

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Consultancy for a Governance and Stakeholder Assessment Baraawe Marine Conservation Area (BMCA), Somalia

Item	Details
Project	Baraawe Marine Conservation Area (BMCA)
Contracting organization	Climate Resilience and Adaptation Network (CRAN)
Assignment modality	Output-based consultancy; individual consultant or qualified consultancy firm/team
Geographic focus	Baraawe District, Lower Shabelle, South West State, with consultations with relevant state/district institutions as agreed
Operational start	Immediately after contract award
Expected duration	Up to four calendar weeks from contract signature
Reporting line	BMCA Project Coordinator, with technical oversight from the MEAL and Learning Manager

1. Project Background and Rationale

The Baraawe Marine Conservation Area (BMCA) is a proposed coastal and marine conservation area in Baraawe District, Lower Shabelle, South West State, Somalia. The coastal area supports artisanal fisheries, fish processing and trade, and other community resource uses linked to marine and coastal ecosystems. BMCA Phase I is intentionally focused on governance readiness rather than full technical marine assessment.

The central project management challenge is the absence of an operational, representative and decision-capable co-management arrangement that connects community, customary, district and state roles. The project therefore prioritizes stakeholder engagement and expectation-setting, governance assessment, mandate alignment, formation of an interim co-management committee, a practical decision-making framework, a recognition pathway, and preparation for later technical work.

Activity 1.3 provides the evidence base for those subsequent governance decisions. The assessment must establish how authority currently works in practice, which actors are considered legitimate by different groups, where mandates or expectations overlap, what inclusion and conflict risks may affect the process, and which collaboration arrangements are realistic in the Baraawe context. The findings will directly inform Activity 2.1 (mandate and role alignment) and Activity 3.1 (interim BMCA co-management committee design).

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this consultancy is to produce a focused, evidence-based and decision-oriented assessment of the governance and stakeholder environment affecting BMCA. The assessment will map relevant formal and customary authority structures, analyze stakeholder roles and relationships, identify mandate overlaps and coordination gaps, assess legitimacy, inclusion and conflict risks, and provide practical recommendations for mandate alignment and the later design of an inclusive interim BMCA co-management committee.

3. Specific Objectives

- Map the key formal, customary, community and fisheries-related governance actors influencing marine and coastal resource decisions relevant to BMCA, and describe their current roles, interests, influence and relationships.
- Identify areas of complementary, overlapping, unclear or contested mandates and operational responsibilities among district, state, customary, fisheries and community actors, while clearly flagging issues that require later legal interpretation.
- Assess stakeholder legitimacy, trust, representation and participation conditions, with particular attention to women, youth, small-scale fishers, fish processors/traders and groups at risk of exclusion.
- Identify actual and potential governance conflicts, coordination bottlenecks, elite-capture risks, political or institutional sensitivities and other factors that may affect the legitimacy or functionality of BMCA governance arrangements.
- Identify existing coordination mechanisms, customary practices, local dispute-resolution arrangements and other collaboration opportunities that can support practical interim co-management.
- Provide actionable recommendations for mandate-alignment consultations, authority focal-point arrangements, representation principles, selection safeguards and the subsequent design of the interim BMCA co-management committee.

4. Scope and Boundaries of the Assignment

The consultant/consultancy team will undertake the tasks below. The work should remain proportionate to a focused governance assessment and should use existing project evidence wherever it is credible, particularly records generated through stakeholder engagement.

4.1 Inception and evidence review

- Review the approved BMCA Phase I concept note, workplan and MEL plan, detailed budget justification, current implementation plan and available Activity 1.1/1.2 records provided by CRAN.
- Review relevant laws, policies, institutional mandates, administrative instruments and previous governance/stakeholder information made available by CRAN or relevant authorities; identify evidence gaps rather than assuming undocumented mandates.
- Prepare a concise inception note setting out the assessment framework, key questions, stakeholder coverage, sampling logic, data-collection tools, ethical safeguards, work schedule, quality-assurance approach and deliverable plan.

