

**Terms of Reference**

**Post Title: International Consultant** for Mid-Term Evaluation of the “Women in Politics” Project

**Project Title:** Women in Politics

**Contract modality:** Individual Contract (IC)

**Starting Date:** 1 October 2020

**Duration: 1.5 months (**30 working days)

**Duty Station:** Yerevan, Armenia

1. **Background:**

Gender equality and women’s empowerment remains a critical development issue in Armenia: women comprise 52.2% of population in Armenia and 56% of those with higher education, still, leadership positions in government, in policy-making institutions or the private sector in Armenia are male-dominated. Due to their limited representation in leadership positions women have very little influence over policy decisions. While a 25% quota system ensures women are represented in political parties, they face distinct barriers to enter the office at the local and national levels.

UNDP Armenia has been continuously working in the area of the political empowerment of women, advancing leadership of women, supporting the local governments to engender local decision-making and development processes, enabled youth to get knowledge and skills on participatory governance advance their potential and raise their voice in policy-making at national and local levels. UNDP’s has considerably contributed to increase of representation of women at the local level, as well as formation of dynamic group and women and youth who not only benefit from projects’ support, but also lead local initiatives on broad spectrum of aspects, including participatory governance, women empowerment, and other.

Currently, UNDP’s Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (WEGE) Programme is comprised of four parallel projects working on political leadership of women, economic empowerment of women, innovative pubic services, youth leadership advancement, strengthening gender equality in the public administration system of Armenia and other. Projects are implemented in strong synergy and coordination with one another building on the ongoing activities, relying on the cadre of women and youth already capacitated form previous projects and joining forces to upscale number of support schemes countrywide. UNDP enjoys broad partnerships among national, regional and local governments, donor and international community, civil society organizations, media and other.

One of those projects is “Women in Politics” (hereinafter WiP) project, implemented by UNDP Armenia with financial support from UK Good Governance Fund (UK GGF), and in partnership with the RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development (RA MTAI) and OxYGen Foundation. The overarching goal of the project is to contribute to enhanced political participation of women, with specific focus on increased representation and participation of women, including young generation, in community development processes.

The project objectives are:

a) Research on policy gaps and perceptions for women’s political participation;

b) Women empowerment through leadership schools, pre- and post-electoral support, setting female-led integrity islands, etc.;

c) Strengthening the role of political parties for inclusiveness and gender equality;

d) Facilitation of bottom-up policy dialogue and networking events;

e) Advancing public discourse, awareness raising and advocacy campaigns on gender equality;

f) Advancing youth leadership though upscale of UNDP’s “I AM the Community” youth leadership model, and engaging youth in community democratization and development processes.

To that end, UNDP Armenia seeks a qualified Project Evaluation Specialist (hereinafter "the Evaluator") to conduct mid-term Evaluation of the “Women in Politics” Project and present the findings and recommendations in the Evaluation Report.

1. **Objectives and Scope of work:**

The overall objective of the mid-term evaluation assignment is to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, effectiveness, efficiency as well as, if available already at this stage, the impact and sustainability of interventions under the “Women in Politics” project.

The evaluation findings will be used:

* by the project partners to align/modify the planned scope of activities with the proposed recommendations to ensure all the project objectives are reached within the lifetime of the project;
* by the project partners and the stakeholders to maximize the project impact;
* by the Donor to use the collected data when planning further potential GGF interventions in the country.

The geographical coverage of the evaluation mainly includes 450 non-consolidated communities of Armenia where the project implements its actions.

The evaluation will primarily focus on direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project and will include beneficiary women, young people aged 18-30, high school students aged 16-18, municipalities, local councils, partner media outlets, as well as other stakeholders.

The evaluation will be carried out in close cooperation and consultation with the project team, responsible party OxYGen Foundation, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and UK Embassy based on the results framework, reviewing the project documents and conducting in-depth and key informant interviews with main stakeholders, members of the beneficiary groups and selected communities.

