



## **Terms of Reference**

### **National Project Coordinator**

- Project title:** Managing Water Scarcity through Strengthened Water Resources Management Project
- Position:** National Project Coordinator
- Duty Station:** Climate Change Department, Ministry of Finance, Partnership House, Vaiaku, Funafuti.

#### **Project Description**

The Managing Water Scarcity through Strengthened Water Resources Management project responds to MFAT's Water Security Strategic Approach to address the climate change-related water security challenges faced by Pacific Island Countries. The Project is being implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC) over the three-year period from July 2020 to June 2023, and

builds upon the achievements, learnings, and enabling environments established through the MFAT-funded Strengthening Water Security of Vulnerable Island States (SWSVIS) project. This Project was also implemented by SPC and from 2015 to 2019 supported a range of activities to strengthen the availability, reliability and quality of drinking water in vulnerable and isolated communities in the Cook Islands, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Tokelau and Tuvalu. The SWSVIS project worked across multiple sectors within the participating countries to help develop and implement a suite of practical measures and tools that strengthened local capacity to anticipate, prepare for and respond to the impacts of drought. The new Water Scarcity Project represents a significant scaling up and refocusing of the activities implemented under the SWSVIS project. It aims to provide support to specific water-scarce communities to actively manage resources to improve resilience, in order that:

- Communities have the infrastructure and capability required to access, collect and store water.
- Communities understand, protect and maintain water resources and infrastructure; and
- Communities are sustainably using water resources and managing risk.

Implementation of the Project is now commencing in each of the five atoll nations of the Cook Islands, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Tokelau and Tuvalu.

A recalibration of originally envisaged Project activities was required in response to the significant and rapidly evolving constraints and risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The amended approach incorporates alternative methodologies to be utilised in the first years of the programme in order to progress priority activities during periods of border closures and travel restrictions. While

many uncertainties remain and conditions may change, several assumptions have been made in formulating this initial workplan, including that:

- International travel restrictions will persist until at least late 2021, meaning that country missions and the mobilisation of international technical assistance will not be possible until late 2021 at the very earliest; and
- While the domestic impacts of the pandemic on participating countries may affect the capacity of counterpart agencies to participate in programme activities, it is assumed that several key country-based activities will be able to continue with appropriate support.

The amended project design reduces the number of first-year activities proposed to take place in participating countries, including those that require SPC in-country technical assistance such as undertaking groundwater surveys and assessments. Instead, the focus moves to providing remote support for countries to:

1. develop practical and costed Country Investment Plans to be endorsed by governments and MFAT for implementation from the second quarter of 2021 onwards;
2. implement a smaller subset of in-country activities to address immediate water security needs already identified by participating countries.

It is expected that support for further activities will be considered by MFAT in response to the Country Investment Plans and in the light of evolving understanding of COVID-related risk and restrictions.

In order to implement project activities on the ground and enable national participation in activities at the regional level, the project provides for the mobilisation of local resources to provide project management support and coordination of local demonstration activities and support participating countries in their engagement in the project.

The national project management function will be an integral part of the implementation of the project at the national and local levels and provide a “national water security coordinator” role to support Government’s efforts in managing water scarcity through strengthened water resources management. While the National Water Security Coordinator (NWSC) position will be based with the designated host Ministry, he or she will be required to work closely across multiple sectors and will be expected to work in and alongside other key government agencies, island councils and, where appropriate, civil society organisations in order to assist in the implementation of project activities.

In this regard, a key function of the NWSC will be in fostering engagement and collaboration across sectors, between levels of Government (including at the national and island levels), and between Government and civil society to assist in implementing the investment plan that will remain useful well beyond both the life of the project.

## Scope of Services

The specific objectives of this appointment are:

- To provide the overall management and coordination of national project activities under the approved investment plan;
- To provide targeted technical assistance to local technical officers, civil society, NGOs and communities in the implementation of project activities;
- To assist in the facilitation of access to local, regional and international experts in the support and implementation of project activities;
- To coordinate and strengthen partnership in water security issues which includes the sharing of information, collaboration and participation by the project stakeholders;
- To support knowledge building and the management and sharing of project information throughout the implementation of the project; and
- To provide effective advocacy and awareness of the role of water resource management in managing water scarcity issues.

## Specific terms of reference

He or she will have the following specific responsibilities and duties:

### 1. Coordination of Investment Plan Activities

- a. Coordination of project activities agreed under the investment plan at the national and local levels, working in close collaboration with relevant Government, island council and civil society partners, and ensuring that project activities are coordinated and integrated at the national level so that they contribute effectively and efficiently to the achievement of both national policy priorities and agreed project outcomes;
- b. Facilitation of periodical reviews and revision of the investment plan as required;
- c. Preparation of regular work plans, schedules and budgets, and submission to relevant national coordinating body and PCU for approval;
- d. Monitoring of national project delivery, progress and budget, and reporting regularly and as required to the relevant national coordinating body and the PCU;
- e. Management and monitoring of the procurement of services and materials in accordance with relevant national and SPC policies, including the preparation of *Terms of Reference*, *Requests for Proposals*, and *Requests for Quotations* as appropriate; and
- f. Working with relevant national agencies to secure required approvals and permits to support implementation of project activities.

