Request for Proposals
Zambia: Gender-responsive Integrated Water Resources Management for Water Security and Livelihood Improvement

May 2025

ABOUT THE NDC PARTNERSHIP

The NDC Partnership is a global coalition of countries and institutions working to mobilize support and achieve ambitious climate goals while enhancing sustainable development. Through the Partnership, country members leverage their resources and expertise to provide countries with the tools they need to implement their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and combat climate change to build a better future. Hosted by WRI, the UNFCCC Secretariat, and the UN Office for Project Services, the NDC Partnership has members in all regions of the world, with staff in Washington DC, USA and Bonn, Germany.

BACKGROUND

Zambia became a member of the NDC Partnership in 2016 with the aim of accelerating the implementation of mitigation and adaptation actions aspired for in the Nationally Determined Contributions, policies and plans. The Ministry of Finance and National Planning and the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment are serving as focal points for the NDC Partnership programme in Zambia. On 17 May 2023, Zambia launched the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Framework serving as a sustainable country engagement programme with the NDC Partnership Support Unit. Climate Change has taken a toll on Zambia's agriculture, energy and water sectors, impacting the livelihoods of many, especially women in rural areas. Women play a significant and multifaceted role in society such as ensuring the general well-being of the family (cooking, cleaning, and fetching water), managing the nutritional needs of the family through subsistence agriculture and operating small-scale agro-businesses. Zambia is currently experiencing the effects of the driest 2023/2024 agriculture season in more than 40 years. According to the Food Security Drought Response Plan (2024), the drought adversely affected surface water levels, crop and pasture production for an estimated 6.5 million people, representing 1.1 million farming households across the country. This severe drought is associated with the late onset of rains and prolonged dry spells associated with the El Nino phenomenon which negatively affected crop production. This also came against the backdrop of at least 2.04 million people who were already severely food

insecure and in need of humanitarian assistance beyond the end of the rainy season of 2023/2024.

To mitigate these impacts, it is essential to implement climate-resilient water management strategies, promote gender-sensitive policies and support women's participation in decision-making processes. This is achieved through i) enhancing catchment protection measures in selected districts through Nature-based Solutions (NbS); ii) small-scale dams' rehabilitation in selected Districts and communities; (iii) strengthening dam management through establishment of community-based management committees; (iv) promoting sustainable financing solutions for catchment protection and dam management.

The project aligns and contributes to the aims, objectives and targets of the 8th National Development Plan (NDP) and the NDC Implementation Framework. The 8th NDP has included a dedicated chapter on Environmental Sustainability detailing interventions on mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction. In addition, government developed the NDC Implementation Framework which contains an outcome on the promotion of water security of all Zambians via gender-responsive and climate-smart water infrastructure. The Project also responds to the Government of Zambia decision to approve the implementation of a Three-year Roadmap for designing, constructing and rehabilitating dams as water harvesting infrastructure, to address the inadequate water harvesting infrastructure in the country. In the decision, the Zambian government noted that the construction and rehabilitation of multipurpose dams countrywide, will contribute to enhancing climate resilience against drought and enhance access to water for domestic, agricultural, livestock, fish farming, hydroelectric power generation and any other commercial or industrial use.

The proposed project is well aligned with and complements existing initiatives, programs and projects, such as for example GIZ's Integrated Water Catchment Management and Landscape Protection in Zambia (AWARE 2.0) project that implements Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) in the Lower Kafue Sub-Catchment and jointly with the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation (MWDS) plans on rehabilitating small-scale dams. Other projects include Improving the capacities of groundwater management and protection in Zambia and the water supply management programme being undertaken by government with the aim to maintain and rehabilitate dams in the 84 affected districts by drought as well as help Government drill high production boreholes. As such, the proposed project can thus build upon successful approaches, contribute to their scaling-up, and complement activities that promote sustainability of the measures and ownership of infrastructure by communities.

SCOPE OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES

The project will focus on strengthening climate resilience in Zambia by promoting gender-inclusive Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). The aim is to address water scarcity, improve water management, and reduce climate vulnerabilities in the most affected settlements, especially rural areas that have been most affected by drought. Therefore, policy/incentive frameworks and capacities for the adoption and upscaling of

water and energy efficient climate-smart innovations and practices as well as multi-stakeholder coordination systems will be strengthened by the project.

Activities will target water-stressed areas – such as the Lower Kafue Sub-Catchment – where women, who are disproportionately affected by water shortages, will be prioritized. By integrating climate resilience into Zambia's water management strategies and ensuring gender-sensitive approaches, the project will enhance water security, improve health and hygiene, empower women, and reduce conflicts over water resources. Through financing solutions offered by government at the community level such as constituency development funds and cash for work initiatives, the protection of water catchment areas and the maintenance of dams will be ensured.