Interviews should be organized and held online in view of the COVID-19 restrictions. Findings of the mid-term evaluation will be communicated to the implementing partners, stakeholders, and donor organization – UK GGF.

**Evaluation Framework and Criteria**

All project related documents and materials will be thoroughly reviewed in the Inception phase by the Evaluator to finalize the evaluation design with a clear Evaluation Matrix, a clear logic and workplan of the evaluation, which shall be agreed by all parties. Five core OECD DAC evaluation criteria, namely the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, as well as sustainability and impact (to the extent possible) will be analyzed. Key evaluation questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

***Relevance***

* Are the project activities/components relevant to the actual/defined needs of the beneficiaries? Were the objectives clear and feasible? How do the main components of the project contribute to the planned objectives and are logically interlinked?
* Is the project in line with the current priorities of the country? Is the Government committed to the project? How is the project aligned with and supports the national, regional and community strategies/plans?
* Has the project involved relevant stakeholders through consultative processes or information-sharing during its preparation phase? Was the needs assessment/analysis on women’s political participation carried out at the beginning of the project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders? Are these needs still relevant? Have there any new, more relevant needs emerged that the project should address?
* How project adjusted to COVID-19 context with activities and mode of operation?

***Effectiveness***

* How effective has the project been in establishing ownership by the stakeholders? How has the project encouraged ownership on behalf of the beneficiaries for learning and applying the newly acquired knowledge and skills in practice? Can the project management and implementation be considered as participatory?
* Is the project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives/outcomes/outputs? What are the key achievements, challenges and implementation lessons? How can these be applied to the project?
* To what extent has the online capacity building work been effective and did it serve its purpose?

***Efficiency***

* To what extent has the UNDP made good use of the human, financial and technical resources, and has used an appropriate combination of tools and approaches to pursue the achievement of project results in a cost-effective manner?
* Was there a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities of key actors involved?
* To what extent did the project capitalize on other complementary initiatives to the project to reinforce the results of the project?
* Have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered? To what extent are the activities and achieved results cost-efficient?

***Sustainability (to the extent possible)***

* To what extent and how has the project been able to support the government and beneficiary communities in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects under the ongoing government reforms initiatives?
* Is there a need to adjust the project (i.e. timeline in relation to COVID-19)? If so, do project objectives and strategies have to be adjusted?
* What are the possible sustainability prerequisites for each of the project components? What are the hindering factors for ensuring the sustainability of project outcomes beyond the project lifecycle?

***Impact (to the extent possible)***

* Has the project contributed or is likely to contribute to long-term political or social changes for individuals, communities and institutions in achieving the SDG agenda?
* To what extent has the project achieved its overarching goal of contributing to enhanced political participation of women and youth in community development processes?
* Has the project had any intended or unintended secondary effect throughout the implementation?

Evaluation questions will be adjusted and refined by the Evaluator during the desk review phase.

In addition to five main evaluation criteria, the evaluation will focus on cross-cutting issues, such as inclusion of vulnerable groups (especially people with disabilities), conflict sensitivity, anti-corruption, user-centric approaches.

**Inclusion of vulnerable groups:**

* + - How were vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities) involved in the project? What are the entry points for the involvement of people with disabilities? Have vulnerable groups been inadvertently excluded of the opportunity to benefit from project activities (during online or offline work)?

**Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation methodology will be guided by the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner: representatives of key stakeholders, including communities, line ministries, NGOs, beneficiary women and youth, donor community, etc. will be involved in the evaluation as key informants.

In this evaluation mixed method approach will be applied by combining qualitative and quantitative components to ensure complementarity. The independent evaluator will collect data from desk review and verify them with soft in-depth interviews. The analysis will be built on triangulating information collected from different stakeholders (project staff, project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries) through different methods including secondary data and documentation review and primary data. It should critically examine the information gathered from the various sources and synthesize the information in an objective manner. If contradictory information is obtained from different stakeholders, an effort should be made to understand the reasons for such information, including any gender-based factors and differences.

