Government of Nepal
Ministry of Education and Sports
Department of Education
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT SELECTION)

NEPAL
Nepal Safer Schools Project (NSSP) — Project Preparation
Grant No.: IDA E758-NP (Preparation Grant for Nepal Safer Schools Project)

Assignment Title: Social Development Specialist (Individual Consultant)
Reference No. (as per Procurement Plan): NP-CLPIU EDU-556510-CS-INDV
Date of Publication: 7 November 2026 (2083/07/21 BS)

The Government of Nepal has received financing from the World Bank (International Development Association) toward the cost of the Preparation Grant for Nepal Safer Schools Project (IDA Grant No. E758-NP, under the Grant Facility for Project Preparation), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include leading the social assessment and stakeholder analysis for the Project and preparing its social risk management instruments in compliance with Nepal's national regulations and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) with grievance redress mechanism, Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Labor Management Procedures (LMP), SEA/SH Risk Assessment and Action Plan, Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), social inputs to the ESMF and ESCP, and leading meaningful and inclusive stakeholder consultations. The estimated level of effort is 180 person-days (approximately 6 person-months) on a full-time basis over approximately 6 months, based at DOE, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, with field visits to project districts. The assignment is expected to start in December 2026.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment (Annex 1) is attached to this request for expressions of interest, and can also be found at the following websites: www.cehrd.gov.np / www.moe.piu.gov.np.

The Department of Education (DOE), Ministry of Education and Sports, now invites eligible individual consultants ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services, including a

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cover letter, a detailed curriculum vitae and copies of academic certificates and experience documents.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" September 2025 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

The Consultant will be selected on the basis of qualifications and relevant experience. The procurement process will be in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection (Open – National) method set out in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours, 09:00 to 16:00 hours (Nepal Standard Time), on Government working days.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail) by 12:00 hours (Nepal Standard Time) on 25 November 2026 (2083/08/09 BS).

Department of Education (DOE)
Attn: SDE Ashok Adhikari, Section Chief, Project Infrastructure Development Section (PIDS), Department of Education
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal
Tel: +977-9851422340
Website: www.cehrd.gov.np / www.moe.piu.gov.np

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ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Social Development Specialist — Individual Consultant

Project	Nepal Safer Schools Project (NSSP) — Project Preparation Phase
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), through the Department of Education/Project Implementation Unit (DOE/PIU)
Financing	International Development Association (IDA) Grant No. E758-NP – Preparation Grant for Nepal Safer Schools Project, under the World Bank Grant Facility for Project Preparation (GFPP)
Grant Agreement	Letter Agreement between Nepal (Recipient) and the International Development Association, signed on 30 August 2026; Grant amount SDR 1,100,000; Grant Closing Date 31 December 2027
Grant Activity (Annex, Section 2.01)	Component 3: Project Management and Capacity Building – Part (e) Project Management (E&S risk management and preparation of associated instruments, including the ESCP and SEP); and Component 2 – Part (d) Strengthening Institutional Readiness (consultations with Local Governments and communities)
Procurement Plan Activity Ref.	NP-CLPIU EDU-556510-CS-INDV
Name of Consulting Service (as per Approved Procurement Plan)	Social Development Specialist: hiring of social development specialist for social assessment and stakeholder analysis to mitigate social issues
Position	One Individual Consultant — Social Development Specialist
Market Approach	Open – National
E&S Risk Classification	Substantial (Social)
Selection Method	Individual Consultant Selection, following an open national request for expressions of interest, in accordance with the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, updated version dated September 2025.

1. Background and Context

Nepal is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, highly exposed to earthquakes, floods, landslides, and increasingly severe climate-related hazards. A large share of Nepal's public school buildings were constructed before the adoption of modern building codes and are inadequately equipped to withstand seismic events or climate shocks. The 2015 Gorkha

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earthquake destroyed or damaged approximately 32,000 classrooms, and successive disasters have continued to highlight the structural fragility of the school building stock.

In response, the Government of Nepal, through the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and its Department of Education/Project Implementation Unit (DOE/PIU), is preparing the Nepal Safer Schools Project (NSSP) with World Bank financing. The project's development objectives are to (i) improve the safety and disaster resilience of selected existing school infrastructure in Nepal, and (ii) strengthen the institutional systems needed for long-term, risk-informed planning and implementation of school infrastructure investments for disaster risk reduction.

The Government of Nepal has received a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank, in an amount of SDR 1,100,000 (Grant No. IDA E758-NP – Preparation Grant for Nepal Safer Schools Project), under the Grant Facility for Project Preparation (GFPP), through a Letter Agreement signed on 30 August 2026 (the "Grant Agreement"), to support preparation and implementation readiness, including preparation of the Environmental and Social (E&S) documentation required for the Project.

