be provided by the Chief Strategy and Partnership Officer and the Stakeholder Engagement Specialist.

**11. QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

- Advanced degree (Master/ Doctoral degrees or equivalent minimum) in Anthropology, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Economics or other relevant fields;
- Minimum 10 years experiences in gender, social and economic, and poverty analysis;
- Specific knowledge and experience in international development cooperation, policy analysis and advocacy;
- Specific knowledge and experiences with relevant international agreements and practices on gender and vulnerability and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- International experiences and relations, and regional knowledge of the Mekong River Basin and asset;
- Excellent inter-personal skills and team work;
- Fluency in English, verbal and writing and strong analytical skills; and
- Compliance with all MRC’s Rules and Regulation Regarding Consultancy Management and Contract Monitoring and Closure.

**12. SIGNATURE BLOCK:**

**MRCS:**

Full Name: Bountieng Sanaxonh

Title: Director of Planning Division

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Subscriber:**

Subscriber’s Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscriber’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_