



**Request for Expression of Interest for Consultancy Services
(Individual - Local Consultant)
Communications Officer
GCF Project BLZ-RS-012**

TITLE OF PROJECT: Strengthening the Capacity of the Ministry of Economic Development for pre-Accreditation to the Green Climate Fund

PROJECT OBJECTIVE: The overarching objective is to address institutional gaps identified that inhibit Belize's ability to successfully access climate finance through entities such as the GCF.

1. BACKGROUND

Belize, like many other Small Island Development states (SIDS), is vulnerable to climate change impacts such as extreme flooding, warmer temperature, sea level rise, and erosion. A 2014 assessment categorized Belize's vulnerability index to climate change as extremely high: ranking 9th on the list of 38 other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF, 2014), emphasizing the importance for Belize to mitigate and adapt to climate change in its short-, medium- and long-term development plans. Also, the Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment conducted in 2019 shows that the coastal, fisheries, water and agriculture sectors are all at risk to these impacts of climate change, which in turn will impact the country's economy as these sectors are great contributors to Belize's GDP. Nonetheless, Belize has made significant progress to respond to those climate change related challenges, but much more is still required. According to Belize's first Biennial Update Report by the National Climate Change Office (NCCO), support needed for the country is grouped into three different categories: technical assistance, financial support, and capacity building (BUR, 2020). To address the following needs, key funding agencies, such as the GCF, will need to support the government to meet its Nationally Determined Contribution. Additionally, a resource requirement report states that an estimated USD 1.906 million is needed to meet the updated Belize NDCs for 2030.

The Ministry of Economic Development (MED), in its pursuit of seeking GCF accreditation as a Direct Access Entity (DAE), has internally assessed its institutional structures under a previous GCF-funded readiness which identified several gaps that are preventing MED in meeting the fund requirements. The main gaps that remain to be addressed in this new readiness are the lack of adequate internal financial management systems such as procurement and auditing policies and guidelines aligned to GCF requirements. Also highlighted in the GCF Country Programme is the need to strengthen the communication capacity of the NDA, housed within the Climate Finance Unit (CFU). Through an ongoing GCF readiness programme, a communication officer is assisting the NDA in putting together a strategy to engage with stakeholders about climate adaptation. A continuation of the communication officer's role is needed to build upon the previous readiness and to further strengthen the communication mechanism for the NDA. This includes the creation of a digital repository to facilitate the monitoring and tracking of climate change projects within the CFU.

This proposed readiness grant is informed through an internal assessment and recommendation of the MED (primarily using the GCF Self-Assessment Tool), and a gap assessment and action plan conducted through a previous GCF readiness grant. The current readiness grant will provide technical support to strengthen the operational policies of MED to enable its compliance with GCF accreditation requirements.

The objective of this Readiness is to address remaining institutional gaps for MED against the GCF's accreditation standards, which inhibit Belize's ability to fully access more climate finance from entities such as the GCF. Through this Readiness grant, the MED will be better positioned to seek GCF accreditation to access more direct climate finance for the country. In doing so, Belize will increase its national capacity to access finance for resilience building and to further its climate agenda, as outlined in the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the National Climate Change Policy Strategy and Action Plan (NCCPSAP), Belize's Country Programme for Engagement with the Green Climate Fund 2022, Plan Belize – Medium Term Development Strategy 2022-2026 and Horizon 2030. The project will do so through two of the GCF's five readiness objectives:

Objective 1: Capacity Building - GCF recipient countries and relevant stakeholders set up adequate systems – human, technical and institutional – that enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities towards the GCF and enhance their ability to achieve their objectives; and

Objective 5: Knowledge sharing and learning - GCF recipient countries have benefited from increased levels of awareness, knowledge sharing and learning that contribute to their developing and implementing transformational projects in low-carbon and climate-resilient development pathways.

This will be done through the following outcomes and outputs:

- (1) Strengthened capacity of the MED to meet and maintain the GCF's Accreditation Standards as a Direct Access Entity (DAE) applicant through (i) Building a robust and functioning internal audit function within MED, (ii) Developing adequate procurement procedures, policies, and guidelines across MED's operations.
- (2) Build Knowledge Sharing and Learning Platform through (i) creating a digital repository to facilitate the monitoring and tracking of climate change projects within the CFU; (ii) improving the communication mechanism for the NDA to reach and engage with stakeholders through a direct response feature; and (iii) developing a knowledge and awareness strategy and implementation plan for the NDA, inclusive of communications products.

The direct beneficiaries of this readiness proposal are the units and departments within the Ministry of Economic Development, as the Ministry is seeking GCF accreditation. These include the Policy and Planning Unit, the Climate Finance Unit, the Belize-EU Cooperation, among others. The indirect beneficiaries include relevant government ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Sustainable Development) whose work would benefit from MED accreditation, and all stakeholders who liaise with the MED to access climate finance or interact with climate funds such as the GCF, Adaptation Fund, and Multilateral Development Banks.