Under Section 2.02 of the Grant Agreement, the Recipient carries out the grant-financed Activities through its project implementing unit under MoES, or any successor thereto, which is now the Department of Education/Project Implementation Unit (DOE/PIU). This assignment is financed under Component 3 (Project Management and Capacity Building), Part (e) Project Management, which supports environmental and social (E&S) risk management and the preparation of all associated instruments, including the environmental and social commitment plan and the stakeholder engagement plan, together with Component 2, Part (d) Strengthening Institutional Readiness, which supports consultations and workshops with Local Governments and communities, as described in Section 2.01 of the Annex to the Grant Agreement. Consulting services are eligible expenditures under Category (1) of Section 3.01 of the Grant Agreement, financed at 100% inclusive of taxes. The Grant Closing Date is 31 December 2027 (Section 3.03 of the Grant Agreement); all services under this assignment shall be completed within the Grant period.

In accordance with Section 2.03 of the Grant Agreement, the Activities financed by the Grant shall be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan for the Activities dated 1 July 2026, as amended from time to time. The instruments prepared under this assignment shall be consistent with these requirements, including the Recipient's obligation to establish, publicize, maintain and operate an accessible grievance mechanism for Activities-affected people (Section 2.03(e) of the Grant Agreement).

The Project has been classified as Substantial risk for both environmental and social dimensions. Social risks include labor influx and associated SEA/SH risks, potential impacts on informal land occupiers, exclusion of marginalized groups (Indigenous Peoples/Adivasi Janajati, children with disabilities, girls), and health and safety risks to students during active construction on school premises. Ahead of project appraisal, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Labor Management Procedures (LMP), SEA/SH Action Plan, and Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) are required, consistent with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), in coordination with the World Bank, setting out specific, time-bound commitments, measures, and actions to manage the Project's environmental risks and impacts is also required.

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Per the Project's approved Procurement Plan, DOE/PIU is seeking to engage one qualified Social Development Specialist to conduct social assessment and stakeholder analysis and to lead preparation of the Project's social risk management instruments such as SEP, LMP, SEA/SH Action Plan, RPF and others, mitigating social risks and ensuring compliance with World Bank requirements. The Social Development Specialist will work alongside a separately engaged Environmental Specialist and Procurement Specialist, coordinating closely on cross-cutting instruments.

2. Objectives of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is for the Consultant to lead the social assessment and stakeholder analysis for the Project and to prepare the Project's social safeguards documentation, ensuring compliance with Nepal's national regulations and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), with primary responsibility for the following Environmental and Social Standards (ESS):

- ESS1 — Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts (social dimension)
- ESS2 — Labor and Working Conditions
- ESS4 — Community Health and Safety (social/community dimension)
- ESS5 — Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement
- ESS7 — Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities
- ESS8 — Cultural Heritage (social/community dimension)
- ESS10 — Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

The Consultant will also work closely with and contribute social inputs to instruments led by the Environmental Specialist to ensure the ESMF, ESCP and related documents are fully cross-referenced and internally consistent.

3. Scope of Work

3.1 Inception and Document Review

- Review all available project preparation documents, School Physical Infrastructure Assessment, Master plan development and Implementation Procedure 2083, including the Initial Environmental and Social Review Summary (ESRS), Project Concept Note, draft E&S instruments, and existing social assessments (e.g., ESMF).
- Review Nepal's applicable national legislation and guidelines on land acquisition, labor, child protection, disability rights, and Indigenous Peoples, including the EPA 2019, Land Acquisition Act 2034 (1977), Labor Act 2074 (2017), Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 2056 (2000), and Disability Rights Act 2074.
- Review the World Bank's ESF, applicable ESSs, and relevant Good Practice Notes on SEA/SH, labor influx, stakeholder engagement, and Indigenous Peoples.
- Conduct a gap analysis between the current state of social safeguards preparation and the requirements of the World Bank ESF, identifying instruments to be newly prepared versus revised.

3.2 Social Assessment and Stakeholder Analysis

- Conduct a social assessment of communities in project target districts, covering demographic profile, land tenure and occupancy patterns (including informal occupiers of school land), and the presence of Indigenous Peoples/Adivasi Janajati and other vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- Carry out a stakeholder identification and analysis exercise, mapping MoES and DOE/PIU, local governments (LGs), EDCUs, School Management Committees (SMCs), contractors, students, parents, teachers, persons with disabilities, Adivasi Janajati communities, and civil society organizations.

