

SOUTHERN
TANZANIA
ELEPHANT
PROGRAM

STEP



Consultancy Opportunity

Assessment of Sustainable, Climate-Resilient, and Nature-Positive Livelihood Opportunities for Village Savings and Loans Associations and Households Engaged in Sustainable Cooking Systems Projects in Kilolo and Mlimba Districts

1. Background

Southern Tanzania Elephant Program (STEP) is an NGO that works collaboratively to conserve the incredible Udzungwa and Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystems of south-central Tanzania, through targeted support to key protected areas and the communities living around them. STEP is a member of a coalition implementing a major new initiative, the Udzungwa Landscape Strategy (ULS). The ULS is a 20-year commitment focused on ensuring the long-term preservation of the globally significant biodiversity found in the Udzungwa Mountains. A central element of this strategy is the engagement of local communities in the establishment and strengthening of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). The aim of VSLAs is to improve financial resilience and promote sustainable livelihoods among forest dependent communities, thus supporting both conservation and community development objectives. Another critical component involves promoting sustainable cooking systems, this work is led by ULS coalition partner Mazingira Alliance for Community and Conservation (MACCO).

To further align community livelihoods with conservation goals, STEP seeks a qualified consultant to conduct a survey across 10 villages in Kilolo and Mlimba Districts where VSLAs and sustainable cooking system projects have been established under the ULS. The survey will focus on understanding the current livelihoods of VSLA members and households engaged in sustainable cooking system projects, especially with regards to their sustainability, climate resilience and environmental impact, and identify and assess the feasibility of (alternative) livelihood opportunities that promote community wellbeing while advancing environmental conservation goals. Following the survey, the consultant will recommend which interventions and investments in sustainable and climate-resilient livelihood opportunities would have the greatest impact for people and nature.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of this consultancy are to:

- Assess the current livelihoods of VSLA members and households engaged in sustainable cooking system projects in 10 villages, especially with regards to their sustainability, climate-resilience, and environmental impact.
- Identify and comprehensively assess economic feasibility, community preferences, and potential for nature-positive outcomes of livelihood alternatives that would be sustainable, climate-resilient, and contribute positively to the environmental conservation objectives of the ULS and are suited to the local socio-economic and environmental context.

- Provide actionable recommendations for specific livelihood interventions and investments that can be undertaken by the Udzungwa Landscape Strategy that will result in more sustainable, climate-resilient and nature-positive livelihoods.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will:

- Conduct a thorough desk review of relevant documents, including published and grey literature and program documents, with a preliminary identification of potential sustainable, climate-resilient, and nature-positive livelihood options.
- Design surveys to assess current livelihoods and evaluate their sustainability, climate resilience and environmental impact. In the technical proposal, the consultant should outline which standard livelihood assessment methodology they intend to use and why (e.g., Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, Household Economy Approach, Participatory Rural Appraisal), and how the survey will be gender sensitive. The technical proposal should also state how the consultant intends to assess economic feasibility, community preferences and environmental impact of potential livelihood alternatives, income-generating activities, and value addition opportunities that would promote more sustainable, climate-resilient and nature-positive livelihoods, as well as gender equality and social inclusion (GESI).
- Conduct surveys in 10 villages with VSLA members and households engaged in sustainable cooking systems projects
- Analyze survey data and prepare a comprehensive report presenting findings and actionable recommendations.

4. Deliverables

The consultant is expected to deliver:

- Interim deliverable: A 5-page report from the desktop review outlining key findings and identifying potential sustainable, climate-resilient, and nature-positive livelihood options, survey plan outlining methodology and timeline, and copies of survey tools.
- A detailed final report presenting:
 - Results of livelihood assessment, with commentary on the main challenges and opportunities faced by VSLA members and households engaged in sustainable cooking system projects. A copy of the raw data should also be provided to STEP.
 - Results of assessment of the economic feasibility, community preferences and environmental impact of potential livelihood alternatives, income-generating activities, and value addition opportunities that would promote more sustainable, climate-smart and nature-positive livelihoods in ways that enhance gender equality and social inclusion.
 - Concrete recommendations and actions for implementation in future phases of the Udzungwa Landscape strategy.

5. Duration

The consultancy is expected to start no later than 7th April 2025 and be completed by 30th May, with a duration of 8 weeks.

6. Fee

The consultancy fee for this assignment is TZS 9,500,000 inclusive of withholding tax. Travel, food, and accommodation expenses for fieldwork in Kilolo and Mlimba Districts will be covered according to STEP's standard rates.

7. Qualifications and Experience

The ideal consultant(s) should have:

- Demonstrated experience with livelihood assessment methodologies
- Demonstrated experience in implementation of sustainable and climate-resilient livelihood strategies and projects
- Familiarity with the socio-economic and environmental context of southern Tanzania
- Strong written and spoken communication and facilitation skills, including the ability to work with diverse stakeholders.
- Excellent organizational skills, attention to detail, and ability to deliver work to a high standard and meet deadlines
- Fluency in English and Swahili (spoken and written)

8. Application Process

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- A cover letter outlining relevant experience and suitability for the assignment.
- A technical proposal outlining the proposed approach, methodology, and timeline for the consultancy.
- CVs of the lead consultant and any team members (if applicable) detailing track record, credentials and references. References of shortlisted candidates will be contacted.
- Examples of previous similar work would strengthen the application.

All applications must be submitted by 30th March 2025 to applications@stzelephants.or.tz. Please write 'ULS Livelihood Consultant' in the email subject.

Interviews will be scheduled shortly after the application deadline. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

9. Contact Information

For enquiries, please email: applications@stzelephants.or.tz