2. SCOPE OF WORKS

The Communication officer will assist the Ministry of Economic Development in the creation of a standard operating procedure for MED communications and the creation of a knowledge and awareness, strategy, and implementation plan, as well as a digital repository to track and monitor all GCF projects that are ongoing.

These will not only help streamline internal processes but will assist in creating a better knowledge management and dissemination system between the Ministry and the wider public. The outcomes will be for both public consumption (to increase awareness of all ongoing climate investments in the country) and internal use (to keep up to date with project components and funding coming from all units to ensure maximum coherence). A direct response feature will also be built into the NDA website through which the public can pose queries/leave feedback relating to projects and any actions tied to the NDA.

The communication officer will:

1. Develop a Standard Operating Procedure document and Knowledge and Awareness Strategy and implementation plan for the Ministry of Economic Development
2. Facilitate the development of joint advocacy strategies with partners associated networks.

3. Develop strategic partnerships with public and private sector stakeholders to achieve MED mandate.
4. Act as a spokesperson liaison to media, governments, and other actors.
5. Develop and roll out suite of communication materials (Handouts/flyers, information briefs, new articles, infographics, audio/visual communications, and templates) to support the knowledge and awareness plan.
6. Ensure timely development of briefing materials, presentations, and other communication media.
7. Advise technical staff and the management for meaningful engagement with key actors and institutions.
8. Coordinate five (5) workshops for the NDA and relevant stakeholders relating to the deliverables.
9. Perform other functions of his/her area of expertise that may be assigned by the Director.

3. DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

Deliverables	Timeframe
Inception Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed scope of work • Methodology • Timelines (Gantt Chart) • Milestones including stakeholder engagement 	2 weeks after signing contract
Organize and convene a half-day stakeholder workshop to sensitize stakeholders of the project objectives and get preliminary feedback to inform the knowledge and awareness strategy and implementation plan	2 months after signing contract
Develop a knowledge and awareness strategy and implementation plan for the NDA, inclusive of communications products (i.e., flyers, infographics)	5 months after signing contract
Conduct validation workshop on knowledge and awareness strategy and implementation plan with MED and other relevant stakeholders approx. 50 people including MSDCCDRM, NGOs, and other private and public sector actors.	6 months after signing contract
Develop a Standard Operating Procedure for MED internal and external communications.	8 months after signing contract
Conduct validation workshop on Standard Operating Procedure with MED and other relevant stakeholders.	9 months after signing contract
Develop training materials, including handbooks, manuals, and templates (in a form that can be used to facilitate future training) for the institutionalization of the SOP	11 months after signing contract

Conduct a 1-day training session of approx. 50 participants, including MED staff and other relevant stakeholders, including MSDCCDRM, NGOs, MOF, and other private and public sector actors for the SOP and Direct Response Feature/Digital Repository.	12 months after signing contract
Institutionalize the Standard Operating Procedures	16 months after signing contract
Conduct a 1-day training session of approx. 50 participants, including MED staff and other relevant stakeholders, including MSDCCDRM, NGOs, MOF, and other private and public sector actors. Based on the lessons learnt from the first training and from the institutionalization of the SOP and digital platform.	17 months after signing contract
Draft a final lesson learnt and recommendation report.	18 months after signing contract

4. PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in communications, management, public relations, journalism, or a relevant field.
- A minimum of 2 years of work experience in project management, development of communications materials.
- Any other skill set required:
 - Work experience in communications, project management, public relations, or related field.
 - Work experience with national, regional, and global entities.
 - Demonstrable experience and achievements working in and advocating towards multi-stakeholder platforms and processes.
 - Familiarity with the international development community and climate change projects.
 - Track record in policy analysis, writing and editing articles, website content, reports, and press releases.
 - Ability to quickly understand and absorb new topics, issues and policies and incorporate them into a communication strategy.
 - Ability to deliver oral presentations to various audiences.
 - Excellent communication and project management skills; team player and facilitator.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONSULTANCY

Tenure: Eighteen (18) months commencing from the date of engagement.

Location: Climate Finance Unit Office in Belmopan

Reporting Responsibility: The Communication Officer will report to MED GCF-RS12 Project Manager and the Director of the Climate Finance Unit.

6. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED AND EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Interested applicants are asked to submit a hard copy package that has a letter of interest, their most recent curriculum vitae and two references (name and contact) no later than 4 pm (local Belize time) on Thursday, March 21st, 2024, addressed to:

Chief Executive Officer
ATTN: Ms. Celina Flores
Administrative Officer
Ministry of Economic Development
Sir Edney Cain Building
City of Belmopan
Belize C.A

Ref: Expression of Interest – GCF-RS12 Communications Officer

Soft Copies should be sent via email to admin.officer@med.gov.bz with the subject reference: Expression of Interest – GCF-RS12 Communications Officer.

MED is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against protected characteristics (gender, age, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability).

MED is not liable for any costs incurred by applicants in submission of their application.