



Terms of Reference (TOR) for
SUMERNET Fellowship under Component 2: Strengthening research-to-policy capacities
SUMERNET PLUS Programme

(Version: 6 March 2026)

A. BACKGROUND:

In this phase **SUMERNET PLUS** (July 2025 to December 2027), the Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET) will strive to improve policies and practices through scientifically robust, policy-relevant research and diverse and innovative means of outreach to support a just and sustainable transition for enhanced climate resilience, while taking into account gender equality, disability and social inclusion and human rights based approach in the Mekong Region.

This will be realized through the following **programme objectives**:

- **Enhanced capacities and inclusive collaborations of Mekong’s knowledge producers, policy influencers, and young professionals** are needed to deliver credible research, solution-oriented knowledge co-production, policy engagement, and communications that respond to the differentiated needs of local communities, women and other marginalised groups, and local leaders in addressing climate resilience challenges.
- **Improved policy development and implementation by policymakers and practitioners** that are inclusive, gender-responsive and grounded in human rights-based approach to deliver equitable climate resilience solutions in the Mekong Region.
- **Adoption of just, equitable and sustainable practices by the private sector and other stakeholders**, based on inclusive evidence from solution-oriented knowledge co-production, will contribute to climate resilience in the Mekong Region.

Programme themes:

- **Exploring nexus interactions and trade-offs in the Mekong Region.** This theme focuses on existing dependencies, synergies, and trade-offs among key sectors (e.g., water, energy, agriculture, and forests) with the overall purpose of designing innovative solutions that address the existential threats of climate and unsustainable development using a transdisciplinary and inclusive approach.
- **Building socio-ecological resilience across scales.** Through practical and innovative partnerships (including public-private partnerships), this thematic area will maintain and enhance the resilience of socio-ecological systems to development and climate change.
- **Just sustainable transitions.** This thematic area will support the development of innovative, scalable solutions and evidence in key sectors (e.g., water, energy, agriculture, and forests) on a just sustainable transition for climate resilience. It will focus on defining the problem and solutions along with marginalized and vulnerable communities, women, youth, and local and Indigenous peoples.

Priority areas of work:

- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Water-energy-food nexus

- Agriculture and food systems
- Forests and environmental degradation
- Women, youth, and climate action

SUMERNET PLUS will continue linking evidence-based research with policymakers, local communities, and vulnerable and marginalised groups across the region so that policy choices made will ensure socially inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development in the Mekong Region.

SUMERNET Fellow under Component 2: Strengthening research-to-policy capacities :

The Fellow will support the design, coordination, and implementation of capacity strengthening and knowledge exchange activities under Component 2. This includes contributing to training programmes, knowledge products, and engagement processes aimed at enhancing the technical and soft skills of boundary partners and agents of change across the Mekong region.

B. GENERAL TASKS:

The Fellow is expected to:

1. Support the **planning and delivery of capacity development initiatives** for partners, grantees, and network members
2. Contribute to the **development of learning materials and knowledge products**, including training modules and best practice documentation
3. Facilitate **knowledge exchange and peer learning processes** among stakeholders
4. Strengthen integration of **cross-cutting themes** (e.g., GEDSI, HRBA, conflict sensitivity, ethics) in capacity development activities
5. Support **monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL)** of capacity strengthening efforts, including documentation of outcomes and lessons learned
6. Engage with programme partners and stakeholders to ensure **relevance, inclusiveness, and responsiveness** of capacity-building interventions
7. Contribute to ensuring **quality, accountability, and transparency** in programme implementation
8. Coordinate with other SUMERNET PLUS components to align programme initiatives with network-wide strategies.