Overall, these interventions will lead to small scale farmers, particularly women beneficiaries' economic independence, entrepreneurship and sustainable water practices including improved livelihoods and long-term climate adaptation benefits. The project targets 10,000 households as beneficiaries, 50% of whom are women or and girls headed. Indirect beneficiaries will reach 50,000 people across water-scarce communities in selected Districts of Southern Province (Magoye sub-catchment in Monze and Pemba Districts). The priority Districts are included in the Dam Surveillance Inventory conducted by the Ministry of Water Resources Development and Sanitation.

This project builds on existing government and donor initiatives such as:

- National Adaptation Plan (NAP; 2023) – The project will support the implementation of the National Adaptation Plan focusing on water.
- Zambia's Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency Plan (2011): The project will enhance this by adding a gender and climate lens.
- National Green Growth Strategy (2024) – The Project will assist the project achieve some targets on the water sector
- The Zambia Water Partnership and African Development Bank's Water Strategy: These initiatives emphasize sustainable water management, which will be expanded by promoting gender equality in water access and decision-making.
- UN Women's Climate Resilience Programs in Zambia: The project will collaborate to further empower women in water governance roles.
- The project aligns with the 8th National Development Plan, Zambia's NDC Implementation Framework (2023-2030) and the National Adaptation Plan (2023-2035) by addressing key climate change adaptation priorities in the water sector.
- The National Water Resources Strategy
- The National Rainwater Harvesting Strategy and Implementation Plan
- The Restoration and Protection Plan for the Magoye River Catchment
- The National Water Policy
- Consolidated Resource Mobilization Strategy and Implementation Roadmap for the NAP and Zambia Water Investment Plan (ZIP)
- The Climate Smart Agriculture Investment Plan (CSAIP)

Objective of the Assignment

The main objective of the assignment is to implement the project, which will improve livelihoods through increased water availability for communities. Through gender-responsive, integrated and upscaled rehabilitation and management of water catchments and small-scale dams, the project will enhance water security that responds to government clarion call for urgent intervention.

Outcomes 3, 11 and 12 of the NDC Implementation Framework contains proposed interventions on promoting water security of all Zambians via gender-responsive and climate-smart water infrastructure for crop production, livestock and human wellbeing. A key output is ensuring that relevant water technologies are adopted and implemented and sustained on the results of assessment. As such, the proposed projects outcomes below are also responsive to Government strategic priorities:

Outcome Area 1: Increased Community Engagement in Dam and Catchment Protection and Management: This outcome area will ensure equal participation of women and men in community sensitization and awareness campaigns, establish gender-balanced community-based catchment management groups, develop and implement community-led catchment and dam management plans that address gender-specific needs and provide training and capacity-building support that is accessible to both women and men. This outcome area will ensure sustained catchment and dam rehabilitation linking long term benefits and catch and dam infrastructure management.

Outcome Area 2: Rehabilitated Small Dams Increase Water Storage Capacity: Rapid assessments and feasibility studies will be conducted taking into consideration rehabilitation needs including ensuring that dam rehabilitation plans address the different needs and priorities of women and men. The assessments will be based on the Dam Surveillance Inventory Report produced by the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation. The survey report includes comprehensive information on the state of dam infrastructure including details of beneficiary households, district and community locations, and rehabilitation needs. Training and capacity-building support on dam operation and maintenance including economical utilization of the water resources, that is accessible to both women and men, will be provided/

Outcome Area 3: Promote sustainable Financing Solutions for Catchment Protection and Dam Management: This outcome area will focus on ensuring sustainable finance for catchment protection and dam management. Stakeholders will explore utilization of Constituency Development Funds under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and Cash for Work under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services. Innovative sources of financing such as the Sustainable Agriculture Financing Facility (SAFF) a government of Zambia initiative to promote access to financing for irrigation and other farm mechanization equipment and other initiatives to meet future rehabilitation needs will be explored. The project will support stakeholder consultations, in particular the nexus of climate change, water resources and social protection in the allocation of resources