### 2. Provision of Targeted Technical Assistance

- a. Provision of assistance to local technical officers and communities in the implementation of project activities through guidance and technical and administrative support;
- b. Facilitation of access to appropriate local, regional and international expertise for the implementation of project activities proposed through the investment plan.

### **3. Strengthening Partnerships for Water Security**

- a. Facilitation of improved cooperation, coordination and information exchange between:
  - Relevant sectors, including but not limited to the key project sectors of disaster management, water, and weather services; and
  - National Government, island councils, civil society and the private sector;
- b. Provision of administrative and technical support to relevant national and local coordination bodies in their consideration of national project activities and other matters relating to water security;
- c. Facilitation of effective information exchange between organisations active in national water security initiatives, including national and local government, non-government organisations, civil-society, regional and international organisations, and donors;
- d. Development of opportunities to further support the implementation of activities identified in the country-level project implementation plan, including opportunities for collaboration with partners for the implementation of activities identified in country consultations but outside of the scope of the project, and the replication and up-scaling of successful project demonstration activities.

### **4. Knowledge Building and Information Management**

- a. Maintenance of effective archives of project information, and facilitating effective exchange of this information as appropriate;
- b. Provision of support to relevant sectors in the effective communication of technical information to non-technical audiences, including assistance in the development of knowledge products appropriate to local audiences;
- c. Assistance in the development and effective management of information databases, including GIS, for the management of water security;
- d. Ensuring relevant data and information arising from the national project is made available to relevant Ministries to assist in the management of water security issues and drought situations;
- e. Publishing and dissemination of national project outputs, and as appropriate making these available through the project's regional water security resource centre; and
- f. Compilation and reporting of lessons learned through the implementation of project activities.

### **5. Advocacy and Awareness of Water Scarcity Issues**

- a. Provision of assistance in the design and implementation of activities for the effective advocacy and awareness of water scarcity issues and effective water resource management responses;
- b. Identification and development of innovative approaches to support and strengthen ownership and management of water scarcity and security issues at the community level;
- c. Provision of support for the consideration of water scarcity and security issues in national, local and sectoral planning processes as appropriate;
- d. Ensuring effective representation of national project initiatives at the local, national and regional levels;
- e. Identification and development of opportunities to maximise visibility of the work of the project and its supporting partners; and
- f. Contribution to the preparation of media releases and, where appropriate, representation of the project in local media;

### **Institutional Arrangements**

The NWSC will be based and accountable to his or her host Ministry and to the SPC Project Manager located within the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) at SPC's Disaster and Community Resilience Programme in Suva, Fiji.

The PCU will work closely with the NWSC in his or her implementation of country-level implementation plans, with progress to be reviewed quarterly against an agreed NWSC work-plan by SPC, the host Ministry and where appropriate the relevant national coordinating committee. The NWSC will be required to support the relevant national coordinating committee in its engagement in project activities and its consideration of water security issues.

The PCU will facilitate country access to a pool of technical expertise and training resources, managed on a needs-basis at the regional level and providing support and mentoring to project activities. The NWSC will be expected to work closely with the implementing agencies and other stakeholders and may require to travel to Fiji from time to time for project related work only (pending travel restrictions).

### **Duration of Service**

Unless otherwise mutually agreed between the NWSC and SPC in writing, the contract will be for an initial period of 12 months (with intentions to extend based on performance) from August 2023 to June 2024 or at a date that is otherwise mutually agreed between the Consultant and SPC in writing.

### **Duty Station**

The NWSC will be based in country at Climate Change Department, with the Ministry of Finance. He or she will be required, from time to time, to travel to the outer islands and to participating villages (domestic travel) and to attend Regional Steering Committee meetings in Fiji subject to travel and border restrictions. Given the multi-sectorial nature of the position, he or

she will carry out his/her duties in collaboration with all other sectors hence may require moving from department to department accordingly.

### **Required skills, qualification and experience**

The successful candidate must have:

- (a) At least five years relevant supervisory and project management experience;
- (b) Demonstrated ability to work closely and collaboratively with island communities, government agencies, civil society and the private sector;
- (c) Demonstrated understanding of water security challenges and responses in atoll environments, at both the national and community levels, and including considerations such as the role of gender in water management;
- (d) A degree in a field relevant to water security, including but not limited to: community development; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); disaster management; climate science; climate change adaptation; meteorology; natural resource management; engineering; GIS or surveying;
- (e) Excellent written and oral communication skills in both English and local language(s), including an ability to communicate technical issues to non-technical audiences;
- (f) Familiarity and knowledge of financial processes and procedures of the host Government, with experience of financial and reporting requirements of donor-funded projects an advantage;
- (g) Computer literacy, including demonstrated expertise in the use of MS Office and in particular MS Excel and its use in financial reporting;
- (h) Experience in managing conflict situations and demonstrable negotiation skills will be an advantage.