C. SPECIFIC TASKS:

Capacity Development Design & Delivery

- Conduct or support **training needs assessments** for boundary partners and stakeholders
- Assist in designing **training curricula, agendas, and session plans** (e.g., research methods, policy engagement, MEL, financial and project management)
- Support organisation and facilitation of **training workshops, webinars, and learning sessions**
- Contribute to integrating **interactive and innovative learning approaches** (e.g., peer learning, Human Library, storytelling approaches)

Knowledge Products & Learning Materials

- Develop or co-develop:
 - Training modules and toolkits
 - Best practice compendiums and guidance notes

- Case studies showcasing capacity development outcomes
- Support **documentation of good practices and lessons learned** from programme implementation
- Ensure materials are **accessible, user-friendly, and tailored to regional contexts**

Knowledge Exchange & Fellowship Support

- Support design and coordination of **fellowship and learning exchange programmes**
- Facilitate **cross-country and cross-sector knowledge sharing** among network members
- Assist in organising **regional dialogues, learning events, and exchange platforms**
- Engage with fellows and participants to track progress and support their learning journeys

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

- Support tracking of **capacity development outputs and outcomes**
- Assist in collecting and analysing **feedback from participants and stakeholders**
- Contribute to **learning reflections, after-action reviews, and synthesis reports**
- Document evidence of **capacity uptake, behavioural change, and policy engagement impact**

Stakeholder Engagement & Coordination

- Liaise with **partners, grantees, and experts** to support implementation of activities
- Coordinate with internal teams to ensure alignment with **programme objectives and timelines**
- Support communication and dissemination of capacity development opportunities and outputs

D. DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

No.	Deliverables	Description	Timeline
1.	Inception Workplan and Learning Plan	Detailed workplan outlining priority areas of engagement, proposed capacity development activities, learning objectives, and coordination approach with Component 2 team.	Within Month 1 (May 2026)
2.	Training Needs Assessment Brief	Rapid assessment and synthesis of capacity needs of target groups (e.g., grantees, partners, fellows), including priority topics and recommended formats for delivery.	By Month 2–3 (May–June 2026)
3.	Capacity Development Activities Support	Support design and delivery of at least 3–5 training sessions / workshops / webinars , including	Ongoing (June 2026 – February 2027)

No.	Deliverables	Description	Timeline
		agendas, materials, and facilitation support.	
4.	Training Modules / Learning Materials	Development or co-development of at least 1–2 training modules, toolkits, or guidance materials (e.g., policy engagement, MEL, project/financial management).	Draft by Month 6 (September 2026); Final by Month 9 (December 2026)
5.	Knowledge Exchange & Fellowship Engagement Support	Support coordination and documentation of knowledge exchange events , peer learning sessions, or fellowship activities; including summaries and key insights.	Ongoing (June 2026 – March 2027)
6.	Case Studies / Best Practice Documentation	Develop at least 1–2 case studies or best practice notes capturing lessons from capacity development or partner engagement.	By Month 10–11 (January–February 2027)
7.	MEL Contributions and Learning Reflections	Support data collection, participant feedback analysis, and preparation of learning/reflection notes on capacity strengthening outcomes and effectiveness.	Ongoing , with synthesis by Month 11 (February 2027)
8.	Support SUMERNET meetings, Learning Forum and other key events.	Support to SUMERNET annual regional network meetings, Learning Forum and other key events provided	By Month 2-11 (May 2025-February 2027)
9.	Coordinate Regional SYP networking events	Coordination for Regional SYP networking events provided	By Month 2-11 (May 2025-February 2027)
10.	Provide coordination support to other program grants when relevant	coordination support to other program grants when relevant provided	By Month 2-11 (May 2025-February 2027)
11.	Coordinate SYP engagement at key program activities	Coordination of SYP engagement at key program activities provided	By Month 2-11 (May 2025-February 2027)

No.	Deliverables	Description	Timeline
12.	Contribute to SYP network development and membership expansion	SYP network development and membership expansion contributed	By Month 2-11 (May 2025-February 2027)

E. PERIOD:

This role is expected to perform tasks within the period currently from **1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027**.