**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE “STRENGTHENING REPRESENTATIVE BODIES IN MONGOLIA” PROJECT**

**24 September 2018**

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| Project title: | “Strengthening Representative Bodies in Mongolia” project |
| Title of the assignment: | To conduct the mid-term review of the project |
| Type of contract: | Individual Contract - International |
| Contract duration: | 2 months (starting mid-October 2018) / 17 working days |

**Background**

Since the promulgation of the new Constitution in 1992 and the emergence of local self-governing bodies in Mongolia, Citizens Representatives Hurals (CRHs) have become a stable institution and played an important role in the consolidation of democracy. However, challenges remain in making them truly representative of local people, as a responsive and accountable institution. The legal framework established in the early transition period has not kept pace with the country’s social, economic and political transformations. Laws are approved without sufficient consultations with local authorities, thus making their implementation difficult at the local level. The organizational capacities of CRHs are constrained by limited resources available at their disposal, unclear mandates and lack of overall guidance. With significant turnover of the CRHs’ members, there is a continuous need to update the knowledge of their duties and responsibilities as elected representatives. At the same time, citizens’ ability to demand accountability from elected representatives is limited due to their low awareness about the functioning of local self-governing bodies, which make important decisions affecting their lives.

The “[Strengthening Representative Bodies in Mongolia](http://www.khural.mn/medias/a1694754-ddd4-46d0-b893-c30177765613.pdf)” (SRBM) Project aims to address the above challenges by adopting a comprehensive three-pronged strategy for capacity development of local self-governing bodies, addressing simultaneously the interrelated levels of legal and institutional environment, the organizational capacity of CRHs including individual competencies as locally elected representatives. In addition, the Project assists the Parliament of Mongolia in translating recent laws and policies into concrete actions aimed at creating opportunities for meaningful citizen participation in decision-making, mobilizing support of CRHs in awareness raising and monitoring the implementation of recently approved laws. In turn, this is expected to result in the increased effectiveness of laws by translating policy declarations to concrete impacts at the citizens’ level. In line with the above, the project is articulated around four main “Outputs”:

1. Improved legal framework for local self-governance.
2. Citizens’ Representative Hurals have improved organizational capacity.
3. National training program for local elected representatives is institutionalized.
4. Improved capacity of the Parliament Secretariat to support representative bodies.

The key indicators for each Output are laid out in the Project’s Result Framework. SRBM Project is jointly implemented by UNDP and the Parliament of Mongolia with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) over a period of four years (2017-2020). The Project builds on the foundation laid by the “Support to Participatory Legislative Processes” and “Capacity Strengthening of Local Self-governing Bodies” projects, both implemented by the Parliament Secretariat and UNDP with support from SDC from 2013-2016. Sustainability and institutionalization constitute key objectives of this second phase.

**Objective**

The objective of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability (see DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance, OECD and UNDP’s evaluation norms and standards) of the SRBM project in its first two years of implementation (2017-2018). A particular focus should be laid on the progress made towards the achievement of the project outcomes and towards institutionalization, while ensuring to encompass as well as considerations of relevance, validity, project management and implementation. Based on the findings of the assessment, the MTR is to establish practical recommendations on the adjustments of activities, outputs, approaches, structureand strategies to be undertaken for the remainder of the project duration until the end of 2020. In addition, the MTR fits within UNDP Country Office Evaluation Plan with a project evaluation on decentralization and local governance planned at the end of 2018 as part of the SP Outcome 2 (“Citizens’ expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance”). Evaluation findings and lessons learned will be used by UNDP for the fine-tuning of the program design and implementation.

**MTR approach and guiding questions**

***Approach***

The Consultant will work in close cooperation with SRBM Project Team and two further MTR team members from UNDP Regional Office and SDC Head Office, respectively.

The Consultant shall refer to UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results ([PME Handbook](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf)) as well as SDC M&E guiding documents for general guidance. The MTR must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The SRBM project is open to and interested in using a variety of evaluation methods that contribute evidence to the guiding questions listed below and allow for triangulation of findings.

The MTR should draw on a balanced combination of assessment methodologies and data collection tools, including desk reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and / or participatory workshops, direct observation (field visits), etc. The evaluation design is to factor in the need to both capture answers to closed, specific questions and encourage open discussion and free expression of opinions and inputs for future planning.

