**Terms of Reference**

**Final Project Evaluation: “Strengthening Capacity of Key Institutions to Support Parliamentary Democracy”**

**1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

In March 2008, Bhutan elected a new government to replace a century-old monarchy. In this new democratic society it was, and continues to be, important to develop a strong democratic culture, independent media and a “public space” to enable the electorate to make informed choices about its future.

To address this need, a project entitled “Strengthening Capacity of Key Institutions to Support Parliamentary Democracy” was developed and implemented by Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD), with financial support from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF). The United Nations Development Programme, Bhutan (UNDP Bhutan) acted as Executing Agency for the project. Following an eight month extension, the project ran from April 2010 until June 2012. The project had a total budget of 225,000 USD, of which the UNDEF grant comprised 203,972 USD.

The project aimed to educate media, youth, officialdom and civil society on the concepts of democracy so as to strengthen the foundation of Bhutanese democracy, media and civil society. In order to achieve these objectives, activities such as conferences, workshops, trainings, and the production of publications and web portals on democracy were implemented. The activities were designed to enhance participants’ understanding of the role of media in a democracy, strengthen media professionalism, and improve general writing skills to encourage discourse and civil society voice.

**2. EVALUATION PURPOSE**

This final project evaluation is being arranged by the Executive Agency, UNDP Bhutan, as stipulated in the Project Document. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the outcomes achieved in light of the project’s effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, quality of project management and sustainability. The evaluation should provide recommendations for projects in the development of media and democratic society in Bhutan in the future.

**3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND CRITERIA**

The evaluation shall cover all activities undertaken within the framework of the project. Attention should be paid to the project cycle in its entirety, including planning, implementation, management, review and monitoring.

The involvement of and impact on all target groups and beneficiaries[[1]](#footnote-1) should be considered as far as possible during the course of the evaluation. The project’s performance should be assessed against the indicators, assumptions, and risks specified in the Project Document (Annex 1).

In accordance with UNDP Evaluation Guidance[[2]](#footnote-2), the evaluation must also address how the intervention sought to strengthen the application of rights-based and gender mainstreaming approaches.

The evaluation should provide an assessment of the project against the following criteria:

1. **Relevance:** extent to which the project and its intended outputs or outcomes were consistent with the needs of intended beneficiaries and relevant strategies.
2. **Efficiency**: how economically resources were converted into results.
3. **Effectiveness**: extent to which progress toward outputs or outcomes has been made.
4. **Quality of project management:** risk management, result based management, reporting, and financial management.
5. **Sustainability:** extent to which benefits of the project have continued since the project came to an end, and the likelihood of continued benefits in the future.

**4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

In order to assess the project against the criteria above, the evaluation should answer the following questions:

1. **Relevance of the project objectives**
   1. Within the limitations of information available at the time of planning, how strong was the situation and needs analysis undertaken for the project, and how clear and realistic were the project objectives?
   2. To what extent were the intended outputs consistent with the needs of intended beneficiaries and the priorities for the development of a democratic society in Bhutan? Consider any relevant organizational or national strategies.
   3. How well did the project activities and design respond to the stated objectives?
   4. How contextually appropriate was the method of implementation?
   5. How well did the project complement the activities of other actors?
2. **Efficiency**
   1. How effectively were resources used to produce the intended outputs?
   2. How could resources have been used more efficiently to achieve the intended results?
3. **Effectiveness**
   1. To what extent has the project contributed to progress against the stated outputs and outcomes?
   2. What have been the most significant overall results of the project? To what degree have the objectives been achieved?
   3. How well was the project able to adapt to a changing external environment and democratic context in Bhutan while pursuing the stated objectives?
4. **Project management and support** (pertaining to implementing and executing partner as appropriate).
   1. To what extent were the management structures of the project adequate and effective?
   2. How strong was the risk management of the project?
   3. Assess the quality of financial implementation against the planned budgets and progress.
   4. How high was the quality of project monitoring and reporting?
5. **Sustainability**
   1. To what degree have the benefits of the project continued since the end of activities, and what is the likelihood of continued benefits in the future?
   2. How effective was the sustainability strategy and how well was it implemented?

**5. METHODOLOGY**

The evaluator will employ a variety of data sources and follow the principle of triangulation so as to answer the questions above. A participatory methodology, with contributions from a wide range of stakeholders, should be employed as far as possible within the resources available.

A desk review of the relevant project documents, budgets, expenditure reports, project reports, on-site reviews and steering committee meetings, as well as reports and evaluations of individual activities, should be undertaken. The evaluator will have access to all relevant reports, including mid-term and annual review reports. Materials on all individual activities, including evaluations by participants and BCMD staff, will be made available.