4.2 Governance, authority and decision-pathway mapping

- Identify statutory, administrative, customary, fisheries-related and community governance structures that influence marine and coastal resource use in the BMCA area.
- Document how relevant decisions are currently initiated, discussed, authorized, communicated, implemented, challenged and reviewed in practice.
- Assess the relationships between state, district, customary and community actors, including formal reporting lines, informal influence, accountability relationships and existing coordination mechanisms.
- Prepare a clear authority/actor map and decision-pathway narrative that distinguishes formal mandates from de facto practices and stakeholder perceptions.

4.3 Stakeholder analysis and participation conditions

- Analyze stakeholder interests, incentives, influence, expectations, concerns, potential contributions and willingness to participate in BMCA governance.
- Assess which actors are considered legitimate or trusted by different stakeholder groups and identify reasons for divergent views where they exist.
- Assess barriers to meaningful participation and representation for women, youth, small-scale fishers, processors/traders and other less influential groups.
- Identify stakeholders that may be excluded, overrepresented or disproportionately influential and recommend proportionate inclusion and anti-capture safeguards.

4.4 Mandate-overlap and coordination analysis

- Document areas where institutional, customary and operational roles are complementary, overlapping, unclear or contested.
- Analyze the practical implications of mandate ambiguity for interim BMCA governance, coordination, representation and decision-making.
- Distinguish issues that can be addressed through practical interim role arrangements from issues requiring further legal or institutional clarification.
- Prepare a mandate-overlap and coordination matrix that can be taken directly into mandate-alignment consultations.

4.5 Legitimacy, inclusion and conflict-risk analysis

- Identify factors affecting legitimacy, trust, accountability and acceptance of prospective BMCA governance arrangements.
- Assess risks of elite capture, exclusion, token participation, politicization, authority disagreement, clan/community tension, stakeholder domination, fisheries/resource-use conflict and misinformation or unrealistic expectations.
- Assess likely triggers, affected actors, severity and practical mitigation options, without exposing confidential or sensitive information unnecessarily.
- Prepare a consolidated legitimacy, inclusion and conflict-risk matrix with recommended mitigation and follow-up actions.

4.6 Collaboration opportunities and practical governance recommendations

- Identify existing institutions, trusted practices, coordination forums and community mechanisms that could support BMCA without creating unnecessary parallel structures.
- Propose practical authority/focal-point and coordination options for the mandate-alignment stage.
- Recommend representation principles and safeguards for the later interim committee, without selecting committee members or predetermining the final committee structure.
- Prioritize recommendations as immediate, Phase I follow-up, or issues requiring Phase II/legal/technical follow-up.

4.7 Validation and finalization

- Prepare a concise draft assessment report, analytical matrices and a presentation of key findings, risks, evidence gaps and recommendations.
- Present and technically defend the draft findings during the three governance assessment validation sessions organized by CRAN, ensuring that feedback is documented rather than automatically accepted.
- Maintain a response-to-feedback matrix showing each substantive comment, the consultant's response and resulting revision or rationale for non-inclusion.
- Finalize the complete assessment package following CRAN technical review and validation.

5. Key Assessment Questions

1. Which formal, customary, community and fisheries-related actors currently exercise authority, influence or practical control over marine and coastal resource decisions relevant to BMCA?
2. What are the legally stated, administratively understood and practically exercised roles of district, state, customary and community actors, and where do these differ?
3. How are decisions currently made, communicated, implemented and disputed, and which actors are accountable to whom?
4. Where are mandates and operational responsibilities complementary, overlapping, unclear or contested?
5. Which stakeholders are considered legitimate and trusted by different groups, and what factors strengthen or weaken that legitimacy?
6. What expectations, concerns, incentives and potential contributions do key stakeholder groups bring to BMCA governance?
7. Which groups face barriers to participation or representation, and what measures are needed to ensure meaningful rather than nominal inclusion?
8. What existing or potential conflicts could affect BMCA governance, and what are their triggers, actors and practical mitigation options?
9. What risks of elite capture, politicization, exclusion, misinformation or domination by better-connected groups should be addressed?
10. Which existing coordination mechanisms, customary practices or local dispute-resolution arrangements can be built upon?
11. Which mandate issues can be addressed through interim role clarification and focal-point arrangements, and which require later legal/institutional review?
12. What evidence-based recommendations should guide Activity 2.1 mandate alignment and Activity 3.1 interim committee representation, selection safeguards and design?