The Consultant is expected to adopt a collaborative and participatory approach thereby ensuring close engagement with all relevant stakeholders. Consultations and interviews conducted during the in-country mission should thus involve a sufficiently broad and representative range of stakeholders who have project responsibilities and / or benefit from the project.

The final MTR report should describe the assessment strategy and its rationale, making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses of the methods selected.

The findings of the MTR will lead to the elaboration of specific, practical, achievable recommendations.

***Evaluation ethics***

Evaluations in UNDP shall be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’, and must follow the procedures to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, for example: measures to ensure compliance with legal codes governing areas such as provisions to collect and report data; provisions to store and maintain security of collected information; and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

***Guiding questions***

The SRBM project would like to explore the guiding questions below, among others. The Consultant is expected to refine these questions and develop sub-questions when relevant. The (sub-)questions are to be integrated into an evaluation framework that will also indicate, for each question, operationalized indicators, targets and baseline data when applicable, data sources and data collection instruments.

1. **Progress towards results**

* Which progress has been made so far towards achievement of the planned outputs and (short-term) outcomes of the project? Examples of potential sub-questions:
  + What were the main factors (positive and negative, internal and external) that have affected achievement and / or non-achievement of the outputs and outcomes?
  + Were there any potential unintended outcomes?
  + How did the different project outputs contribute to the observed outcomes?
  + To what extent has the project succeeded in reaching out to different groups of beneficiaries (e.g., politically marginalized groups, youth, women, urban and rural poor) and strengthen their capacities?
  + How far has SRBM mainstreamed gender into project activities and promoted gender equality?
  + Which best practices could be leveraged during the rest of the project?
  + Are there any recommendations for improving the achievement of outcomes?
* Is it feasible to deliver the planned outputs within the remaining period of the project implementation (2019-2020)?
* Are the project’s planned outcomes clear and achievable within this time frame?
* What are the key critical risks to the generation of outputs and outcomes?

1. **Sustainability and institutionalization**

* What progress has been done towards sustainability in general? Sub-questions should address the different dimensions of sustainability, for example:
  + Financial sustainability: Are there signs of increased commitment from government institutions to (co-)finance project activities? Have cost-efficiency strategies been put into place? Which alternatives could the project consider for securing financial commitment beyond the project duration?
  + Institutional sustainability: What is the status on the gradual take-over of project components by national institutions? Have national institutions been identified for that purpose? Are there signs of ownership from stakeholders with regard to activities, processes, tools, etc.? Is there evidence of replication and up-scaling?
  + Technical sustainability: Have national institutions been scrutinized along their capacities and, if relevant, is a strategy for capacity-building in place? Is there evidence that capacity and knowledge generated by the project will be used beyond the project lifecycle?
  + Social sustainability: To what extent do the implemented activities answer to needs of the different sub-groups of beneficiaries? Which processes have been put in place to ensure that beneficiaries’ needs are addressed? How likely is it that such processes continue being used on the long term?
* What are the recommendations for ensuring sustainability of the project and for the design of the exit phase of SRBM?

1. **Relevance and validity**

* What changes in the overall context are affecting or likely to affect the project?
* To what extent are the strategy and objectives of the program still relevant, especially regarding the recent / planned changes in the legal environment? Are the activities and outputs of the project relevant to the attainment of outcomes and to the local capacity building needs?
* Are the theory of change and its underlying assumptions still valid?

1. **Project management and implementation**

* How effective is the SRBM project structure? Examples of potential sub-questions:
  + How clear are the roles, responsibilities and reporting lines?
  + Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner?
* Are effective processes in place for quality assurance, risk management, result-based work planning, reporting?
* Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships? Examples of potential sub-questions:
  + Do local and national government stakeholders have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
  + What synergies and collaboration with other projects, among which SDC projects, has been built so far? Are there opportunities to further develop these synergies?
* Is internal communication regular and effective? Are proper means of external communication established to convey the project progress and (intended) results to the public? Examples of potential sub-questions:
  + Are some key stakeholders left out of communication?
  + Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project results and to their investment in the sustainability of project results?
* What M&E tools have been used? Are any different / additional tools required?
* Have the outputs been delivered within intended deadlines?
* Have the resources (financial, human, time, etc.) of the project been efficiently used to achieve relevant outputs and outcomes (cost-effectiveness)?
* Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds? How appropriate were changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions, if relevant?