Key Deliverables and Activities

1: Increased community engagement in dam and catchment protection and management with equal participation of women and men				
Outputs Deliverable Name	**Key Performance Indicators**	**Proposed Activities Deliverable Description/Outline Activities**	**Estimated Cost**	**Timeline/ Due Date**
		Inception Meeting and Report (including exact number of dams and sites, communities that are benefitting, status of IWRM)		
Community Sensitization and Awareness Campaigns	Number of community members participating in sensitization and awareness campaigns	• Conduct community meetings and workshops, • Distribute informational materials, and • Establish community-led catchment management groups.	$55,000	30 Aug 2025
Capacity Building and Training	Number of community-led catchment management groups established	• Provide training and capacity-building support to community members on sustainable catchment management practices, leadership, and decision-making		30 Aug 2025
Community-Led Catchment Management Plans	Number of community members receiving training and capacity-building support	• Support the development and implementation of community-led catchment management plans that address gender-specific needs		30 Sep 2025
Outcome 2: Rehabilitated small dams increase water storage capacity and provide training and capacity-building support on dam operation and maintenance				
Rapid Assessments and Feasibility Studies	Number of small dams rehabilitated	• Conduct rapid assessments and feasibility studies to identify rehabilitation needs	$315,000	30 Jul, 2025
Dam and Irrigation Scheme Rehabilitation	Increase water storage capacity Increase irrigation capacity	• Rehabilitate small dams to increase water storage capacity • Rehabilitate irrigation schemes and increase production and water use efficiency		30 May 2026

Training and Capacity Building	Number of community members receiving training and capacity-building support	• Provide training and capacity-building support on dam operation and maintenance • Provide training and capacity building support on efficient irrigation water use and crop production.		30 Apr 2026
Outcome 3: Promotion of Sustainable Finance solutions for Catchment Protection and Small-Scale Dam Management				
Sustainable Finance Mechanisms	Number of sustainable finance mechanisms established	• Conduct a feasibility study on sustainable finance mechanisms for catchment protection • Conduct stakeholder consultations on the utilization of CDF and Cash for work	$25,000	31 Dec 2025
Training and Capacity Building	Number of sustainable finance products and services developed	• Develop and disseminate guidelines and toolkits on sustainable finance solutions for catchment protection and small-scale dam management.		31 Dec 2025
Policy and Regulatory Framework Strengthening	Number of policy and regulatory reforms advocated for	• Conduct a review of existing policy and regulatory frameworks related to sustainable finance and catchment protection. • Develop and advocate for policy and regulatory reforms to support the use of sustainable finance mechanisms.		31 Mar 2026

PROJECT MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, SUSTAINTABILITY

Project Oversight: As focal point for the NDC Partnership, the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment will provide oversight functions oversight over the project. As provided for in the National Green Economy and Climate Change Act 18 of 2024, the Technical Committee will provide the necessary technical and policy guidance to the project as appropriate. A Technical Working Group (TWG) comprising the representatives from the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock will be constituted to provide day-to-day support towards the technical assessment, training and capacity building of community committees on dam management and catchment protection management.

Project Implementation: The Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation, through the Water Resources Management Department will coordinate the implementation of the Project. The Project will leverage ongoing initiatives under the AWARE project to ensure

sustained coordination of project implementation, monitoring and reporting and knowledge and sharing lessons. The Project Management team will also ensure the following:

- Baseline surveys and assessments of water infrastructure.
- Regular progress reports and gender-specific evaluations. - Engagement of local water governance bodies, ensuring gender parity.
- Capacity-building initiatives will ensure local ownership and technical sustainability.
- Gender-inclusive water management frameworks will be institutionalized at the local level.
- Local capacity-building will empower communities to manage water resources effectively beyond the project lifecycle.
- The establishment of gender-inclusive water governance structures will ensure long-term participation of women in decision-making.
- The integration of climate-resilient infrastructure will reduce future water-related vulnerabilities. Assessment by specialized engineers to identify the number and locations of dams requiring rehabilitation, considering quality requirements. The development and delivery of an inception report based on an engineering assessment should include further details on beneficiaries, such as realistic estimations, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), gender disaggregation, and a more defined geographical scope. Additionally, the report should outline the timeline for contracting and executing work, considering the impact of the rainy season.

POTENTIAL RISKS

1. Limited access to electricity in rural areas and the vulnerabilities to availability of electricity as Zambia's critical energy infrastructure is predominantly hydro-based making it sensitive to climate change events like rainfall variability. The Kariba dam is a key example of this variability. Diversifying sources of energy to power water abstraction and delivery for livelihood and livestock will reduce the risks.
2. Limited technology diversity is hampering access to water by vulnerable communities. Nature-based Solutions will be integrated with renewable energy alternatives such as solar systems to support the enhancement of availability of water in the target area.
3. Budget allocation constraints: Zambia is currently facing debt distress which is limited the country's capacity to provide the essential socio-economic services. Grant resources targeting communities support the deployment of resources in a decentralized manner to reach the most vulnerable.