The Evaluator will review the following documents before conducting any interviews: project documentation, progress reports, work plans, monitoring data, workshop reports, country data, policies, legal documents, etc.

Preliminary suggestions for data collection methods to be envisaged include:

* Desk review including review of analysis of existing documents, legal and policy framework (RA Gender Policy Strategic Programme and Action Plan 2019-2030; the Strategy and Action Plan for the Implementation of Gender Policy 2019-2023; The Law of the RA on Local Self-Governance; European Charter of Local Self-Government, UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other);
* Review of monitoring and evaluation reports, available reports and analysis generated through the project;
* Key informant interviews with beneficiaries, duty-bearers and policy-makers, community focal points, partner organizations;
* Expert interviews with project implementing agencies;
* Focus group discussions with beneficiaries.

Because of COVID-19 interviews and focus group discussions may be conducted online to ensure no risk for evaluator and interviewees.

The independent evaluator will identify key stakeholders/informants (including but not limited to project implementers, decision makers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, etc.), and appropriate data collection methods for each informant category (such as semi-structured or in-depth interviews, expert interviews, focus groups), in close coordination with the project team.

A combination of these methods should be proposed by the independent evaluator in the detailed evaluation methodology.

In close cooperation with the project team, the Evaluator will also be responsible for the development of appropriate instruments, including questionnaires, interview and focus group guides, for each of the methods selected. All materials should be gender-sensitive in language and presentation, as well as shall take into consideration human rights and equity angles.

The evaluation will follow the principles of the UN Evaluation Group’s norms and standards in particular with regard to independence, objectiveness, impartiality and inclusiveness and will be guided by the UN ethics guidance as guiding principle to ensure quality of evaluation process, especially apropos conflict of interest, confidentiality of individual informants, sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs, discrimination and gender equality, to address issues of vulnerable population.

A major limitation to the evaluation will be in some cases impossibility of face-to-face interviews due to COVID-19 restricting measures, thus, data will be obtained through online means and digital tools, though following all strict guidelines to the extent possible.

1. **Duties and responsibilities:**

Under the direct supervision of UNDP Project Coordinator, UNDP CO Evaluation Manager and in coordination with the project team, the incumbent will evaluate the following:

* + - Midterm Progress made by the Project towards the achievement of outcome and outputs;
    - Relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of outputs vis-à-vis the Project Results and Resources Framework;
    - Effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of capacity and leadership development activities conducted within the framework of the project to increase women participation and activism on local level (pre-electoral support, thematic leadership schools, leadership schools for high school students, etc.);
    - Effectiveness and sustainability of participatory approaches applied within the framework of the project to advance community dialogue and engagement in decision making on the local level (DEMO lab projects, female local councilors’ leadership projects, “integrity islands”, policy dialogue, etc);
    - Effectiveness and relevance of the public awareness activities undertaken within the framework of the project to stimulate discourse on issues related to gender equality and local democracy, as well as to promote gender-balanced portrayal of women and men (OxYGen Foundation components);
    - Effectiveness and sustainability of youth leadership advancement component (youth camp, youth club and policy-making activities, etc.);
    - Level of responsiveness of the WiP project activities towards the needs of the Project beneficiaries in the context of the ongoing reforms in the area of gender equality and local governance.