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- Identify social risks specific to the Project — labor influx, SEA/SH, child protection, exclusion of vulnerable groups, and disruption to school operations during construction — to inform the design of mitigation measures across the social safeguards instruments below.
- Based on the Social Assessment and Stakeholder Analysis, work with the Social Development Specialist to adapt the existing sector-wide ESMF to reflect the Project's scope of school retrofitting, reconstruction, and demolition activities across project districts.

3.3 Preparation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

- Prepare or revise the SEP based on the stakeholder analysis in Section 3.2.

The SEP shall include:

- A phased engagement strategy covering project preparation, appraisal, implementation, and closure, with differentiated approaches for different stakeholder groups.
- A public consultation and disclosure plan, including proposed methods (community meetings, radio/FM broadcasts, social media, school-level consultations) and timelines for disclosure of all E&S instruments in Nepali and local languages as required.
- A detailed description of the Project's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), including structure, access points, response timelines, escalation procedures, and provisions for anonymous, child-sensitive, and gender-responsive complaints.
- Monitoring indicators and reporting arrangements for stakeholder engagement activities.

3.4 Preparation of Other Required Social Instruments

- Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF): consistent with ESS5, to govern land acquisition, temporary or permanent displacement, or economic displacement resulting from school construction, retrofitting, or site clearance, including eligibility criteria, entitlement matrix, valuation methodology, consultation and disclosure requirements, grievance procedures, and treatment of informal occupiers/encroachers on public land.
- Labor Management Procedures (LMP): consistent with ESS2, the Labor Act 2074, and the Child Labor Act 2056, covering categorization of project workers; child labor prohibition and monitoring; a Code of Conduct (CoC) for contractors and workers; and measures addressing labor-influx risks (community health, SEA/SH), coordinating with the Environmental Specialist on construction OHS provisions.
- SEA/SH Risk Assessment and Action Plan: a risk assessment specific to the project context (construction workers on active school campuses, labor influx into communities) and an action plan covering prevention, response, and reporting, consistent with the World Bank's Good Practice Note on SEA/SH.
- Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF): consistent with ESS7, including a social assessment of Indigenous Peoples' presence in target districts, free, prior, and informed consultation (FPIC) requirements, and culturally appropriate benefit-sharing and grievance mechanisms.

3.5 Contribution to the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)

- Support the client in preparing the social components of the ESCP, documenting specific, time-bound commitments/measures/actions of MoES and DOE/PIU to manage social risks and impacts, for integration into the consolidated ESCP jointly owned with the Environmental Specialist.

3.6 Stakeholder Consultations

- Work closely with Environmental Specialist to design and lead meaningful consultations on the draft E&S instruments (ESMF, LMP, SEP, RPF and others) with MoES and DOE/PIU, CEHRD, LGs, EDCUs, SMCs, school communities (parents, teachers, and, where appropriate, students), civil society organizations working on education and disability rights, and Adivasi Janajati representative organizations.
- Ensure consultations are targeted and inclusive of women, girls, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples communities, using culturally appropriate and accessible methods.
- Conduct separate, targeted consultations with vulnerable groups where required to enable meaningful participation.

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- Document consultation processes, participants, feedback received, and how it has been incorporated into the revised instruments, including a summary table of key comments and responses, in a consolidated Stakeholder Consultation Report.

3.7 Finalization and Disclosure Support

- Finalize the ESCP, ESMF, SEP, RPF, LMP, SEA/SH Action Plan, and IPPF based on feedback from stakeholder consultations and the World Bank Task Team.
- Prepare the consolidated summary note jointly with the Environmental Specialist, documenting: (i) the approach and methodology used; (ii) key findings and decisions for each instrument; (iii) how stakeholder feedback was incorporated; and (iv) outstanding issues or risks requiring attention during implementation.
- Support DOE/PIU in publicly disclosing all finalized social instruments on the MoES and DOE/PIU websites, in English and Nepali, prior to project appraisal.

4. Deliverables and Timeline

SN	Deliverable	Timeline
1	Inception report and detailed work plan	Week 2
2	Social legislation review and gap analysis note	Week 3
3	Social input to draft Project-specific ESMF	Week 6
4	Social Assessment and Stakeholder Analysis Report	Week 8
5	Draft SEP (including GRM design)	Week 10
6	Draft RPF	Week 12
7	Draft LMP (including Code of Conduct)	Week 14
8	Draft SEA/SH Risk Assessment and Action Plan	Week 14
9	Draft IPPF	Week 16
10	Social inputs to the draft ESCP	Week 16
11	Consolidated Stakeholder Consultation Report	Week 20
12	Final ESCP, ESMF, SEP, RPF, LMP, SEA/SH Action Plan, and IPPF, incorporating DOE/PIU and World Bank feedback	Week 22
13	Consolidated Summary Note (joint with Environmental Specialist)	Week 22
14	End-of-assignment handover report	Week 24

All deliverables shall be submitted in English; publicly disclosed instruments shall also be submitted in Nepali, in editable electronic format (.docx) and PDF. DOE/PIU and the World Bank Task Team shall endeavor to provide consolidated comments on each deliverable within 10 business days of submission.

