



ANNOUNCEMENT _ 04 MAY 2022

Terms of Reference for External Evaluation

of the project

Early elections 2021 – domestic observations and citizens empowerment by civil society

1. Introduction

Project title	Early elections 2021 – domestic observations and citizens empowerment by civil society
Project Reference number	ENI/2021/424-629
Project lifespan	08.06.2021 - 07.06.2022
Evaluation commissioning manager – Executive Director of OxYGen Foundation	Margarita Hakobyan
Programme Manager	Karen Ayvazyan
Evaluation timeframe	20.05.2022 – 03.08.2022

The present document represents the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the external evaluation of the Project **“Early elections 2021 – domestic observations and citizens empowerment by civil society”**.

The evaluation study is expected to assess the implementation and the results of this project, in order to consider its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact.

2. Background, rationale, and purpose of the evaluation

Background on Project:

The main goal of the project **Early elections 2021 – domestic observations and citizens empowerment by civil society**

(Project) is contribute to improving the Armenian democratic process by fostering CSO coordinated oversight and monitoring for inclusive, gender sensitive, transparent, free and fair elections in 2021 both at local and national levels.

The specific objective of the Project is to open new avenues for the substantive participation of disadvantaged groups of society in Armenian politics along the electoral cycle by relying on NGO oversight and evidence-based advocacy work.

The main outcomes of the Project are:

1. A strong policy & advocacy CSO network is facilitated for the joint monitoring of the Parliamentary and local level elections in Armenia during 2021 and the launching of follow up advocacy initiatives on a multiparty basis. (OxYGen,)
2. A strong evidence base is collected on women’s electoral behaviour so as to uphold reliable and feasible follow-up recommendations and policy proposals to address the core causes hindering women political activism in the country. (OxYGen)
3. A comprehensive analysis of the electoral process is provided through short-term and long-term electoral observation by the Independent Observer Public Alliance so as to support the consolidation of democratization of electoral processes in Armenia through civic oversight.
4. Participation of youth, with the focus on first-time votes, in elections and local and regional life is promoted (civic and ‘voter education). (YSCS).
5. Enabling environment for increased inclusiveness and consideration of environmental aspects of the election processes are promoted in Armenia. (Implemented through the modality of financial support to third parties - FSTP).
6. Objective information to Armenia’s citizens regarding elections is ensured via non-partisan media coverage. (Implemented through FSTP).
7. Raised public awareness and shaped the public discourse through quality media reports and voters’ rights information campaign.

The lead applicant OxYGen Foundation for Protection of Youth and Women Rights (OxYGen) and co-applicants Helsinki Citizens Assembly Vanadzor Office NGO (HCAV), Yerevan School of Civic Studies educational NGO (YSCS), and Union of Informed Citizens^p consulting NGO (UIC), after an open selection, established working relationships through the FSTP sub-grants with the most relevant civil society organizations in Armenia dealing with the key issues that will be addressed by the Action:

“Investigative Journalists” NGO

“Women’s Information-Analytical Network” NGO

“Agate” Rights Defense Center for Women with Disabilities NGO

“Lusastgh” charitable NGO

“ISSD” Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Development of Communities NGO

“Arar Art” cultural NGO.

Purpose of the evaluation:

The purpose of this evaluation is to collect and analyze information on the Project design, implementation and the results of it achieved vs. targeted outputs and outcomes. The principles and procedures of the evaluation should be in compliance with the OECD-DAC principles.

The following two **types** of evaluation approaches will be applied:

1. The **process evaluation** in order to assess how and in what ways the Project had been working;
2. The **outcome evaluation** in order to assess how and in what ways the Project achieved its objectives.

The whole process of evaluation will be gender-sensitive and inclusive of all stakeholders.

3. The objective of the evaluation

The evaluation will take place in the course of 20.05.2022 – 03.08.2022.

The evaluation should provide assessment against project aims, objectives and results based on the indicators of the Project log-frame.

4. Scope of the evaluation and approach on methodology

The process of evaluation will be carried out in a transparent and participatory manner, including consultations with Project partners and with a range of stakeholders in the assessment. The process, as well as the final results, should be gender-sensitive, addressing and incorporating the specific sensitive aspects and needs, as well as guarantying the participation of female stakeholders, first-time voters and people with disabilities (PWD) as respondents in the data collection and analysis process.

The methodology for the evaluation envisages both desk and field researches. The **desk research** will be the first step for the evaluation team for:

- Understanding the Project and its specifics;
- Assessing the process through project documentation;

The **sources for the desk research** include:

- Project log-frame, indicators, and Project document
- Project and partners’ reports
- Project produced materials
- Project visibility/media reports;
- Other documentation, such as communiqués, produced films, etc.