The evaluator will collect primary data through semi-structured interviews and surveys, organized as appropriate as individual interviews, focus group discussions, telephone interviews, or by email. Wherever relevant, physical indicators will be used, e.g. the establishment of the portal and the number of users for the portal should be assessed.

It should be noted that Bhutan has limited baseline data available especially in terms of democratic participation and civil society. As efforts to garner more baseline data, currently the most effective means of evaluation is likely to be direct interviews and surveys and to rely on qualitative information. However, useful data sources could include the Royal Government of Bhutan’s Media Impact Study (2008) and the results of the 2013 follow up study if available, the European Union’s election monitoring report, and the Cultural Industries Sector Development, a 2009 baseline report.

Final decisions about the specific design and methods for the evaluation should emerge from participatory consultations held among the executing and implementing agencies, the evaluators, and key stakeholders where relevant. The methodology shall be based on what is appropriate and feasible to meet the evaluation purpose and objectives and answer the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and extant data.

**6. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES**

The evaluation team will be accountable for producing the following deliverables:

* **Evaluation inception report.** The report should detail the evaluators’ understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods; proposed sources of data; and data collection procedures (including interview and possible survey questions). The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, as well as the outcomes of an initial desk review of project materials.
* **Draft evaluation report.** The draft evaluation report should contain all components of the final report. The draft report will be reviewed by the evaluation management team to ensure it meets quality standards.
* **Final evaluation report.** A detailed evaluation report should include an executive summary of findings, detailed analysis of all evaluation questions and clear and practical recommendations for future programming. Annexes to the document should include the Terms of Reference, itinerary, list of documents reviewed, persons interviewed, summary of field visits, survey and interview tools, etc.
* **Presentation of evaluation and recommendations.** Once finalized, the evaluation results shall be presented to the implementing and executing agencies as well as relevant governmental, civil society and media stakeholders so as to share the lessons and recommendations.

**7. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES**

A national consultant with the following qualifications shall be engaged to undertake the evaluation:

* Academic and professional background in fields related to Media, Democratic Governance, Journalism, or Social Studies;
* A minimum of 5 years of working experience in the governance or development sector in Bhutan;
* Experience with the development of democratic participation and media in Bhutan is an advantage;
* Demonstrated skills and knowledge in participatory monitoring and evaluation processes;
* Experience in monitoring and evaluation of development projects supported by UN agencies and/or major donor agencies is desirable;
* Experience with human rights based approaches and gender mainstreaming;
* Proficiency in writing and communicating both in English and in Dzongkha; and
* Excellent in human relations, coordination, planning and team work.

The evaluator must be independent from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing or advising any aspect of the project to be evaluated.

**8. EVALUATION ETHICS**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group’s ‘Standards for Evaluation within the UN System’[[3]](#footnote-3) and the UNDP’s Evaluation Policy.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**9. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Executing Agency, more specifically the Governance Unit of UNDP in Bhutan, will be responsible for monitoring the evaluation outputs to ensure quality. The inception and draft reports will be reviewed and commented upon by a group consisting of representatives from the Executing Agency, Implementing Agency, as well as relevant government and civil society stakeholders.

**10. TIME-FRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS**

The following time schedule for the evaluation process is envisaged:

* Finalization of selection of evaluators and signing of contract: 26th March 2013
* Briefings of evaluators: 27th - 29th March 2013
* Submit detailed draft inception report: 5th April 2013
* Feedback and finalizing inception report: 10th April 2013
* Field work: 14th – 24th April 2013
* Submit the draft final report: 3rd May 2013
* Feedback on the draft report: 10th May
* Submission of final report: 17st May
* Information sharing session: 24th May 2013

**11. TENDER PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals should detail the proposed methodology, schedule and financial proposal including consultant’s daily rate and number of days committed to the evaluation. A copy of the consultant’s resume, P11 form[[5]](#footnote-5) and contact details of three referees must be included.

Proposals should be submitted in electronic format to [**procurement.bt@undp.org**](mailto:procurement.bt@undp.org)by **12 noon** on **Monday 18th March 2013**.

The consultant will be paid on lump sum basis based on submission deliverables which meet quality standards, based on an agreed schedule of work. The lump sum will include all necessary travel costs and DSA necessary to undertake the evaluation, as well as the costs of organizing the information sharing workshop.

The payment schedule is as follows:

* Initial payment: 15% upon signing of contract
* 2nd payment: 85% upon acceptance of final report

1. Media professionals, policy makers in the government sector, youth, civil society organisations, and a cross section of society. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. # *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*, UNDP 2011. Available at http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/

   [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www.unevaluation.org/unegstandards [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Available to download at: sas.undp.org/documents/p11\_personal\_history\_form.doc [↑](#footnote-ref-5)