**Scope of work**

1. **Desk review (home-based).** The Consultant will be required to become acquainted with available project materials and conduct a desk review of key documents including SRBM Project Document, theory of change, results framework, sustainability plan, annual work plans, annual and semi-annual reports, as well as the MTR and final report from the previous phase (CSLSB) and any other materials that the team considers useful for this review and provides ahead of the in-country mission. The desk review should inform the design of the in-country mission and its key findings should be included in the end-of-mission presentation.
2. **Preparation of the in-country mission.** In cooperation with the other members of the MTR team the Consultant is to thoroughly develop a clear evaluation framework and detailed plan of the in-country mission ahead of the mission:
   * The evaluation framework is to specify the refined evaluation questions and sub-questions and show how each evaluation question will be answered by way of proposed data collection methods and instruments, indicators, and sources of data; it should ideally be accompanied by a draft of data collection instruments, such as interview guidelines or focus group discussions or workshop plans, etc.
   * The mission work plan should indicate the proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables during the mission, designating lead responsibilities for each task or product between the MTR team members.
3. **Collect data during the in-country mission** through carrying out key informant interviews / focus group discussions, and other methods deemed appropriate by the MTR team. A translator will assist the MTR team during their mission in Mongolia. SRBM Project will provide logistic support. During the mission the MTR team should seek to interact with a diversity of stakeholders among which project staff and management, donors, partners and beneficiaries. More specifically this includes representatives from: SRBM PIU, Board, UNDP Country Office, SDC, government institutions including the Parliament Secretariat, CRHs and their secretariats at various administrative levels, other project partners from the academic and CSO sectors, citizens, key experts and consultants in the subject area, other governance projects in the country. Preliminary findings of the MTR should be presented to UNDP and SDC at the end of the mission.
4. **Develop the draft MTR report**. The draft report is to be submitted and presented to UNDP, SDC and the Parliament Secretariat for review and comments. The report should be comprised of, but not necessarily limited to:
   * A comprehensive summary and thorough analysis of the information collected in the previous steps (desk review and in-country mission);
   * Evidence-based conclusions that cover all guiding questions listed above and highlight the gaps identified and lessons learned so far;
   * Practical recommendations for the rest of the project duration, formulated on the basis of the information collected and conclusions. This section should specify adjustments to be made in relation to outputs, outcomes, strategies, approaches; and actions needed to achieve these adjustments.
5. **Final mid-term review report** that addresses all comments made by reviewers (UNDP, SDC and Parliament Secretariat) on the draft report. After acceptance, the final report will be translated into Mongolian. The final MTR report should not exceed 40 pages (excluding annexes). **In addition** to the elements of the draft MTR report specified in Point 4 above, it should include:
   * An executive summary that captures the key conclusions and recommendations of the MTR;
   * Description of the assessment strategy and its rationale, making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses of the methods selected; description of the data collection process in practice;
   * Tables, references, etc.;
   * All material produced during the consultancy[[1]](#footnote-1), including data / research findings, indicators, questionnaires and other tools, etc.

The respective responsibilities of each MTR team member should be jointly agreed upon among the MTR team at the initial stage of the assignment.

**Expected deliverables and payment schedule**

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| **Deliverables** | **Estimated duration to complete** | **Instalment (%)** | **Target due dates** |
| **Presentation** of key findings of desk review (Task 1, Scope of work) and preliminary findings of in-country mission (Task 3, Scope of work) | 11 working days | 30% | End of in-country mission, 5 November 2018 at the latest |
| **Draft MTR report** (Task 4, Scope of work) | 4 working days | 50% | 23 November  2018 |
| **Final MTR report** (Task 5, Scope of work) | 2 working days | 20% | 7 December 2018 |

The UNDP standard method of payment is the output-based lump-sum scheme. The payment will be made in the proposed installments upon satisfactory certification of receipt of deliverables by UNDP.