6. Methodology and Quality Requirements

The assignment should use a predominantly qualitative and participatory methodology appropriate to institutional and governance analysis. The consultant will refine the methodology in the inception note, subject to CRAN approval. At minimum, the approach must include:

- Structured desk review using an evidence matrix that records the source, relevance, level of authority and any contradictions or gaps.
- Stakeholder and authority mapping using transparent criteria such as role, interest, influence, legitimacy, representation and relationship to BMCA decisions.
- Key informant interviews with relevant state/district authorities, customary leaders, fisheries actors, BMCA partners and other governance actors identified through the mapping.

- Targeted focus-group or small-group discussions where necessary to ensure the perspectives of women, youth, fishers, processors/traders and less influential groups are adequately captured.
- Triangulation across documents, stakeholder categories and methods. The report must distinguish documented facts, stakeholder perceptions, consultant analysis and unresolved/contested issues.
- Conflict-sensitive, gender-responsive and inclusion-aware facilitation, including separate discussions where power dynamics could inhibit participation.
- Daily or periodic evidence review with CRAN during fieldwork to identify gaps early and avoid unnecessary repeat consultations.
- Validation of draft findings with key actors before finalization, while retaining the consultant's responsibility for evidence-based professional judgement.

The consultant should build on completed activity engagement records and should not repeat consultations simply to increase numbers. The final sampling/coverage plan must demonstrate that all required stakeholder categories are adequately represented and that evidence has reached a reasonable level of triangulation for the assessment questions.

7. Minimum Stakeholder Coverage

Stakeholder category	Minimum analytical focus
South West State authorities	Relevant fisheries/blue economy, environment and other directly relevant institutions or designated focal points; focus on mandates, policy expectations, coordination and recognition of interim arrangements.
Baraawe District Administration	District leadership and relevant administrative/technical representatives
Customary leaders and elders	Recognized elders, traditional leaders, resource/tenure custodians and dispute-resolution actors
Artisanal fishers and fisheries groups	Small-scale fishers, landing-site representatives and relevant associations/groups
Women and women-led groups	Women fish processors/traders, women leaders and women involved in coastal livelihoods
Youth	Young fishers, coastal youth and youth-group representatives
Fish processors and traders	Relevant value-chain and market actors.
Other community / potentially marginalized groups	Community representatives, local civil society and groups at risk of exclusion where relevant
BMCA implementation partners	Implementing partners and Academic Institute.

Additional actors may be included where the mapping identifies a direct governance role or material influence. Any expansion beyond the above categories should be justified in the inception note and should not displace the required community and authority coverage.

8. Required Analytical Products

Product	Minimum content
Authority and actor map	Visual/structured map of relevant formal, customary, community and fisheries actors, their relationships, influence and accountability links.
Stakeholder analysis matrix	For each key actor/group: role, interests, influence, legitimacy, expectations, concerns, participation barriers, potential contribution and engagement implication.
Mandate-overlap and coordination matrix	Mandate/role area; actors involved; evidence/source; overlap or ambiguity; operational consequence; interim coordination option; issue requiring further legal review.
Legitimacy, inclusion and conflict-risk matrix	Risk/issue; affected groups; evidence; likelihood/importance; potential effect on BMCA governance; mitigation; responsible follow-up actor.
Decision-pathway summary	How relevant decisions are currently proposed, authorized, communicated, implemented, challenged and reviewed, including formal and de facto practices.
Action-oriented recommendations	Prioritized recommendations linked explicitly to Activity 2.1 mandate alignment and Activity 3.1 committee design, plus issues deferred to later legal/technical work.

