

TOR for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and Community Engagement Review

Project title	PRESERVE - Pacific Resilience through Secure livelihoods, Ecosystem and Resource management, Valued culture and Equity
Engagement type	Consultancy – desk based
Geographic scope	Timor-Leste: Caraulun watershed in Manufahi district Papua New Guinea: Watom Island in East New Britain, and Tekedan and Dalom Catchments in New Ireland Samoa: Luatuanu'u in Upolu Island, Anoama'a West District
Estimated duration	3-4 weeks
Estimated level of effort	Approximately 3-5 days
Deadline for expressions of interest	4 Nov 2026
Anticipated start date	16 Nov 2026

Independent review of PRESERVE's proposed community engagement and participation approaches to assess alignment with Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles and international good practice.

1. About Kiwa PRESERVE

The Kiwa PRESERVE key goal is for Asia Pacific Islands communities, ecosystems and economies to develop enhanced resilience to climate change. PRESERVE is an acronym for Pacific Resilience through Secure livelihoods, Ecosystem and Resource management, Valued culture and Equity.

In 2025, the Kiwa Initiative, planted seeds for a new Nature-based Solutions (NbS) initiative to improve life in communities across the Pacific Region. Beginning in 2026, the Kiwa PRESERVE project was created to bring key partners and communities together to improve community water supply, food production and livelihoods through Nature-based Solutions across Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea and Samoa.

The project identifies the need for climate adaptation strategies in Pacific nation communities and builds on local expertise and traditional knowledge gathered over many years by governments, partners and sub-grantee organizations to share and implement with participating communities.

Led by WaterAid Australia, this project is funded by the Kiwa Initiative (€5,000,000). It will be implemented in Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Timor-Leste from June 2026 to September 2029.

The theory of change envisions that by equipping communities and local authorities with the skills, tools and mechanisms to sustainably manage natural resources, collaborative action

will foster equitable access to water and food systems for community members, while improving biodiversity and ecosystem health at the watershed level.

Kiwa PRESERVE will be implemented at a local level by WaterAid Timor-Leste and WaterAid Papua New Guinea, working alongside sub-grantees Permatil (Timor-Leste), Permatil Global (Australia) and Live & Learn (Papua New Guinea and Samoa), with overall coordination by WaterAid Australia. With their collective knowledge, experience and capabilities in delivering Nature-based Solutions in the Pacific region, these implementing partners will work alongside communities, local leaders and government to achieve the Kiwa PRESERVE project objectives.

The 4 specific project sites are:

1. Timor-Leste: Caraulun watershed in Manufahi district
2. PNG: Watom Island in East New Britain,
3. PNG: Tekedan and Dalom Catchments in New Ireland
4. Samoa: Luatuanu'u in Upolu Island, Anoama'a West District

1. Background to the consultancy

WaterAid Australia is committed to embedding the principles and processes of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) in the PRESERVE project. PRESERVE partners have many years' experience working closely with communities to understand and respond to context-based challenges, and integrating human rights principles and gender equity, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) in our ways of working. The design of PRESERVE also places community-led resilience profiling and planning, and local traditional ecosystem knowledge at the heart of the project design and implementation. However, PRESERVE is the first time that partners are specifically integrating FPIC principles and processes in our work.

The KIWA Initiative has developed [guidance on FPIC, GEDSI and human rights-based approaches](#) in Nature-based Solutions programming, however this guidance requires contextualisation. WaterAid Australia requires specialist expertise to review proposed community engagement plans to assess alignment with international good practice and provide feedback and recommendations for improvement.

This Terms of Reference (TOR) outlines the scope, deliverables, timeframe and required qualifications for an individual consultant or small consultancy team to undertake this work.

2. Objectives

The assignment has two primary objectives:

1. To assess the extent to which PRESERVE's proposed community engagement, consultation and decision-making processes in each context align with recognised FPIC principles and international good practice.
2. To provide practical recommendations that strengthen community ownership of project design, implementation and adaptive management decisions, and improve alignment with Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles and relevant guidance provided by the KIWA Initiative.

3. Scope of Work

Task 1: Review of Community Engagement and FPIC Approaches

The consultant will undertake a structured review of project documentation and (draft) implementation approaches related to community engagement, participation and FPIC. The review should assess the extent to which proposed engagement approaches align with recognised FPIC good practice, including the Free, Prior and Informed Consent guidance and associated reference documents contained within the Kiwa Initiative Guidelines for New Regional Projects.

The consultant should provide their proposed methodology in the proposal; however, it is expected that the review will consider:

- Whether communities have adequate opportunities to influence project priorities, design decisions, implementation approaches and adaptive management throughout the project lifecycle.
- The adequacy of processes for information sharing, community deliberation, collective decision-making and documentation of consent.
- The extent to which proposed approaches support ongoing participation and community ownership beyond initial project planning stages.
- The adequacy of proposed grievance, feedback and accountability mechanisms, drawing on the Kiwa grievance mechanism guidance.
- Whether FPIC approaches are inclusive and accessible for women, young people, people with disabilities and other groups who may face barriers to participation – including the appropriateness of proposed approaches for engaging customary leaders, rights-holders and community governance structures while also balancing the need for diversity and GEDSI principles in decision-making that may not always be reflected in existing community governance structures.