1. **Timeline and expected deliverables:**

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| **Description of deliverables** | **Delivery time** |
| * Evaluation methodology, including (online) data collection tools/questionnaires, list of beneficiaries and stakeholders to be interviewed; interview schedules and reports are finalized and agreed with the UNDP CO team; | October 5, 2020 |
| * 1st draft Evaluation Report is submitted to UNDP, UK GGF and UK Embassy for review and feedback; | October 20, 2020 |
| * The final draft report is presented to/validated by UNDP, MTAI and UK GGF. Stakeholders debriefing discussion is organized. | October 30, 2020 |
| * The Evaluation Report is finalized based on the feedback of the above-mentioned parties and Management Response is prepared accordingly. | November 15, 2020 |

**Key outputs**

1. Evaluation methodology, including (online) data collection tools/questionnaires, list of beneficiaries and stakeholders to be interviewed. Interview schedules and reports – outlined in an evaluation inception report.
2. Data collection and analysis and draft outline of the Evaluation Report.
3. Evaluation report in English including key recommendations (minimum 30 pages plus annexes). [Evaluation report shall be in line with the UN Evaluation Group standard 4.9.](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/Template/section-4/Sec%204%20Template%206%20Standard%20evaluation%20report%20content%20full%20details.docx) It shall be evidence-based, presenting the project’s progress vis-à-vis the Results Framework, based on triangulated data. The report shall present findings and recommendations on project planning, programming, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of interventions.

**Key Documents to review**

* Project Document
* Results Framework
* Annual and Progress Reports
* Other relevant documents provided by the implementing partner or requested by the Consultant
* Project Budgets and Expenditure Reports
* Detailed Workplans and Revisions
* CCA and UNDAF Evaluation, other relevant Evaluations (UNDP, stakeholders, etc), UNDP Annual Results-Oriented Analysis Report

**Suggested contents page**

**Opening pages (acknowledgments, list of acronyms)**

**Executive Summary (5-6 pages)**

**Chapter I Background, Object and Methodology**

* 1. Introduction
  2. Background and context of the project
  3. Object of the Evaluation
  4. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation
  5. Evaluation Methodology (short)
  6. Major Limitations
  7. Ethical considerations, Human Rights and Cross-cutting aspects

**Chapter II Analysis and Findings**

* 1. Relevance
  2. Effectiveness
  3. Efficiency
  4. Sustainability
  5. Impact

**Chapter III Conclusions and Recommendations**

3.1 Conclusions and Lessons Learned

3.2. Recommendations

**ANNEXES**

1. Terms of Reference
2. Desk Review and Background Documents
3. List of Key Informants Interviewed
4. Detailed Methodology
5. Interview Guides and Survey Instruments
6. **Required qualifications:**

***Education:***

* Advanced university degree (MA and equivalent or higher) in development studies, social sciences, public administration or related field;

***Experience:***

* At least **7 years** of professional experience in programme/project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for the international organizations in democratization and local governance, community development, gender and youth.
* - At least 5 **years** of experience in managing and leading evaluation assignments for a range of major aid agencies or NGOs in particular evaluating community based, country wide or large donor programmes;
* Proven experience in development and application of methodologies for evaluation and assessment, including tools and techniques.
* Proven experience of working in community development projects/programmes;

***Language Skills:***

* Proficiency in English, knowledge of Russian is an advantage**.**

***Competencies/Skills:*** .

* Broad knowledge of development issues and national policy and practice in local governance and community development processes, political participation, leadership schemes, etc.;
* Advanced knowledge of gender equality issues;
* Strong data collection, analysis;
* Substantive knowledge of concept and principles of local development and governance processes, as well as subject-matter international instruments;
* Strong analytical capacity and creative thinking;
* Proven capacity to write analytical reports;
* Strong planning skills and ability to respect deadlines;
* **Excellent writing skills in English.**
* **Excellent communication and oral presentation skills;**
* Excellent teamwork skills; ability to consult, involve and work with stakeholders of different backgrounds, points of view and interests;
* Demonstrated initiative, high sense of responsibility and discretion;
* High level of integrity, **professionalism and respect for diversity.**
* Availability to travel as required.

1. **Payment mode:**

100% of the payment will be made upon effective conclusion of the Deliverablesand submission for approval by WEGE Programme Manager and UNDP CO Evaluations Manager.