

Democracy Works Foundation (DWF)

**Terms of Reference for Needs Assessment: Climate, Environment and Resources
Governance Programme: Civil Transitions for Inclusive Climate Action**

Call for Proposal(s) ID:	CTICA/001/08052026
Commissioning Programme:	Climate, Environment and Resource Governance
Published Date:	12 May 2026
Submission Deadline:	29 May 2026 at 16h00 SAST
Required Technical Qualifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience conducting research, with a minimum of 5-7 years proven professional experience in the fields of climate change, Just Energy Transition, energy and environmental governance, public policy, sustainable development, or a related field. • For individual consultants, a Masters’ Degree in the relevant field as outlined above is required. • Expertise in climate governance, energy policy, or Just Energy Transition • Experience working with Civil society organisations, Local government, Private sector stakeholders • Knowledge of South African municipal systems and related public participation processes such as {Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), local economic development (LED) commitments, provincial climate actions plans and municipal JET programmes, and any relevant public participation processes in support of advancing socio-economic development.}
Additional Requirements for Submission:	<p>Interested applicant(s) must submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical proposal (methodology and approach) and workplan (maximum 10 pages) • Financial proposal • Company profile, along with all necessary compliance documentation, if necessary. • CV(s) of key personnel (maximum 2 pages) • Example(s) of similar work

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please submit your proposal to recruitment@democracyworksfoundation.org |
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About Democracy Works Foundation

[Democracy Works Foundation \(DWF\)](#) is a Southern African non-profit organisation dedicated to strengthening democratic resilience in the face of institutional decline, corruption and shrinking civic space. Established in South Africa in 2014, with additional offices in Angola, Lesotho and Malawi, DWF works to build inclusive, sustainable democracies by developing tools, platforms and research to enhance democratic culture, institutions and leadership.

DWF has established itself as a preeminent voice in democracy development through its distinctive values-driven approach to embedding democracy development activities within broader social development priorities.

DWF, through its Climate, Environment and Resources Governance Programme, is implementing projects aimed at strengthening inclusive climate governance and advancing a Just Energy Transition (JET) in South Africa, with the aim of advancing socio-economic development and promoting inclusive participation in decision-making. Through its approach, DWF combines principled advocacy with practical solutions to advance democracies that deliver real socio-economic and environmental benefits while safeguarding fundamental freedoms.

Context

Energy poverty in South Africa is a complex, multidimensional issue driven by accessibility, and affordability. This affects millions of households despite high national electrification rates. A legacy of apartheid-era inequalities means that low-income households, particularly in informal settlements and rural areas, bear a disproportionate burden of high energy costs, power cuts, and reliance on hazardous and polluting fuels. The Just Energy Transition that South Africa aims to transform the energy mix in South Africa from being fossil fuel dependant to cleaner, greener and forms of power. This transition opens up the opportunity to advance energy democracy as well, through advocating for affordable and clean energy for every household. This is only possible if communities are empowered to meaningfully participate in the Just Energy Transition and are central to decision making.

DWF aims to contribute to the reduction of energy poverty through this project by developing the capacity of citizens to participate meaningfully in the Just Energy Transition. The project aims to:

- 1). Deepen a democratic culture in the implementation of the Just Transition: the project will focus on strengthening civil society participation in the just transition and

investment decision making amongst both state and private sector actors to increase cooperation and coordination in the decision-making processes, and
2). Develop the capacity of leaders to facilitate and encourage participation in the Just Energy Transition: The project will provide municipal government officials with the necessary skills and capacities to better collect, analyse and strategically contribute to decision- making in local economic development.

The overall objective of the project is to develop a conducive environment for the increased participation of civil society organisations in the Just Energy Transition and investment decision-making.

DWF's intervention logic believes that if communities meaningfully participate in the just transition through engagements with local government and the private sector AND community needs are clearly addressed, THEN energy poverty will be alleviated, and inclusive local development participation will occur.

DWF seeks to commission a comprehensive needs assessment across selected municipalities to inform programme design and implementation, The programme focuses on enhancing:

- Civil society participation in climate and energy governance,
- Municipal capacity for climate-responsive planning and linking Just Transition awareness and considerations to the development priorities of community based CSOs thereby establishing them as change agents in the integration of the Just Transition into broader integrated development planning and local economic development.
- Private sector (Independent Power Producers - IPPs) engagement with communities and municipalities.

Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to conduct a multi-stakeholder mixed method needs assessment to:

1. Identify capacity gaps and training needs among:
 - Community-based organisations (CSOs/CBOs)
 - Municipal officials
 - Independent Power Producers (IPPs)
2. Assess:
 - Avenues for participation in climate and energy governance decision-making process, with the view to support social compacting among identified stakeholders.
 - Alignment of IPP socio-economic development (SED) investments with local priorities, including identifying gaps or opportunities for gender-inclusive and social accountability mechanisms in existing initiatives.

- Opportunities for strengthening inclusive governance and Just Energy Transition processes

Objectives of the Needs Assessment

1. **Civil Society Capacity:** Assess capacity of CSOs to engage in energy and climate governance, and identify gaps/needs in climate literacy, advocacy, and participation in IDPs.
2. **Municipal Capacity:** Determine municipal capacity to collect and use community-based data and integrate climate and JET into IDPs and local economic development planning activities.
3. **Private Sector (IPP) Engagement:** Assess IPPs' capacity and readiness to engage with communities and municipalities and identify gaps in ESG, and opportunities for advocacy to influence wider integration of gender-responsive and socially accountable mechanisms in ESG commitments to advance socio-economic development.
4. **Socio-economic Development (SED) Alignment:** Analyse how IPP SED investments align with community needs, municipal development priorities, and identify socio-economic and climate resilience gaps to inform the development of tailored trainings targeted at the identified stakeholders.

