1. BACKGROUND

The ongoing COVID-19 outbreak and its aftermath poses severe challenges for Nepal’s economy and the livelihoods of the population. Nepal is ranked as among the most vulnerable economies in the Asia-Pacific region, with a continued heavy reliance on agriculture and a majority of the economically active population engaged in the informal economy. The economy is also, to a large extent, dependent on the tourism and construction sectors, as well as remittances from migrant workers.

The decline of the tourism and hospitality sectors, suspension of construction activities, declining remittances, potential for food and fuel shortages, and the return of migrant workers can cumulatively render a large section of Nepal’s population highly vulnerable. With weak social protection systems with limited social assistance or social insurance, the poor and vulnerable households will bear the brunt of the slowing down of economic progress in Nepal.

The socio-economic aspects of the COVID-19 crisis will lead to increased challenges for many groups in precarious employment situations, including migrant workers and their families, informal labourers and daily wage workers, small businesses, and rural communities, due to potential loss of employment, debt obligations, travel restrictions, inflation, and food and fuel shortages. Conditions for already excluded groups will also worsen. These include, for example, elderly, unemployed, persons with disabilities, Dalits, religious and ethnic minority groups, disadvantaged women (single parents, single-headed households, women victims of gender-based violence (GBV)), disadvantaged children (neglected children, children from low income households, children subject to abuse), informal/undocumented workers, LGBTIQ persons and unemployed youth.

UNDP is supporting the Government of Nepal with initiatives in the immediate response to the COVID-19 outbreak and will continue its work in support of the short, medium and long-term socio-economic recovery efforts. In line with the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, activities will focus on socio-economic support to the most vulnerable groups of the population and those most severely impacted by the outbreak and its attendant economic slowdown. The support will be designed to ensure that SDG investments and achievements to date are not reversed. These activities are directly in line with UNDP’s global Integrated Response to COVID-19, and the immediate priority area of Social and Economic Impact Assessments and Response.

The activities are expected to serve as short- and medium-term response to the socio-economic crisis, as well as directly contribute to an enhanced and comprehensive long-term programmatic response.
2. **RATIONALE**

The impact of COVID-19 in Nepal is at least two-pronged. First, Nepal’s insufficient preparedness, weak health infrastructure, and lack of required technology and human resources to fight the COVID-19 outbreak makes the country particularly vulnerable. In addition to the enormous and immediate health risks and the potential pressures on Nepal’s health sector, the global economic disruptions and the resulting impact on global value chains, plus restrictions in global travel and trade are already severely impacting Nepal’s economy and people’s livelihoods. Early signs indicate that Nepal’s heavy economic reliance on India and China, which are its largest trade partners and major sources of tourism revenues and investments, will exacerbate the socio-economic impact of the global COVID-19 crisis in the country.

To support socio-economic recovery and restore livelihoods of those most severely affected by the social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, a dedicated recovery package will be provided. The package will include both on-farm and off-farm components and focus on support to agriculture value chain and strengthening supply system through commercial production, processing, enterprise development and marketing through improved energy and irrigation facilities. Specifically, support will include enhancing technical and entrepreneurial skills, and provision of tools, equipment and other inputs, access to finance, on site technological support, and strengthened business linkages. The package will be targeted towards the most vulnerable groups, such as daily wage earners, informal sector workers and returning migrant workers and vulnerable farming households. This will help increase both on-farm productivity and off-farm income of the farmers and the informal and migrant labors.

The recovery package will have following major components:

1. On-farm Production and Livestock:
2. Agro-forestry and green parks
3. Improved Irrigation and Energy services
4. Strengthening supply chain and market system

1. On-farm production and Livestock: a) on-farm production: Provision of seeds (such as rice, maize, wheat, potato, onion, vegetables, etc.) fertilizers, technical expertise and other on-farm inputs; agricultural tools, equipment and machinery to reduce workload of farmers and enhance efficiency (for example drum seeders for rice seeding, pit diggers for vegetable and fruit planting, corn shellers, wheat/rice threshers, combined harvesters for plain area); provision of on-site technical support to farmers; support of green volunteers in farmers field, micro/small-scale irrigation and water management, including rain or runoff water harvest, ground water pumping and water storage; provision of poly-house farming, drip irrigation, plastic mulching, minimum/zero tillage and alternative pest management; b) Livestock production: Provision of animal shed improvement, farmyard manure management; production of organic manures and biogas, provision of improved goat and livestock farming for meat and milk production; provision of animal feed and veterinary services;

2. Agro-forestry plots and green parks: a) Agro-forestry plots:- provision of multi-story multi-species plantation (cash crops as ground story: examples - ginger, turmeric, pineapple, broom-grass, etc; fruit trees as second story: examples -
lemon, papaya, jackfruit, mango, licchi, etc; soft wood tree species as third story for fodder production and hard wood tree species as fourth story for timber production) under collaborative arrangements with local community, palika and land-owner; with provisions of irrigation; composting; fencing; maintenance (weeding; pruning; pollarding); nursery and seedlings; technical inputs for mapping; design, layout and plan; planting and monitoring; b) Green parks:- provision of landscaping, design, plan, and plantation of local ornamental tree and flowering species and grasses and construction of water pond/lake for recreation and aesthetic values and bird watching in order to provide a pollution free environment to elderly people and children for health benefits;