WaterAid will provide relevant documentation, which may include project design documents, organisational safeguarding policies, engagement plans and planned participatory tools, workshop plans, GEDSI tools and frameworks and other relevant resources.

Task 2: Consultation with Project Teams

The consultant will conduct brief interviews with a small number of project managers and relevant staff from the four project locations and regional partners to better understand how community engagement and FPIC principles are expected to be operationalised in practice.

The consultations should explore:

- Planned engagement approaches in each country context.

- Anticipated challenges and risks.
- Existing strengths and good practices.
- Capacity and support needs for implementation.
- Opportunities to strengthen community participation and accountability mechanisms.
- Integration of FPIC principles into community engagement resources and facilitation guides developed within the project.

Task 3: Recommendations and Organisational Learning

The consultant will synthesise findings and develop practical recommendations to strengthen community ownership, participation and accountability in initial engagement and, where possible, throughout project implementation. Recommendations should consider FPIC processes and any aspects of stakeholder engagement, inclusion, accountability and grievance mechanisms that materially influence communities' ability to participate in and share project decisions. The recommendations need to be feasible and match the project's scale, scope and approaches.

The consultant will also facilitate an online learning session with project staff and partners to present findings, discuss recommendations and strengthen understanding of good FPIC practice.

4. Deliverables

#	Deliverable	Description	Indicative timing
1	Inception note (email format)	Brief outline of proposed methodology, review framework and interview plan.	Week 1
2	Organisational Brief	Concise briefing note (approximately 2 pages) summarising findings of the review, including: • Assessment of alignment with Kiwa FPIC guidance and community engagement good practice, • Key strengths of the proposed approaches • Key risks and gaps related to community ownership and FPIC • Recommendations to strengthen community participation and	Week 4

		decision-making during project inception • Recommendations to maintain meaningful community ownership and engagement throughout implementation • Recommendations for minimum inclusion of FPIC in any community engagement facilitation guides and materials	
3	Webinar	A 60 minute online presentation for project staff and partners covering findings, examples of good FPIC practice and recommendations. Presentation slides to be shared with WaterAid.	Week 4

All written deliverables should be submitted in English, in Microsoft Word format, unless otherwise agreed. Reports should be clear and accessible for a non-specialist audience while maintaining technical accuracy.

5. Timeframe and Level of Effort

The assignment is expected to be completed within approximately 4 weeks of contract commencement. The estimated level of effort is approximately 3-5 consulting days, including document review, interviews, preparation of recommendations and delivery of the webinar.

6. Required Qualifications and Experience

WaterAid Australia is seeking an individual consultant with the following qualifications and experience:

Essential

- Demonstrated experience applying FPIC in Indigenous, customary land tenure and/or community-led natural resource management contexts.
- Strong understanding of human rights-based approaches, stakeholder engagement, gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI), and community accountability mechanisms.
- Experience reviewing community engagement and social safeguard approaches within environmental, conservation, climate resilience or development programmes.

- Familiarity with Pacific approaches to participatory governance and community-led development.

Desirable

- Experience working in the Pacific and/or Timor-Leste.
- Familiarity with customary governance systems and community decision-making processes in Pacific contexts.
- Experience in natural resource management, climate resilience, conservation or nature-based solutions programmes.
- Experience supporting environmental and social safeguard systems.

7. Institutional Arrangements

The consultant will be contracted by and report directly to WaterAid Australia. The primary day-to-day contact for the assignment will be the Systems Strengthening Technical Lead.

WaterAid Australia will:

- Provide the consultant with relevant project documentation.
- Facilitate introductions to project managers and relevant staff across project locations.
- Coordinate logistics for interviews (virtual) and webinar delivery.
- Review and provide written feedback on draft deliverables.
- Make payments in accordance with the agreed schedule upon approval of deliverables.

8. Budget and Payment

Interested candidates are requested to submit a budget proposal inclusive of all professional fees. WaterAid Australia will consider value for money alongside technical quality in the assessment of proposals.

Payments will be made against approved deliverables in accordance with a schedule to be agreed at contracting stage.

9. How to Apply

Interested individuals or firms are invited to submit an expression of interest (EOI) by **4 Nov 2026** to Fraser Goff, WaterAid Australia Systems Strengthening Technical Lead (fraser.goff@wateraid.org.au).

The EOI should include:

- A brief technical proposal (maximum 3 pages) outlining the proposed approach to all three tasks and demonstrating relevant experience in the region.
- A curriculum vitae (CV).
- A financial proposal (budget), submitted as a separate document.
- A signed Statement of Integrity required as part of AFD Procurement Policies

10. Safeguarding and Organisational Policies

WaterAid is a child safe organisation. We recognise that we must meet community expectations and the trust placed in our personnel to maintain the highest standards of conduct with children. Therefore, all positions within WaterAid are required to comply with our Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.

WaterAid is committed to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in everything we do. The values and standards we uphold are highlighted in our Global Code of Conduct. The consultant will be required to sign and comply with our Global Code of Conduct.