The **field research** will include face to face **interviews** with the project teams, partners, and stakeholders through semi-structured questionnaires in order to guarantee the availability of both quantitative and qualitative evidence whenever appropriate. Also, the evaluation team will apply the

qualitative information collection from specified beneficiary groups, eg. Observers, media, first-time voters, PWDs, women. Deep expert interviews and /or focus group discussions should be applied to this end.

The sources of information for the field research for the evaluation include:

- OxyGen Project staff, co-applicants, and FSTP partners;
- Project beneficiaries/target groups' representatives;
- Focus groups with citizens
- Other stakeholders, as appropriate.

The exact list of respondents should be elaborated in close consultations with OxyGen.

5. Evaluation team: qualifications and skills sought

Based on the fact that the suggested methodological approach for the external evaluation is quite complex and requires the expertise of evaluation in policy-advocacy projects, OxyGen encourages individual consultants/companies/organizations to propose an evaluation team.

The required skills and competencies for the evaluation team member(s) are:

- At least a higher education or professional qualification relating to Monitoring and Evaluation specifically for policy advocacy projects for the lead evaluator (Essential);
- A proven record in delivering effective and professional evaluation results in policy advocacy projects (Essential);
- Experience assessing the impact and outcomes on gender equality in evaluations (Essential);
- Excellent communication, analysis, writing and report presentation skills in English (Essential);
- Capacity to conduct data collection and carry out field research (Essential);
- Knowledge and awareness of a) gender; b) minority/disadvantaged groups issues in Armenia (Desirable);
- Knowledge of OxyGen its abovemention co-applicants and their work (Desirable).

6. Schedule, deliverables and payment

Considering the benefits of the participatory approach in developing and implementing the external evaluation, OxyGen encourages the external evaluator to consult the Project team, Project partners, respective stakeholders during each stage of the evaluation. Therefore, time resources should be adequately considered during this process.

The Project team will share the ToR and plans for the upcoming evaluation with partners and key stakeholders for availability, participation and feedback.

Activity	Responsible Staff	Deadline
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Contract signing	OxYGen	20.05.2022
Delivery of Inception Report, including the clear design, methodology, methods, tools, and timeline for the data collection and analysis for the evaluation	Evaluator	27.05.2022
Desk Research of documents	Evaluator	To be finished by 07.06.2022
Data Collection	Evaluator	To be finished by 16.06.2022
Analysis	Evaluator	To be finished by 26.06.2022
First Draft report	Evaluator	27.06.2022
Feedback on the first drafts	OxYGen(/EUD)	01.07.2022
Final Draft report	Evaluator	15.07.2022
Feedback on the Final Draft Report	OxYGen(/EUD)	19.07.2022
Final Report – in English and Armenian	Evaluator	01.08.2022
Act of Acceptance	OxYGen	03.08.2022

The Deliverables:

- Inception report (in English)
- Evaluation report (both Armenian and English)

The Payment:

The payment will comprise of two tranches – 35% of the contract cost making the first one to proceed after the inception report.

7. Evaluation responsibilities and management arrangements

OxYGen’s Program Manager will carry out the management of the evaluation process, provision of requested Project documents, and coordination between the Project staff, Project partners and the external evaluation team. Also, the Program Manager is responsible for the timely revision of and feedback on deliverables.

The EU Delegation will be provided opportunities to comment on the Inception Report, first draft report and the final draft report before finalisation.

8. Dissemination strategy and using the findings

All products and documentation for the external evaluation will be developed in English and Armenian.

The final report will be posted on OxYGen’s website and made available for publishing by the institutional donor(s). This is consistent with OxYGen’s commitment to transparency and accountability.

The recommendations derived in the final report will be included in the Project's final report.

9. Process of the selection of the evaluator

The selection of the evaluation expert will be based on the application from the interested party, via the open tender.

The application from individuals/companies shall contain the following sections:

- Evaluator's approach to conducting the external evaluation - Methodology in general
- Research implementation plan (questionnaire piloting, implementation, data quality assurance, processing, analysis)
- Timetable
- Detailed Budget
- Information about the company and proposed staff (company portfolio in case of companies, containing information about similar projects, staff resumes; in case of individuals resumes and information about similar projects)
- Example of previous similar work/report if available.

The application should also include the following documents on the company/organization applying (in case of companies/organizations):

- Registration document of the legal entity;
- Statement from the applicant that the organization is not being reorganized or liquidated and that there is no bankruptcy case against it;
- Letter from the Tax Department confirming that the organization has no overdue payments to the State budget.

Note: The Project is VAT exempt; therefore no VAT costs will be accepted as eligible under this assignment.

HOW TO APPLY:

Send the application package to the following address info@oxygenfund.am with "EE2021 external evaluation" title on the Subject line.

DEADLINE: 5 pm, 16.05.2022

Note: incomplete or late arrivals will not be considered

For additional information, please contact Karen Ayvazyan, Programme Manager: kayvazyan@oxygenfund.am; mobile: 033 15 78 10.