3. Clean Energy Services: provision of reliable energy services through clean sources such as solar or grid extension that will include design and implementation of solar power system (in case of off-grid) for productive use such as drying, heating, milling, grinding, producing oil and flour, boiling, sawing, pulp making, debarking, etc to serve the marginalized and poor community; provision of installation of energy system, testing, training and maintenance;

4. Strengthening Supply Chain and Market: Provision of information about producers, volume and quality of production (including processing and packaging), establishing linkages between farmers, consumers and market; demand and supply forecast, information on product cost, market price and risks; provision of post-harvest support, including handling, grading, transportation and storage; management of market centers, monitoring of product quality and supply chain disruption; coordination among production, marketing and value chain actors

3. **OBJECTIVE**

This ToR elaborates the work and requirements for the organization for implementing the selected socio-economic recovery projects in collaboration with local governments, the private sector and UNDP. The objective of the call for Expression of Interests is to select the organizations to implement the socio-economic recovery projects in Bhimdatta municipality of Kanchanpur.

4. **SCOPE OF THE WORK**

The selected organization will perform the following tasks and responsibilities:
- Identification of the most vulnerable and particularly affected groups, households and peoples for example poor and food insecure households, socially excluded groups like; people with disabilities, elderly, religious and ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ persons, single women, women headed households, returnee migrant workers and their families, daily wage workers, and micro/small entrepreneurs, through developing comprehensive household profiles in the project implementation municipality. The profiles will support in assessing direct and indirect socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis on households and their members.
- Strengthen farmers’ cooperatives (where applicable) for its effective and efficient operations and expansion while implementing the project.
- Implementation of the dedicated socio-economic and livelihood recovery package provision through rapid enterprise development initiatives in municipality following UNDP guidelines and procedures. These may include provision of technical skills, enterprise skills, access to finance, sustainable input management, animal feed and veterinary services, animal shed improvement, on-site production support, tools and equipment support, agro-forestry, improved irrigation and energy services, market linkages etc. The detail implementation plans, and implementation modalities will be developed once the service provider/NGOs is finalized through the evaluation of EOI.
- Promoting local resource persons (agriculture technicians/ green volunteers) and resource-based enterprises to increase the income of vulnerable groups through improved production, processing and marketing. It will be implemented in partnership with, and with co-funding from, provincial government, municipalities and other stakeholders as recommended and guidance from UNDP’s field offices.
- Facilitate partnerships building with the selected provincial and local governments for cost-sharing as well as effective implementation of the selected projects.
- Leverage resources from multiple partners, including provincial government, local governments, private sector and other possible development partners.
- Collaborate and coordinate with the other UNDP projects and other projects implemented by UN agencies and development partners in the area for synergies.
- Advocate wider replication and scaling up of successful projects with other local governments.

5. **Procedures for the selection of potential service provider/organization through EOI**

- The EOI will be assessed based on pre-defined selection criteria and UNDP will final the eligible organization for implementing project in Bhimdatta Municipality.
- Socio-economic recovery packages/projects will be finalized together with the Bhimdatta municipality. Detailed proposals and implementation plans will be developed together with selected organization and Bhimdatta municipality.
- Final selection of the organization will be carried out following UNDP procedure and contract will be awarded accordingly.

6. **Project duration**

The implementation of the projects will start in October 2020 and will be completed by June 2021

7. **Bhimdatta municipality for the project implementation**

The Bhimdatta municipality of Kanchanpur district has been preliminary discussion for the partnership to initiated project.
8. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

The selected organization will work under regular support from UNDP Field Office and Bhimdatta municipality whereas UNDP Country Office will provide regular support and guidance. The organization will coordinate regularly with UNDP Field Offices for implementation of activities. UNDP Country Office and Field Office will monitor the progress of the projects and provide necessary guidance based on the requirements.

9. EXPERTISE AND REQUIREMENT FOR SUBMISSION OF EOI

- The organization must be registered within the district/local government in which it proposes to implement the project under this EOI.
- The organization must have working experience in the thematic area related to the proposed project in agriculture value chain and social mobilization.
- The organization must have at least 3 years of experience in implementing similar type of development projects and working experience with development partners including UN agencies and others.
- The organization are encouraged to obtained recommendation letter from the Bhimdatta municipality for the project implementation and co-funding.

10. DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH EOI

- Brief Expression of Interest in the format attached herewith outlining the methodologies and organizations comparative advantage to implement UNDP socio-economic recovery project;
- Organizational profile, organization structure and name of board members/executive committee members;
- CV of the key personnel to be involved in project implementation, including finance personnel;
- Valid registration certificate, latest tax clearance certificate, last two years' audit reports;
- Evidence of working experience (such as recommendation letter, contract copy) with development partners, including UN agencies;
- Evidence of working experience with relevant local governments (Municipality), if any;
- Recommendation letter from the proposed municipality for implementing program
- Organization Policies (Human Resource/Finance/Operational, etc.);

11. TIME FRAME

EOI can be submitted either by hard copy delivered to UNDP Country Office, UN House Pulchowk, or through email at: registry.np@undp.org by 16th September 2020. The project implementation period will be October 2020 to June 2021.