**Duration**

The total number of working days is 17 over 2 calendar months.

**Institutional arrangement**

The Consultant will work under the general supervision and guidance of UNDP, SDC and Parliament Secretariat. The success of the project depends on the timely delivery of each component. The Consultant should ensure timely identification of potential risks and signal any delays in deliverables.

SRBM project will have the following responsibilities: (i) Provide relevant documents; (ii) and facilitate the mission and assist in organizing field trips and debriefing meetings.

UNDP will provide office space and meeting room during the mission in Ulaanbaatar, if required. The contract and payments will be deliverables-based and assessed by the UNDP programme unit. All travel expenses to and from the target area should be included in the financial proposal.

The present ToR may be subject to modification, without changing the overall objective and the scope of work, on the basis of mutual consultations. UNDP will hold the copyright of the assignment deliverables.

**Qualifications of the successful individual applicant**

***Education***

* Advanced degree in relevant fields (e.g., public administration, political science, sociology)

***Experience***

* 10 years of experience of conducting project evaluations and/or playing an advisory role in projects in the area of local governance;
* Proven experience of conducting research independently, including desk reviews and consultations with government officials; experience of drafting comprehensive reports and communicating research results;
* Previous experience across aspects of project cycle management: project planning / design, implementation, evaluations / reviews;
* Experience with participatory evaluation, and/or evaluation of capacity building projects is an asset;
* Experience with multi-stakeholder projects and working in close partnership with international organizations, government institutions (central and local) and donor agencies.

**Application procedure**

Qualified and interested candidates are requested to submit the following documentations:

* Expression of Interest Letter
* CV showing educational background and experience with the list of publications and brief description of relevant assignments
  + List of similar assignments conducted in the past and related publications and further supporting documents such as evaluation reports;
  + 2 reference letters related to the assignment and contact details of referees;
* Technical proposal: a brief outline of how the proposed MTR can be conducted;
* "All inclusive" financial offer

*Notes:*

The term “all inclusive” implies all costs (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communication costs, etc.) The lump sum is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.

**Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer**

Selection criteria use a Combined Scoring method – where the Technical proposal (qualifications, experience and approach/methodology) will be weighted a max. of 70%, and combined with the price offer which will be weighted a max of 30%. Below is the breakdown of points of Technical proposal.

100 points which equal 70% of the total scoring:

* Educational background – 20 points;
* Proven experience – 50 points;
* Technical proposal – 30 points.

**The TOR is approved by**

Daniela Gasparikova,

Deputy Resident Representative,

UNDP, Mongolia

Approval

Signature

Annex 1: Scoring sheet

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| **Criteria** | **Weight** | **Max. Point** |
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| **Technical criteria 1: Education** |  | **20** |
| Advanced degree in relevant fields (e.g., public administration, political science, sociology) |  | 20 |
| **Technical criteria 2: Professional experience** |  | **50** |
| Proven experience of conducting project evaluations and/or playing an advisory role in projects in the area of local governance; |  | 20 |
| Proven experience of conducting research independently, including desk reviews and consultations with government officials; experience of drafting comprehensive reports and communicating research results |  | 10 |
| Previous experience across aspects of project cycle management: project planning / design, implementation, evaluations / reviews |  | 10 |
| Experience with participatory evaluation, and/or evaluation of capacity building projects is an asset; |  | 5 |
| Experience with multi-stakeholder projects and working in close partnership with international organizations, government institutions (central and local) and donor agencies |  | 5 |
| **Proposed approach or methodology** |  | 30 |
| **Technical Score** | ***70*** | **100** |

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| ***Weight for Technical Criteria*** |  |  |  |  |
| Weak: below 70% | The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a WEAK capacity for the analysed competence | | | |
| Satisfactory: 70-75% | The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a SATISFACTORY capacity for the analysed competence | | | |
| Good: 76-85% | The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a GOOD capacity for the analysed competence | | | |
| Very Good: 86-95% | The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a VERY GOOD capacity for the analysed competence | | | |
| Outstanding: 96-100% | The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated an OUTSTANDING capacity for the analysed competence. | | | |

1. In compliance with evaluation ethics standards, especially regarding confidentiality rights. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)