9. Deliverables, Timing and Acceptance Requirements

Deliverable	Required content	Timing	Acceptance standard
1. Inception note and approved tools	Assessment framework; document-review matrix; stakeholder coverage/sampling plan; KII/FGD guides; consent/safeguarding approach; detailed work schedule and QA plan.	Within 5 working days of contract start	Approved in writing by CRAN before substantive fieldwork.
2. Preliminary mapping and fieldwork debrief	Preliminary authority/actor map; stakeholder coverage status; emerging mandate issues; evidence gaps; updated fieldwork plan; brief debrief with CRAN.	By approximately Day 14	Coverage and gaps are clear enough to guide remaining fieldwork.
3. Draft assessment package	Draft report; authority/actor map; stakeholder matrix; mandate-overlap/coordination matrix; legitimacy/inclusion/conflict-risk matrix; decision-pathway summary; recommendations.	By approximately Day 20	Technically complete draft suitable for CRAN review and external validation.
4. Validation package and participation	Clear slide deck/brief; technical presentation and participation in three CRAN-organized validation sessions; documented validation notes and response-to-feedback matrix.	After CRAN clearance of draft	Feedback is traceable; unsupported views are not presented as verified findings.
5. Final assessment package	Final report; executive summary; all final matrices/maps; response-to-feedback matrix; annexes; clean editable Word/Excel/PowerPoint files; organized evidence/data handover.	Within 3 working days after final validation session	All CRAN technical comments addressed; package is internally consistent, decision-oriented and ready to inform project activities.

10. Expected Final Report Structure

Executive Summary – key governance findings, priority risks and immediate recommendations.

- Background, purpose and assessment scope.
- Methodology, stakeholder coverage, triangulation approach and limitations.
- Governance and authority landscape, including formal and customary structures and current decision pathways.
- Stakeholder analysis: interests, influence, legitimacy, expectations, concerns and participation conditions.
- Mandate overlaps, coordination gaps and practical interim coordination options.
- Legitimacy, representation, inclusion and anti-capture analysis.
- Governance and resource-related conflict risks and mitigation options.
- Collaboration opportunities and existing structures/practices that BMCA can build upon.
- Prioritized recommendations for mandate alignment and interim committee design, clearly distinguishing immediate actions from issues requiring later legal/technical follow-up.
- Annexes – stakeholder coverage, tools, analytical matrices, document list, validation response matrix and other non-confidential supporting material.

The final narrative should normally be **approximately 20–25 pages excluding annexes**. Length is secondary to analytical clarity; unnecessary background text and generic governance theory should be avoided.

11. Management, Coordination and Responsibilities

Actor	Responsibility
Consultant / consultancy team	Lead the assessment independently; prepare and obtain approval of methodology/tools; collect and analyze evidence; maintain secure records; brief CRAN on progress/gaps; prepare all deliverables; present findings at validation sessions; address substantiated feedback.

Actor	Responsibility
BMCA Project Coordinator – CRAN	Primary contractual and operational focal point; facilitate access to project documents and key institutions; coordinate schedules; consolidate CRAN comments; confirm acceptance of deliverables.
MEAL and Learning Manager – CRAN	Technical oversight of methodology, sampling/coverage, evidence quality, triangulation, inclusion, data management, analytical consistency and deliverable verification.
Implementing partners	Support community access, mobilization, inclusion and feedback processes as coordinated by CRAN; support identification of underrepresented community voices without controlling respondent selection.
Academic Institute	Provide relevant academic/technical context and quality input where requested; does not replace the consultant's independent assessment.
District/state authorities and other stakeholders	Participate as information sources and validation actors. Participation does not imply automatic endorsement of findings or entitlement to determine conclusions.
CRAN validation logistics	CRAN will organize the three governance assessment validation sessions under the separate approved activity budget. The consultant provides technical content and participation; event logistics should not be double-costed in the consultancy financial proposal unless CRAN expressly requests otherwise.

12. Required Qualifications and Experience

- Advanced university degree (Master's preferred) in governance, public administration, law, political science, development studies, institutional analysis, conflict studies, natural-resource governance, coastal/marine governance or a closely related field.
- At least seven years of relevant professional experience in governance/institutional analysis, stakeholder mapping, political-economy or conflict-sensitive analysis, natural-resource governance or comparable assignments.
- Demonstrated experience analyzing relationships between formal government institutions, customary systems and community governance structures.
- Demonstrated experience assessing mandates, institutional coordination, legitimacy, representation, inclusion and governance/conflict risks and translating findings into practical institutional recommendations.
- Strong qualitative research skills, including document analysis, key-informant interviewing, facilitation of sensitive group discussions, triangulation and analytical writing.
- Demonstrated knowledge of Somalia's governance and institutional context. Experience in South West State, Lower Shabelle, coastal governance, fisheries or marine conservation is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated competence in gender, youth and social-inclusion analysis and conflict-sensitive approaches.
- Excellent written and spoken English. Capacity to conduct consultations in Somali, or to work effectively with locally appropriate interpretation, is required.
- Ability to work under a compressed schedule, maintain professional independence and deliver concise, decision-oriented outputs.