TEAM OF EXPERT REQUIREMENTS

Team Leader

- Hold at least an MSc degree or equivalent in Water Resources Management, Project Management, Environmental Science, Social Sciences, or related fields.
- At least 5 – 10 years of experience in project management, water security, gender equality, or related field with increasing levels of responsibility.
- Familiarity with the Zambian context including policies, laws, and regulations related to water security and gender equality
- Proficient in local languages spoken in Zambia may be
- Have an extensive understanding of Climate Projections and Risk Profiling.
- Proven experience in assessing vulnerabilities to the impact of climate change and development of climate response strategies and gender equality
- Familiar with National and International reporting protocols under the UNFCCC.
- Experience in the development of Climate Change Monitoring and Evaluation Systems.
- Proven experience in staff management, team leadership and supervision

Key Skills

- **Project Management**: Strong project management skills, including planning, budgeting and monitoring
- **Gender Expertise**: In-depth knowledge of gender equality, social inclusion and human rights, particularly in the context of water security
- **Communication**: Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to work with diverse stakeholders
- Strategic Thinking: Ability to think strategically and develop innovative solutions to complex problems.

Networking: Established networks and relationships with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs and community groups.

Specialized Engineer - Hydrologist

Desirable Qualifications:

- Advanced degree: A master's degree in hydrology or a related field
- Experience in Zambia: Familiarity with the Zambian context, including hydrological characteristics, climate, and water resources management practices.
- Certifications: Relevant certifications, from a Professional body will be added advantage
- Experience: At least 5-10 years of experience in hydrology, water resources management, or a related field, with a focus on water security and sustainability.
- Technical expertise: Strong technical knowledge of hydrological principles, including rainfall-runoff analysis, flood frequency analysis, and water balance calculations.

Key Skills

- Hydrological modeling: Experience in using hydrological models, such as SWAT or HEC-HMS, to simulate water flow and quality.

- Data analysis: Strong data analysis skills, including experience with statistical software and programming languages, such as R or Python.
- Water resources management: Knowledge of water resources management principles, including water allocation, water quality management, and water governance.
- Collaboration and communication: Ability to work effectively with stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and community groups.

CONTRACT TERMS

- Estimated start date: 16 June 2025
- Estimated end date: 30 May 2026

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Prospective vendors should submit:

- Description of proposed project management structure (lead team/project manager, sub-contracted organizations, local experts, etc.)
- CVs of team members
- Examples of and references for similar previous work (with URLs and contact details)
- Proposed implementation approach/project monitoring plan
- A proposed budget with a breakdown of costs sufficient to assess reasonableness and compliance with our funder requirements.
- A proposed schedule for deliverables
- Advanced degree in any discipline, preferably in climate science, programming, public policy (climate/environment), sustainable development, or a similar subject
- At least 10 years of experience in issues related to climate finance, climate/environment, sustainable development, project management, or monitoring in any of the NDC sectors.
- Demonstrable experience working with integrated water resources management.
- Demonstrable experience working in the field of climate change, database management, vulnerability assessments and risk profiling and climate change instruments (both mitigation and adaptation) in South Africa and/or sub-Saharan Africa.
- Demonstrated skills in managing and aligning diverse stakeholder groups, including development agencies, non-state actors / civil society, financial institutions, the private sector, and others.
- Excellent writing, editing, digital and oral communication skills.
- Fluency in English.
- Priority will be given to South Africa based entities.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Evaluation Criteria

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all proposals submitted in response to this RFP

- Completion of all required elements;
- The extent to which the vendor's proposal fulfills WRI's stated requirements as set out in the RFP;
- Experience with similar projects;
- Overall cost of the vendor's proposal;
- Sustainability – WRI values sustainability and all other factors being equal, will favor a proposal to more sustainably perform the work.
- The bidder offering the best overall value will be selected. For this procurement, price and non-price aspects are considered to be of approximately equal importance.

Process

No proposal development costs shall be charged to WRI / all expenses are to be borne by the bidders. WRI may award to the bidder offering best value without discussion. However, WRI reserves the right to seek bidder clarifications and to negotiate with those bidders deemed to be within a competitive range.

WRI may, at its discretion and without explanation to the prospective vendors may choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective vendors or make multiple awards under this RFP. Contracts will not be awarded to vendors debarred by the US government or named on restricted parties lists.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Please send your proposal documents to:

- Mr. Rui Dolabella, Country Engagement Specialist, NDC Partnership Rui.Dolabella.5@ndcpartnership.org
- Ms. Margaret Barihaihi Musana, Regional Manager Anglophone Africa, NDC Partnership Margaret.Barihaihi@ndcpartnership.org
- Ms. Christine Luttmer, Project Manager, Country Engagement, NDC Partnership Christine.Luttmer@ndcpartnership.org
- Mr. Roman Dehsabzi, Project Coordinator, NDC Partnership Roman.DehSabzi@ndcpartnership.org

All proposals must be received by **5:00pm EST on Friday, 06 June 2025** in electronic format to the contacts listed above.