5. Reporting Arrangements

The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the DOE/PIU Project Director (or designated E&S focal point) and will coordinate closely with the Environmental Specialist and

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the Procurement Specialist engaged under the Project, as well as with the World Bank Task Team's Environmental and Social Specialists. The Consultant shall submit monthly progress reports summarizing work completed, planned activities, and any issues or risks requiring attention.

The Consultant's monthly progress reports shall also provide inputs to the semi-annual Activities Report, which the Recipient is required to furnish to IDA not later than fifteen (15) days after each calendar semester, covering that semester (Section 2.04 of the Grant Agreement).

- Maintain regular communication with DOE/PIU E&S staff and the World Bank Task Team.
- Coordinate with EDCUs, LGs, and SMCs in project target districts as required.
- Undertake field visits to representative school sites and communities to conduct social assessment activities and consult with school communities.
- Comply with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards and Good Practice Notes throughout the assignment.
- Adhere to the Project's Code of Conduct, including provisions on prevention of SEA/SH and child protection, and sign the corresponding declaration prior to contract signing.

DOE/PIU will provide the Consultant with access to all existing project documents, relevant background reports, and key informants within DOE/PIU, CEHRD, and partner agencies, and will arrange logistical support for field visits in accordance with agreed procedures.

6. Duration and Level of Effort

Per the Project's Procurement Plan, the assignment is planned to run for approximately **6 months (180 person-days)**, from contract signing to contract completion. Actual start and end dates will follow the finalized selection and contract-signing schedule. There is a possibility of extension subject to satisfactory performance and continuing project preparation needs. The Consultant will be based at the DOE/PIU office in Bhaktapur and may be required to travel outside the Kathmandu Valley for field visits.

7. Qualifications and Experience

- Education: Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in Social Sciences, Development Studies, or a related discipline.
- General Experience: A minimum of 10 years of professional experience in social safeguards/risk management on development projects.
- World Bank ESF Experience: Demonstrated experience preparing E&S instruments (ESMF, SEP, RPF/RAP, LMP, IPPF) under the World Bank ESF or equivalent MDB safeguard standards; prior World Bank project experience in South Asia is strongly preferred.
- Thematic Expertise: Demonstrated expertise in at least two of: SEA/SH prevention and response, Indigenous Peoples planning, child protection, gender-inclusive engagement, resettlement, and labor management in construction.
- Sector Experience: Experience in the education sector or public infrastructure/civil works involving school construction, retrofitting, or rehabilitation is a significant advantage.
- Country/Regional Experience: Prior experience working in Nepal or the South Asia region; familiarity with Nepal's legal, regulatory, and institutional social framework is highly desirable.
- Language: Proficiency in written and spoken English is required; proficiency in Nepali is a strong advantage.
- No conflict of interest with any current or anticipated bidder, contractor, or consultant under the Project (see Section 9).

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8. Selection Method

The Individual Consultant shall be selected on the basis of qualifications and experience, following the Open – National market approach as approved in the Procurement Plan. The selection will be based in accordance with Individual Consultant Selection method, set out in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers dated September 2025, as specified in Section 1.02(j) of the Grant Agreement.

9. Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest

- The Consultant shall not have been involved in decisions on school site selection, land acquisition, or contractor selection in a manner that would create a conflict with their role in preparing social safeguards instruments for the same activities.
- The Consultant shall sign DOE/PIU's Code of Conduct and SEA/SH prevention declaration prior to contract signing, and shall disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest without delay.
- The Consultant shall maintain confidentiality of sensitive information (e.g., individual grievances, vulnerable-group data) collected during consultations and fieldwork, in line with data protection good practice.
- The Consultant shall observe the World Bank's Anti-Corruption Guidelines ("Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants", dated October 15, 2006, revised in January 2011 and as of July 1, 2016), which apply to this Grant as specified in Section 1.02(a) of the Grant Agreement.

10. Facilities to be Provided by DOE/PIU

- Office space (except IT equipment) and access to relevant project documents, systems, and key DOE/PIU and Bank counterparts.

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