



Terms of Reference

Women for the MAR and special projects Officer

I. Background

The Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) is a regional, private environmental fund with the objective of supporting the protection of the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) ecoregion, shared by Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. Its mission is to seek, secure and facilitate regional funding, foster partnerships and drive capacity building for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mesoamerican Reef region.

The Fund carries out its mission through the following programs

1. Saving Our Protected Areas: A Legacy of Care. Establish and protect an interconnected network of priority coastal and marine protected areas in the region.
2. Fishing for the Future: Sustainable fisheries for a thriving reef. Engaging communities in co-management of their fisheries, establishing fish replenishment zones, and monitoring and protecting fish spawning aggregations.
3. Climate change: The need is now. Supporting adaptation to climate change, specifically for coral reefs and mangroves.
4. Clean Water for the Reef: Improving wastewater and solid waste management for a healthier ecoregion and its people.

MAR Fund has targeted women's initiatives throughout the years across different programs. In 2016, MAR Fund supported 17 women-led projects in Guatemala and Honduras through small grants within the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action Program developed by Fcam, Both ENDS, and Mama Cash. Projects included a Diploma on Afro-Honduran Women's Leadership for Territorial Defense against Climate Change, Building Climate Resilient Coastal Communities with Women's Participation in the Sarstun Region of Guatemala, Strengthening women's capacity to defend their rights to save and protect the mangrove ecosystem and secure their livelihoods, and Strengthening women's capacity to demand their rights to a clean and healthy environment through the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems of the Garifuna community of Río Esteban in Honduras, among others.

In 2023, the MAR Fund, with support from the Summit Foundation, conducted a consultation to identify and assess ongoing or potential initiatives to simultaneously improve women's economic opportunities and the health and resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) region. The consultant identified 21 organizations, ventures, and projects in the MAR. Seven women-led projects were



prioritized, three of which were eligible and interested in small grant support, which has been awarded.

In addition, MAR Fund coordinates the MAR+Invest Initiative, a cross-cutting program and blended finance mechanism with strong monitoring and evaluation of impact, business acceleration and capacity building that aims to create conditions for a sustainable ocean-based economy in the MAR. MAR+Invest provides a great opportunity to support women-led ventures in the MAR.

More information about the MAR Fund can be found at <https://marfund.org>

II. Position overview

The officer will be responsible for strengthening the capacity of MAR Fund by designing and implementing a project that links improved economic opportunities for women with improved health of the MAR. This role will include developing an integrated Program Strategy based on the MAR Fund Strategic Plan, starting with a stakeholder analysis and identification of funding needs, strengthening the capacity of the MAR Fund team on gender issues, and continuing to map women's needs, gaps, opportunities and businesses in the MAR. This position will also focus on strengthening rural women's groups (including indigenous communities) on development and submission of proposals, grant follow-up, development of technical and financial reports, design and measurement of indicators and social and environmental safeguards. The Officer will also support the Technical Director in following up on special projects.

III. Key responsibilities

- Analyze data to understand the needs and opportunities for supporting women entrepreneurs in the MAR region.
- Design a comprehensive strategy to develop the MAR Fund Women for the MAR Project with an integrated vision, capable of linking the MAR Fund Strategic Plan with related projects and programs.
- Organize and conduct training sessions for the MAR Fund team on gender issues, ensuring that gender equity is mainstreamed into all aspects of the organization's work.
- Support the elaboration/update of gender/inclusion/equity policies or procedures.
- Implement the MAR Fund Women for the MAR Project strategy.
- Increase the number of current women-led projects supported by the MAR Fund to at least seven based on available funds.
- Review project proposals and budgets submitted to MAR Fund and prepare grant letters or collaboration agreements.
- Review women's groups Due Diligence documents.



- Identify any social or environmental project risk and determine and follow up on mitigation measures.
- Develop and manage the Women for the MAR and special projects budgets.
- Follow up on ongoing women-led projects and special projects (including discretionary grants) awarded, reviewing technical and financial reports and products and preparing requests for disbursements.
- Organize and conduct monitoring site visits to projects in coordination with grantees.
- Prepare and implement a gender training plan for women's groups; if required, identify thematic consultants for the training.
- Develop ToR, evaluate offers, supervise consultants and review and approve final products, request disbursements, to support the development of the Women for the MAR and special projects.
- Define and monitor the indicators for the Women for the MAR and special projects.
- Organize and conduct a regional exchange of experience among women's groups in the MAR.
- Continue to conduct MAR Fund mapping exercises to identify and document women Led ventures in the MAR region.
- Identify potential funding opportunities and support fundraising efforts for gender-focused initiatives.
- Prepare and/or review project proposals for donors and provide feedback to improve gender inclusiveness and women's participation.
- Prepare reports for donors and the Board of Directors.
- Provide information for the various MAR Fund communication channels/platforms (website, webinars, updates, newsletter, social media campaigns, etc.)
- Comply with MAR Fund's environmental and social management system (ESMS)
- Comply with all MAR Fund administrative and institutional procedures.
- Prepare presentations and participate in follow up calls with donors and partners.
- Represent MAR Fund in specific events regionally identifying strategic alliances to showcase MAR Fund work in the region.
- Other tasks that may be required for the most effective development and implementation of the Women for the MAR and special projects.

IV. Qualifications and attributes

- Bachelor's degree in gender, gender justice, social sciences, sociology, anthropology, social work, development, or related fields.
- At least 3 years of project management experience with a focus on gender and women's empowerment.
- Strong understanding of gender issues and women's empowerment, particularly in the context of environmental, conservation, or entrepreneurship projects.
- Experience in supporting and building the capacity of rural women's groups.



- Knowledge of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the MAR, preferable.
- Knowledge of and experience working in the Mesoamerican Reef Region preferred.
- Proven experience in fundraising and proposal writing.
- Excellent creative and proactive skills, action-oriented; able to act and react as needed, even if limited information is available.
- Demonstrated ability to resolve internal and external challenges and identify and respond to opportunities.
- Impeccable verbal and written communication skills in English and Spanish.
- Ability to produce high quality documents.
- Proficiency in data analysis and database management, preferable.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Strong organizational and time management skills.
- Ability to represent MAR Fund with professionalism, discretion, and diplomacy.
- Team player with excellent interpersonal skills, including a good sense of humor, self-awareness, and openness to feedback.
- Availability to travel within the MAR region if needed.

V. Oversight

The Women for the MAR and special projects Officer reports directly to the Technical Director.

VI. Place of work

The position may be based in any of the Mesoamerican Reef countries. If in Mexico, it must be based in Quintana Roo. The project officer will work from her/his residence.

VII. Duration of contract and compensation

The contract will be for a 12-month period, subject to renewal, with a trial period of three months. Fees will be based on the candidate's experience. Payments will be disbursed monthly, and the consultant or employee is required to submit an invoice for each payment, including taxes. Travel expenses associated with essential activities related to MAR Fund business will be reimbursed.

VIII. Application process

Qualified individuals should submit:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. One-page essay (maximum) indicating the reason she/he is interested in this position and why they are the best person for the job, in English and Spanish.
3. Three references from existing or former direct supervisors.



IX. Deadline and contact

Please provide the required information by **January 10th, 2025** to the following email:
jmorales@marfund.org