



ANNOUNCEMENT _ 26 DEC 2023

Terms of Reference for External Evaluation

of the project

Increasing civic voice and action for labour rights and social protection in Armenia: EU4Labour rights

1. Introduction

Project title	Increasing civic voice and action for labour rights and social protection in Armenia: EU4Labour rights
Project Reference number	<u>NEAR-TS/2020/422-063</u>
Project lifespan	15.02.2021-14.02.2024
Evaluation commissioning manager – Executive Director of OxYGen Foundation	Margarita Hakobyan
Programme Manager	Karen Ayvazyan
Evaluation timeframe	15.02.2024 – 15.04.2024

The present document represents the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the external evaluation of the Project “**Increasing civic voice and action for labour rights and social protection in Armenia: EU4Labour rights**”.

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 **Increasing civic voice and action for labour rights and social protection in Armenia: EU4Labour rights** (Project) is to strengthen human rights protection in Armenia, with the main focus on social and labour rights, through participatory multi-stakeholder policy dialogue, endorsed by empowered rights holders and sensitized duty bearers.

The main outcomes of the Project are:

Outcome 1: Enhanced capacity of a viable multi-stakeholder policy network (Civic Voice and Action (CVA)) on labour and social rights with robust knowledge of international and European labour standards, social rights protection and policy advocacy

Outcome 2: Increased evidence based dialogue on policy and practice barriers and reform solutions for gender-sensitive and inclusive policy reforms in labour rights and social protection in the country

Outcome 3: Increased knowledge of rights holders, especially those in vulnerable situations to demand and acquire the protection of their labour and social rights

Building its intervention around the 3 key outcomes, the Action joined the efforts of different stakeholders and actors for fostering legal compulsory and voluntary measures supported by grass roots initiatives for promoting labour rights protection, social policies for the inclusive economic development and improved well-being of all Armenian citizens, including those in most vulnerable situation.

Through multi-stakeholder coalition on labour rights the Action contributed to achieving the following:

- Sustainable joint policy dialogue on labour and social rights is formalised with involvement of the traditionally conflicting stakeholders. These are rights-based organisations, trade unions, business representatives and employers, development experts, representatives of state bodies and international organisations, grass roots initiative groups, human rights ombudsman and think tanks from Armenia and East European countries.
- Establishment of proper institutional framework for ensuring effective supervision of working conditions and labour rights, health, and safety at work with the main focus on vulnerable groups of society and gender equality is supported through multi-stakeholder evidence-based advocacy.
- Multi-stakeholder discourse on the need for addressing vulnerability and deficit for decent work during the crisis and conflicts in line with international best practices and recommendations is facilitated.
- The evidence of the problem on the ground is accumulated, bringing the voices and stories from grass roots and various stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Informed by the evidence base research policy recommendations for effective systemic solutions for addressing cases of harassment, gender-based discrimination and rights abuses are proposed.
- Sector legislative reforms with the main focus on inclusion of the international norms and gender-sensitive approaches are advocated.
- Operational replicable models to inform, report and address the cases of labour and social rights violations at grass roots level and promote successful models for institutionalization at national level and replication at grass roots levels are created.
- Awareness on labour and social rights and on available mechanism for their protection is raised.
- The culture of intolerance towards labour and social rights violations and decent work practices in the country is fostered.

The Project has been carried out in a consortium of seven NGOs: OxYGen Foundation as a lead organisation with the co-applicants SOCIOSCOPE NGO, “Asparez” Journalists’ Club NGO, Armenian Progressive Youth NGO, Media Diversity Institute - Armenia and sub-grantees Protection of Rights without Borders NGO, and Eurasia Partnership Foundation.

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 **15.02.2024 – 15.04.2024**

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 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, media, beneficiaries, women, student journalists. 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 Project 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. Required qualifications and skills

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/organisations 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 abovementioned 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
Contract signing	OxYGen	01.02.2024
Delivery of Inception Report, including the clear design, methodology, methods, tools, and timeline for the data collection and analysis for the evaluation	Evaluator	15.02.2024
Desk Research of documents	Evaluator	To be finished by 10.03.2024
Data Collection	Evaluator	To be finished by 20.03.2024
Analysis	Evaluator	To be finished by 31.03.2024
First Draft report	Evaluator	31.03.2024
Feedback on the first drafts	OxYGen(/EUD)	05.04.2024
Final Draft report	Evaluator	10.04.2024
Feedback on the Final Draft Report	OxYGen(/EUD)	12.04.2024
Final Report – in English and Armenian	Evaluator	15.04.2024
Act of Acceptance	OxYGen	15.04.2024

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 Programme 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 Programme 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/organisation applying (in case of companies/organisations):

- Registration document of the legal entity;
- Statement from the applicant that the organisation is not being reorganised or liquidated and that there is no bankruptcy case against it;
- Letter from the Tax Department confirming that the organisation 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 by CC-ing kayvazyan@oxygenfund.am with "EU4LR: external evaluation" title on the Subject line.

DEADLINE: January 20, 2024 (COB). Note: incomplete or late submissions will not be considered

For additional information, please contact the Programme Manager, Karen Ayvazyan via kayvazyan@oxygenfund.am; mobile: 033 15 78 10 before **January 15, 2024**.