Expected Results

- Deepened understanding of identified stakeholder needs to inform coordination and exchange of information on existing policies, climate action plans and mechanisms for inclusive participation in Just Energy Transition decision-making processes.
- A stakeholder map containing all relevant stakeholders, with a detailed outline of their areas of intervention and relevance to the proposed project, with the view of establishing an ecosystem of actors to foster collaboration and enable stakeholders to participate meaningfully in energy governance.
- A clear scope of available financing mechanisms for renewable energy initiatives in support of locally led IPPs.

Scope of Work

1. **Design Phase:**
 - Develop a needs assessment methodology.
 - Design data collection tools.
2. **Stakeholder Mapping** (A preliminary stakeholder mapping has already been conducted by DWF. The consultant will build on and refine this existing work as part of the needs assessment process).
3. **Data Collection:** The consultant will conduct stakeholder engagement interviews and/or consultations, including data collection activities independently to ensure objectivity and impartiality in the research process.

This information will be consolidated to inform the final report.

4. Data Analysis/Synthesis.
5. Validation – DWF would like to have an external validation workshop on the findings and recommendations from the needs assessment. This will be preceded by an internal presentation to the DWF team.
6. Reporting: Produce a comprehensive needs assessment report with:
 - Key findings
 - Recommendations
 - Priority areas for intervention
 - Inputs for training programme design

Methodology Requirements

The consultant must apply a mixed-methods approach, including:

- Quantitative surveys
- Qualitative interviews and focus groups
- Participatory and inclusive engagement approaches

The methodology must ensure:

- Representation of women, youth, and marginalised groups.
- Private sector players, specifically IPPs operating in the identified provinces (Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo).
- Municipal representatives across all the provinces, specifically working on JET programme implementation.
- Civil society, community-based organisations and network-based formations.

Deliverables

Deliverable	Description	Milestone date
Inception Report	Methodology, tools, workplan	Week 1: 12 June 2026
Data Collection Tools	Surveys, interview guides	Week 2: 19 June 2026
Stakeholder Mapping Report	Key actors identified	Week 2-3: 26 June 2026
Draft Needs Assessment Report & presentation to DWF team	Preliminary findings	Week 3-4: 3 July 2026
External Validation Workshop Report	Stakeholder feedback	Week 5: 7-8 July 2026
Final Report	Consolidated findings and recommendations	Week 6: 17 July 2026

DWF external project launch	Kick-off meeting with stakeholders and programme design	Week 7: 28-29 July 2026
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Project Duration/Timeline

Estimated duration: 6 weeks (8 June to 17 July 2026)

Budget Proposal

As part of the budget proposal submission, please provide your indicative daily rate.

Required Expertise

The consultant should have:

- Experience conducting research, with a minimum of 5-7 years proven professional experience in the fields of climate change, Just Energy Transition, energy and environmental governance, public policy, sustainable development, or a related field.
- For individual consultants, a Masters' Degree in the relevant field as outlined above is required.
- Strong background in research and needs assessments in the fields of climate change, Just Energy Transition, energy and environmental governance, public policy, sustainable development, or a related field.
- Experience working with Civil society, Local government, and Private sector stakeholders
- Knowledge of South African municipal systems (IDPs, LED, provincial climate action plans, municipal JET programmes and relevant public participation processes in support of advancing socio-economic development)

Bid/Proposal Assessment Criteria

Area of Assessment	Weighting (%)
Alignment of technical proposal to the scope of work and overall TOR	40%
Innovation in terms of data collection and analysis	20%
Clear consideration for exercising the duty of care throughout stakeholder consultations	15%
Emphasis on women and youth inclusion to ensure a participatory process	25%

Reporting and Coordination

The consultant will report to DWF Programme Manager, and regular check-ins will be required throughout the assignment.

Outputs for Programme Use

- The needs assessment will directly inform:
- Training programme design targeting capacity building workshops for community-based organisation; and tailored trainings for municipal officials and IPPs in the identified provinces.
- Stakeholder engagement strategy.
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue processes.
- Policy and advocacy interventions to support civil society mobilisation and campaigning efforts.

For noting, individual consultant(s) or consulting firms are encouraged to apply. Democracy Works Foundation reserves the right not to appoint a consultant should applications not meet the set criteria.

CONSENT TO PROCESS YOUR INFORMATION:

By sending us your application, Curriculum Vitae, academic records, qualifications, or any other personal information as defined by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPIA):

- you have disclosed up to date and accurate records; and
- you agree to us keeping your records in our data base as per our Retention Policy.

Declaration:

By agreeing to the terms herein, you give Democracy Works Foundation (DWF) the authority to process your personal information. This consent will remain valid until such time as we have received instructions from you to request, subject to any applicable law and where appropriate, the correction, updating or deletion of your personal information held by us. You further acknowledge and declare that all personal information supplied to DWF is accurate, up to date, not misleading and complete in all respects.