Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Evaluation for

"Recentering the Civic Internet through Partner Engagement"

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0. Project Overview

Project Title	Recentering the Civic Internet through Partner Engagement
Consortium Lead	Oxfam Ireland
Partner Organisation(s)	• Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)
	• Somalia Non-State Actors (SONSA)
	• Institute for Policy Studies and Media Development in Vietnam (IPS) (under the application for state permit/approval)
	• Al Khatt in Tunisia
	• Mzalendo Trust in Kenya
	• Center for Constitutional Governance in Uganda (CCG)
	• The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (Miftah) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
	• AMATE in El Salvador
	• Asociación Aguayo in Bolivia
	• Forum Civil in Senegal
Geographical Coverage	Bolivia, El Salvador, Cambodia, Vietnam, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Tunisia, Senegal, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Ireland
Evaluation period	From 01/01/2024 to 30/06/2025
Program implementation period	From 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2026
Program budget	3,500,000 euros
Evaluation budget	15,000-20,000 Euros

1. Background, Rationale and Purpose of the Evaluation

Background:

ReCIPE stands for "Recentering the Civic Internet through Partner Engagement". ReCIPE is a three-year project co-funded by the European Union that aims to contribute to a rights-respecting digital ecosystem that is values-based, people-centred and safe for civil society actors and human rights defenders.

The project puts people, especially women and youth, at the centre of the digital transformation through bringing voices of civil society organisations (CSOs) from both the Global North and the Global South to multilateral digital governance processes.

The project targets CSOs, civil society activists and community members from 10 focus countries. It also targets technology companies and government authorities to promote the creation and enforcement of effective digital rights laws and policies.

ReCIPE is built around three main pillars that complement each other to bring about the desired change:
- Increasing collaboration between organisations in the Global South and Global North to create vibrant and safe online civic spaces;
- Improving digital rights mechanisms and policies that hold governments and corporate actors accountable;
- Promoting equitable resources for and access to safe online social and political activity for people and communities at risk of digital harm.
Find out more at: https://www.oxfamrecipe.eu/

Rationale and Purpose of the Evaluation:

As an integral part of Oxfam's commitment to social accountability and learning, and in line with donor requirements, Oxfam will commission an independent mid-term evaluation to independently assess the performance of the project.

1.   Effectiveness: the extent to which the project has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its project objectives and outcomes, assessing its effectiveness and different results across groups (based on principles of equity and inclusiveness).

2.   Impact: the extent to which the project has contributed, or is expected to contribute, to changes in people's lives, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended.

3.   Sustainability: It will explore and make recommendations on broader pathways to sustainability and scale-up based on the success of project actions and engage project participants and key stakeholders on these issues.

4.   Relevance: Whether the action responds to the needs and priorities of stakeholders.

5.   Lessons learned: It will identify lessons learned and good practices, focusing on areas such as wider participation, challenges, successful aspects of the project and improved dissemination of results.

The ReCIPE mid-term evaluation will assess the performance of the project and the organisational capacity to achieve the agreed programme objectives. It will also determine whether it can highlight stories of change to illustrate impact through case studies and, based on its findings, make recommendations on sustainability issues. It will be presented at a final validation workshop with project participants and key stakeholders.

The **primary intended users** are the European Union, Oxfam and its implementing partners, primary participants and key stakeholders engaged in the process. Implementing partners could potentially strengthen their organizations based on findings and mobilize additional funding sources.

2. Key Guiding Evaluation Questions

Given its objectives, the evaluation will assess the following evaluation criteria: (i) effectiveness, (ii) impact, (iii) sustainability, (iiii) relevance and (iv) lessons learned, although it will include some other questions (e.g. efficiency) where these could enhance understanding of the evaluation's objectives. The evaluation should respond to the following guiding evaluation questions, which do not exclude other questions that may be added during the inception phase of the evaluation, when the questions will be further refined.

A. *Effectiveness*

- To what extent is the project making progress towards achieving its objectives? And what are the reasons for this?
- How effective is the partnership and collaboration of the ReCIPE project in achieving its objectives? And with other partners involved in the project?
- How has the co-operation between the organisations of the 'Global South' and the 'Global North' been strengthened?
- How effectively have different stakeholders been involved? What other strategies would need to be developed to address their needs and concerns?
- (Efficiency) To what extent were the costs associated with the project proportionate to the benefits generated? What factors influenced any discrepancies?
- Does the intervention design match the resources available to the implementing partners?