13. Ethical, Safeguarding and Data-Management Requirements

- Obtain informed consent for interviews and group discussions and explain clearly the purpose, voluntary nature and intended use of information.
- Protect confidentiality and do not attribute sensitive statements to named individuals without explicit permission.
- Use conflict-sensitive and politically neutral facilitation; avoid language or methods that could intensify clan, institutional, political or resource-use tensions.
- Ensure women, youth and less influential stakeholders have safe and meaningful opportunities to contribute, including separate discussions where necessary.
- Do not create expectations of employment, grants, compensation, committee membership, zoning decisions, enforcement measures or other future benefits.

- Record and report safeguarding, conflict-of-interest or serious implementation concerns promptly through CRAN's agreed channels.
- Store assessment records securely. All project-related data, tools and deliverables produced under the assignment must be handed over to CRAN in organized, editable form and may not be published or reused without written authorization.
- Comply with CRAN's applicable safeguarding, code-of-conduct, anti-fraud, procurement and data-handling requirements communicated at contracting.

14. Contract, Financial Proposal and Payment Basis

The consultancy will be contracted as an output-based, lump-sum assignment under the approved Governance and Stakeholder Assessment package. Applicants must submit a detailed financial proposal in USD showing professional fees and any consultant-incurred travel, accommodation, communication, interpretation or other costs that are expected to be borne by the consultant. Costs that CRAN confirms it will provide directly must not be duplicated in the financial offer.

The three-governance assessment validation-session event costs are budgeted separately by CRAN. The consultant is responsible for technical preparation and participation in those sessions, while CRAN will manage the approved event logistics unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Payments will be tied to CRAN's formal acceptance of agreed deliverables. The payment schedule will therefore be stated in the consultancy contract in accordance with CRAN procurement and financial procedures.

15. Application Requirements

Interested individual consultants or qualified firms/teams should submit one complete application package containing:

- A concise cover letter confirming availability, understanding of the assignment and the proposed lead consultant.
- A technical proposal of no more than five pages describing the proposed methodology, stakeholder coverage, workplan, quality-assurance approach and key risks/mitigation.
- A detailed lump-sum financial proposal in USD with a transparent cost breakdown.
- Updated CV(s) for the lead consultant and any proposed team members, clearly identifying their roles and relevant assignments.
- At least two relevant examples, excerpts or links to comparable governance, institutional or stakeholder-assessment work products where legally shareable.
- Contact details for at least three professional references for comparable work.
- For firms: valid registration and other due-diligence documentation required under CRAN procurement procedures.
- A brief disclosure of any actual or potential conflict of interest involving BMCA stakeholders, authorities, partners or related assignments.

The application deadline is 5th October 2026 at 5pm, to be submitted with the address; procurement@cransomalia.org.

16. Evaluation of Applications

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with CRAN procurement procedures. The assessment will consider:

- Quality, feasibility and proportionality of the proposed methodology and workplan.
- Demonstrated experience in comparable governance, institutional and stakeholder assessments.
- Qualifications and complementary expertise of the proposed consultant/team.
- Understanding of Somalia/South West State governance dynamics and ability to work sensitively with formal and customary actors.
- Quality and relevance of previous analytical work and references.
- Availability to meet the compressed assignment schedule.
- Clarity, reasonableness and value for money of the financial proposal.

CRAN may request clarification, interview shortlisted applicants, verify references or seek additional due-diligence information before award. Submission of an application does not create an entitlement to contract award.

17. Key Expected Result

A validated, practical and decision-oriented governance and stakeholder assessment that enables CRAN and BMCA stakeholders to proceed with mandate alignment and interim committee design on the basis of documented evidence rather than assumptions, while clearly identifying unresolved issues that require later legal, institutional or technical follow-up.