

Section II: Schedule of Requirements

eSourcing reference: RFQ/2021/19787

Provision of services for Monitoring and Evaluation of the implemented CSO and Media grants projects (UNOPS-SIDAPRO-2021-S-004)

Terms of reference (TOR)

for

Provision of Final Evaluation of the projects implemented under the Call for Proposals for CSO and Media grants provided through the Nordic support for Progress of North Macedonia project

1. Background

The Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) fund a sub-regional project “Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia” implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The main objective of the project is to support the Government of North Macedonia in preparing for European Union accession negotiations by enhancing its administrative capacities and human resources for EU integration and supporting effective communication of the benefits of this process. The Project also supports the priorities of the Government reform agenda in the accession process and works on increasing awareness of the effects of the EU accession process to the general public.

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) was awarded the implementation of the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia Project over three years. The Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia Project is a synergy between a Kingdom of Norway funded 4.5 million Euro and Sweden funded 2 million Euro components that are complementary in their activities and outcomes.

The project has four results:

Result 1: Improved Access to Employment

Result 2: Enhanced Social Inclusion, Improved Living Conditions and Local Infrastructure

Result 3: Support the government reform agenda in the accession process;

Result 4: Awareness of and the effects of the EU accession process communicated to the public.

The Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) is the project key partner, responsible for the sustainability of the project results. Direct beneficiaries of the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia Project are selected Ministries of the Government of North Macedonia, civil society organisations (CSOs) and media. The final beneficiaries are the citizens of North Macedonia.

All Project activities are undertaken in partnership and cooperation with national institutions, with the aim of allowing them to adopt/adapt the legal requirements and, where relevant, EU accession criteria. This ensures national ownership and supports the development of national capacities.

One of the most important interventions of the project relates to providing support for active citizens participation in North Macedonia’s EU accession process. A working democracy is a political requirement to join the European Union and civil engagement is perceived as evidence of democracy and good governance at work because it allows citizens to freely associate and engage in civic action. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have so far played a pivotal role in voicing citizen’s interests in the process of implementation of strategic reforms and execution of key policies and strategies for EU accession. As put forward by the European Commission “an empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and is an asset in itself. It represents and fosters pluralism and can contribute to more effective policies, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth. It is an important player in fostering peace and in conflict resolution. By articulating citizens’ concerns, civil society organisations (CSOs) are active in the public arena, engaging in initiatives to further participatory democracy. They embody a growing demand for transparent and accountable governance. While states carry the primary responsibility for development and democratic governance, synergies between states and CSOs can help

overcome challenges of poverty, widening inequalities, social exclusion and unsustainable development. CSOs' participation in policy processes is key to ensuring inclusive and effective policies. CSOs therefore contribute to building more accountable and legitimate states, leading to enhanced social cohesion and more open and deeper democracies.”

The fundamental role of media in the EU accession process derives from the EU political and cultural background. With freedom of speech as a fundamental value and with media as the main platform for enabling this right, media becomes irreplaceable in shaping public opinion as well as acting as ‘watchdogs’, closely monitoring governmental institutions. Media play the main role in providing information to citizens and play an important role in the process of facilitating educated choices for citizens.

In 2019, the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project launched an Open Call for Proposals for Support to Civil Society Organizations and Media for EU Integration Projects with the objective to empower active participation and engagement of the civil sector and media in pursuing activities considered to be in the broad public interest and in support of the country's EU accession process. The aim was that these projects will implement activities that should result in, but should not be limited to:

1. Increased initiatives of CSOs and media to monitor, advocate and participate in processes associated with implementation of key reforms related to the EU accession process, ensuring good quality comprehensive legislation and the development of sustainable policies that benefit the citizens;
2. Improved capacities of CSOs and media as effective and accountable independent actors that conduct activities that result in improved life of citizens;
3. Increased awareness of the general public of the EU accession process and promotion of the benefits of EU membership;
4. The activities described in this ToR build upon the activities already implemented by the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia Project and the communication department of the Secretariat for European Affairs related to the EU integration process of the country.

[Ten projects were awarded](#), six to CSOs and four to media in the total amount of 591,372 USD.

2. Purpose and Scope of Assignment

The purpose of the Final Evaluation of the projects implemented under the Call for Proposals for CSO and Media grants provided through the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project is to provide the analysis of the relevancy, the effects and impact produced by the implemented grants. The findings of this Assessment will in turn contribute to improved design of future Calls for Proposals. The Assessment should include considerations of positive and negative external changes. It will identify achieved impacts and, where possible, indicate whether longer-term impacts are likely to occur.

The selected contractor will be responsible to carry out the assignment, to lead the process and provide directions of the evaluation process. More specifically, the contractor will conduct the following tasks:

- Analyze the relevance of the Call for Proposal, the duration of the projects, the allocated amounts per project and the implementation and administration modalities of the grants;
- Analyze all ten implemented projects in accordance to five main evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.
- Identify and assess the key results;
- Assess the impact of the media grants on the audience;
- Determine the added value of the projects;
- Identify and assess the difference that the projects made to the beneficiaries;
- Consider cost-effectiveness element of the projects and, where possible and relevant, identify examples of cost-effective interventions so that they could possibly be considered for future actions;
- Identify overall lessons learned as well as those relevant for particular projects in order to facilitate decision making by the Government of North Macedonia, donors and other stakeholders;

- Identify overall lessons learned as well as those relevant for particular projects in the terms of administrative procedures;
- Provide realistic, clear, and practical recommendations that could facilitate future calls for proposals and similar actions.