B. *Impact*

- As a result of the activities for CSOs, individuals, diverse groups and at community level, have there been any significant overall changes (outcomes) during this period?
- To what extent are the activities inclusive and equitable?
- Are there any unintended consequences (positive or negative) and what are the reasons for them?

- To what extent has the launch of the project influenced policies or practices related to the digital context at national level? And at international level?
- Does the project make a specific and meaningful contribution to protecting the population from digital threats? Does the project promote gender equality and reduce the digital divide? If so, in what way?
- Are there synergies with other actors and measures used and promoted? How do these synergies contribute to the project?
- To what extent has the project introduced innovative approaches or technologies?

C. *Sustainability*

- Are there any current specific measures in place to ensure that the impact of the project is sustained beyond its completion?
- Have project participants (CSO members, digital rights advocates, community members, youth, women, LGBTBQA+ and rural communities...) acquired the necessary skills (including knowledge about digital rights, digital security and safety) to ensure the continued flow of benefits/services?
- To what extent is there evidence of ownership by project participants and key stakeholders? (Direct and indirect?)
- To what extent and how does collaboration with actors such as human rights defenders, local leaders, governments, local authorities, sector experts and/or technology companies currently contribute to sustainability?
- Does the intervention take account of the real capacities (institutional, technical and economic) of the CSOs and/or implementing partners responsible for its implementation?

D. *Relevance*

- Is the intervention responsive to the needs of the target population and does the intervention meet the specific needs of the context in each country?
- What specific measures are being taken to support and protect the most vulnerable in the digital ecosystem?
- For whom are outcomes being achieved, in what ways and in what circumstances?
- What are the primary/most important goals from the perspective of different stakeholders?
- Is the project strategy still relevant to the achievement of the expected impact on the program?
- Were changes made to increase the relevance of the activities during this period of project implementation?
- Is the project implementation in line with the policy priorities of the Oxfam RiaDA compendium?
- Is the project aligned and its design adequate to match the priorities, policies and expected results established by the European Union?

E. *Lessons learned*

- What have been the successes and challenges to date? And what is the strategy for overcoming these challenges?

- What could be improved?

- What are the main risks associated with the implementation of the project? And what would be the measures to mitigate them?

- What are the specific lessons learned from this phase of the project?

- What are the recommendations for the rest of the project?

3. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation is expected to cover the project **period from January 2024 until June 2025,** considering all project components and existing instruments in the countries where the project is implemented, unless otherwise specified.

4. Methodological approach

The selected consultant/s will propose an appropriate methodology based on the above evaluation criteria and the evaluation's objectives. They will review exiting data gathered by the project´s monitoring system and make recommendations where it is necessary to gather additional information.

The consultant/s will provide a detailed and realistic workplan for this exercise during the inception stage. A Steering Committee composed of representatives from Oxfam and partners, has been set up to provide oversight into this process and will provide feedback at key points as defined below, including the inception report and methodology.

The consultant/s will be expected to develop a comprehensive methodology including detailed methods, techniques of data collection and tools, and an analysis and sampling framework. The findings, conclusions and recommendations will be presented at a stakeholder validation workshop.

The consultant/s are expected to employ a variety of data collection and analysis techniques for both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure a comprehensive evaluation exercise. These may include:

- **Document and systems review:** Review of existing documentation - project documents, project reports, project logical framework, monitoring and evaluation data, any other documents resulting from the activities carried out, national and international policies and/or legislation and/or protocols related to the digital ecosystem and digital rights.

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- **Surveys:** Application of structured survey questionnaires with a representative, random sample of target population to quantitatively assess outcomes. If this is used, it should be greater in scope and in-depth in comparison to data already collected in standard routine project monitoring.

- **Focus Group Discussions:** With target groups and other stakeholders to assess implementation experiences and effectiveness, document successes, challenges and lessons learned and develop recommendations for improvement.

- **Key Informant Interviews:** Consultations with key project stakeholders. Guidance on relevant stakeholders will be provided by Oxfam project team and Steering Committee.

