Learning advisor for USAID project on responsible gold mining, Eastern DRC: **Terms of Reference**

CONSULTANCY OVERVIEW

Keywords	DRC, artisanal gold mining, learning, research, interviews, upstream supply chain actors.
Duration	Mid-April to mid-June 2023 (approximately 3 months)
Location	Various locations in Eastern DRC, based out of Project office (currently Goma)
Renumeration	Competitive, based on experience
Framework	This consultancy operates as part of [USAID's Zahabu Safi (Clean Gold) Project](#) (the Project). Levin Sources is part of a consortium, led by US NGO Global Communities, to implement USAID's Zahabu Safi (Clean Gold) Project.

The below Terms of Reference describes the urgent and important focus of USAID's Zahabu Safi (Clean Gold) Project's learning agenda as it looks to shore up impacts by the end of September 2023 (with the Project currently due to end in December 2023). A second phase of this consultancy could develop into the same consultant harvesting learning from Project successes and failures to share as part of the Project's long-term legacy.

SCOPE OF WORK

Levin Sources seeks a consultant to comprehensively capture learning that explains what more the Project's upstream partners need to do to be market ready. The overarching question: **How can the Project maximize the chances of existing supply chain actors participating in more pilot and future exports?**

The difficulty of exporting responsible gold from Eastern DRC has long been publicized and the focus of several development agency initiatives, one of which is this Project. However, steady progress has been made through onboarding upstream, midstream, and downstream actors, all of whom have expressed interest in creating responsible gold supply chains. Although the Project team has successfully harvested learning from ongoing monitoring and evaluation, there is an need at this stage in the Project for a more focused review of what more upstream partners need to be ready to export. Against this backdrop, the Project is looking to understand what opportunities exist for the Project to meet these needs and adapt and adjust in time to support exports in the next six months.

The review should use key informant interviews to answer the following questions from the Project's learning agenda:
- What's stopping exporters (international or local comptoirs) to push hard for a responsible export, especially initially smaller amounts that can help build confidence and pilot supply chains?
    - What exporter business model is most likely to encourage investment in mine sites and / or pre-financing the purchase of responsibly sourced gold?
    - How are exporters perceived by refiners and what encourages the former to pursue a meaningful business relationship with the latter?
- What's stopping banks to provide pre-finance for a small pilot supply chain? Specifically, what incentivizes bank engagement with supply chain actors and how far can this drive their engagement with Project objectives?
- How comfortable are regulators (ICGLR RCM, DRC Mining Code, etc.) and standard setters (OCED, RMI, LBMA, etc.) with local and international due diligence tools with which the Project has partnered? Can it be used for a pilot export? Assuming this tool is cheaper than

other models of due diligence is the reduced cost sufficient to incentivize downstream investment?

- How did supply chain actors react to the relevance, design, content, and delivery of the Project's engagement and support? Can any behavioral or organizational change be tracked back to the Project?
- What are the main risks for the Project in engaging with these actors and how can these risks be managed?

The review must be utilization-focused, participatory, and done in real time. To be **utilization-focused**, interviews and focus groups should be jointly designed (although not implemented) with Project team members responsible for market linkages and upstream readiness so that their needs are central to the process. To be **participatory**, interviews should primarily target upstream actors as they are the intended beneficiaries of the Project. Interviews and focus groups should be conducted in a way that encourages and empowers beneficiaries to analyze and improve their own situations as well as improve relationships between them and the Project team. It is crucial that a wide range of perspectives are captured, that beneficiaries help prioritize their own feedback, and that those interviewed are given a chance to input into the final After-Action review. To be done in **real time**, the consultant should ensure feedback from interviews is immediately made available to the Project team so that improvements can be made as quickly as possible. The Project needs the most important learning to be captured and factored into decision making before the After-Action review is finalized.

Given that the Project aims to support numerous nascent supply chains across a variety of upstream contexts, it is reasonable to expect that interviews and focus groups will result in numerous hypotheses. These hypotheses should consider what works (or doesn't), for whom (and to what extend), in which circumstances, as well as how and why, all in relation to Private-Sector Engagement. Through discussions with the Project team, the consultant will develop these hypotheses into practical and implementable recommendations for Project interventions that maximize the chances of new supply chains exporting responsibly sourced gold.

Deliverables

- Live spreadsheet containing all interview questions (approved in advance with team) and responses.
- Periodic and ad-hoc word summaries of the most valuable learning captured from interviews and their subsequent analysis. Minimum once per week.
- Narrative report at the end of the assignment with a summary of key findings in the USAID Learning template.

Team Structure

The Consultant will:
- Report directly to and be managed by the Programme Manager (based in the United Kingdom).
- Be introduced to key informant interviewees by the Market Linkages Director and/or the local team members presently responsible for each relationship.
- Work alongside the local team to ensure their existing approach incorporates captured learning.

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- Depending on the consultant's country of residence, contracting and payments will be managed by either Levin Sources or Global Communities. Whilst in country, the consultant will be under the duty of care of Global Communities.

APPLICATION

Qualification, experience and skills

- Previous experience conducting research/capturing learning on a Project of similar complexity in the DRC;
- Knowledge and understanding of 3TG gold value chains originating from Eastern DRC.
- Highly skilled at conducting interview-based research; proven ability to write research reports that adopt a political-economy approach to understanding a market environment.
- Research and Evaluation and good understanding of the drivers in the political economy
- Proven ability to coordinate and collaborate with a multicultural team spread out across different time zones.
- Fluency in oral and written English and French is required. Basic knowledge of Swahili is desirable. (Research will be carried out in French and local languages, but reports will need to be presented in English.)

Process

All Applicants must submit an Expression of Interest (EoI), not to exceed 4 pages by 23:59 (GMT) on Sunday 19 April. The EoI must include:

- A cover letter that includes:
  o brief proposed approach to completing this assignment.
  o a breakdown of estimated level and effort and costs, noting that we expect this consultancy to require the majority of the Consultant's time over the three-month period.
- A CV, including a description of qualifications and/or relevant experiences.

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