3. The Scope of Intervention

The intervention will at least include the following phases: preparatory activities, field missions, drafting of the report, finalisation and presentation of the Final Report.

Within preparatory activities, the contractor will:

- Meet Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project team in order to: reconfirm Assignment objectives, scope, and methodology; to obtain background information needed for the Assessment; and to reconfirm the extent of logistical and organisational support that will be provided to the process.
- Conduct desk research of the project documentation, including the project proposals, Reports, and Final Evaluations.
- Conduct desk research of similar Calls for Proposals, implemented projects and activities of other donors for the duration of the grants.
- Prepare the Inception Report that will detail the Methodology and the work plan of the evaluation. Only upon the approval of the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia Project Manager, the field work should commence.

The field work should at least include:

- In-depth interviews and group discussions with the project implementers.
- Interviews/group discussions with beneficiaries of the projects that will be identified with support from the Nordic Support.
- Interviews with civil servants and other government representatives that have benefited or were engaged in the projects.
- Interviews/group discussions with the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project staff.

The analysis will include:

- Analysis of the field work findings. The Evaluation Team will prepare the draft Report that will include interim findings, lessons learned, and recommendations.
- The draft Report will be discussed with the Nordic Support Project. The Evaluation Team will consider feedback provided to the draft and edit the Report accordingly.

The Final Report, which should be produced in English and have maximum 40 pages, excluding Annexes, should be presented in a workshop that will at least include the representatives of donors, SEA the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project. The Evaluation Team will be responsible for efficient functioning of the process and for completing the Evaluation Report in accordance with this ToR. An outline of the Evaluation Report is provided in Annex I of this document.

Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia will provide logistics and organisational support that may include: provision of documentation, assistance in development of field visit, identification of stakeholders and beneficiaries and organisation of meetings.

4. Expected timing for implementation of the activities

The selected candidate is expected to ensure that the following milestones, performance indicators and reporting requirements are met:

- Inception Report produced within two weeks upon start of the Assignment, provides detailed description of the methodology and work plan, and is approved by the Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project;
- Field work completed within the set time framework, representatives of all grantees met and minimum ten other stakeholders and beneficiaries;
- Draft Evaluation Report produced timely and presented to the project within ten weeks after the start of the assignment;
- The Evaluation Report, produced timely and in line with the requirements, and took into consideration comments provided by the stakeholders. The findings documented and evidence based.

The indicative time framework for the conduct of the task is as follows, but activities should end not later than 15 August 2021:

Evaluation phase	Key output(s)	Indicative time framework
Preparatory activities	Introductory meetings and desk research completed, and Inception Report produced	First two weeks of start of assignment
Field work	Meetings with the stakeholders conducted	Four weeks from start of assignment
Analysis/Report writing	Draft Evaluation Report produced, and circulated for comments	Six weeks from start of assignment
Feedback/editing/finalisation	Feedback to stakeholders who commented the Draft provided. Editing completed and the Report produced	One week upon receiving of Draft Evaluation Report
Report presentation	The Final Report will be presented to stakeholders	Ten weeks from start of assignment

5. Qualifications and Experience

The contracted entity should demonstrate experience in implementing similar evaluation and monitoring activities. The contracted entity should be a duly registered legal entity in continuous business for the past three years with a minimum turnover of 10.000 USD per year.

Minimum three years of experience in project/programme evaluations, including impact assessments, is required with at least three evaluations of similar sized UN, EU, SIDA or other donor funded projects/programmes in North Macedonia.

The dedicated team for the implementation of this task should consist of at least two professionals with at least three years of experience in project/programme evaluations, one of which should hold at least a Master's Degree preferably in social science, public administration, economics, finance or other relevant subject.

5. Important Considerations

The entire process should be closely coordinated with the project office. The project office will support the contractor in coordination and guidance in implementation of activities. Please note that the services defined in this ToR should pay particular attention to the Government recommendations and protocols related to COVID-19. Some activities might be altered/adapted depending on the epidemiological situation in the country.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

The contracted entity will remain in close contact with appropriate Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia/UNOPS personnel and will discuss and agree upon all relevant matters during the implementation of the activities.

The electronic copies of all reports or any other materials pertained to the services will be made available to UNOPS in English. In particular, but not limited to:

- Inception Report;
- Draft Evaluation Report;
- Presentation materials;

7. Other Considerations

Working language when contacting UNOPS is English and all official correspondence should be in English. Reports on progress of activities as well as the final report will be submitted in English language. The activities will be conducted in Macedonian as the main language for the delivery of outputs. The Evaluation Report should be produced in English and have a maximum 40 pages, excluding Annexes. The report language should be clear and concise. It should be written in one of the two following fonts: Arial 10 or Calibri 11. The chapters may include simple graph illustrations and tables in order to enhance quality of presentation of the Report findings.

Annex I: Evaluation Report Outline and Considerations

- I. Executive Summary: clear language, maximum four pages, and should be usable as a standalone document. It should among other include digest of key findings, lessons learned, and recommendations.
- II. Introduction: describing basic details of projects that were included in the Evaluation, identifying evaluation objectives and scope, methodology and other relevant elements of the process (e.g. obstacles, highlights, support received and similar)
- III. The Context: includes description of the policy context, development context, including socio-economic, political and cultural factors; institutional context and stakeholder involvement
- IV. Analysis: presents findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons. This part of the Report should address all the questions detailed in the TOR
- V. Acknowledgments
- VI. Annexes