- **Case studies:** to illustrate in depth how change has occurred over time

- **Validation workshop:** Present findings and preliminary recommendations to a broad range of stakeholders to discuss potential areas for sustainability or scale

The review process should be gender-focused, youth appropriate, inclusive of all stakeholders including People with disability (PWD), culturally sensitive and participatory. It is essential that data collection, as well as data storage, is supported by Oxfam and the country's ethical practices/policies and complies with EU GDPR requirements. To protect the anonymity of the interviewees, the review report should not include names or identifying features of the participants. The data collection methods should incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data. A wide cross section of review participants from the primary project participants should be considered, including but not limited to primary project participants, Oxfam partners, Oxfam offices, country government representatives, CSOs and digital activists, and community members.

5. Bid proposal and deliverables.

The **bid proposal** should present an implementation plan specifying time and resources required for:

- document review,

- data collection including time allocated for travel to meet with communities, partners and stakeholders that facilitate meaningful engagement with women, youth…

- meetings between the reviewer(s) and relevant Oxfam staff,

- data analysis and validation,

- report preparation, and

- obtaining feedback on preliminary results and recommendations.

The proposal should also include a costed logistics plan, considering the following:

- Payment schedule

- (if required) Travel and accommodation arrangements

• Working days/hours, holidays and other special requirements e.g. working weekends, if travel days or public holidays are counted as working days etc.

• (if required) Provision of services such as translators, office space, phone/internet access, printing, photocopying, etc

• Stakeholder communication tools

The consultant/s are also expected to lead and submit the following **deliverables** within the agreed timeframe and budget:

o An inception report including consultants' preliminary findings/understandings based on a desk document review, rationale and a detailed description of the methodology and tools, research questions, analytical methods, data analysis and detailed work plan for conducting the evaluation exercise.

o Draft report with preliminary findings shared for validation with the Steering Committee established by Oxfam and partners for purposes of this evaluation.

o Raw data and transcribed qualitative scripts

o PowerPoint presentation outlining key findings, implications and recommendations for upcoming activities and future implementation to be presented to Oxfam, partners and key stakeholders.

o Evaluation report (maximum 35 pages, excluding annexes), based on the following sections, consisting of:

▪ Acronyms

▪ Acknowledgements

▪ Executive Summary

▪ Background

▪ Methodology

▪ Analysis and findings of the evaluation

▪ Stories of change

▪ Lessons learned and good practices

▪ Conclusions

▪ Recommendations

▪ Updated logframe using data on each Indicator

▪ Annexes, such as:

  - Terms of Reference (TOR)

  - The work proposal includes the methodology, and the tools used.

  - A list of people who participated in the different review activities.

  - The data gathered: from physical support to databases, in cases where they have been developed.

  - Country-specific findings and recommendations

  - Case Studies

- Consulted bibliography.

The report will include an executive summary which can be published separately to the report.

6. Evaluation Leadership and Management

The mid-term evaluation survey is commissioned by Oxfam Ireland. Oxfam will facilitate links between the Consultant/s, country offices's and partners' teams and key stakeholders or any other agreed key informant.

A Steering Committee will be set up that includes Oxfam and project partners and will provide input and feedback at key moments of the process, including the Inception Report and Methodology, a review of the preliminary findings and plans for the Stakeholder Validation workshop, and final report, conclusions and recommendations. The Consultant/s will report directly to Oxfam Ireland and will interact with the Steering Committee at key moments. The Consultant/s will also liaise with implementing partners staff while carrying out this exercise.

The Consultant/s will be fully responsible for all activities required for the evaluation, validating preliminary results and recommendations, submitting a first draft report to Oxfam Ireland and a final draft after feedback from Oxfam Ireland has been received within the timelines agreed in the contract.

Oxfam Ireland is responsible for making payments, facilitating timely access to documents, stakeholders, providing other support required such as transport, accommodation, office space, communication, etc. Oxfam will provide:

- o Relevant preparatory project documents
- o Guidance and technical support as required throughout the evaluation
- o Introductory meetings with partners and key stakeholders
- o Comments, feedback, and approval of all deliverables
- o Inform Partners to Facilitate the Field Data Collection

7. Timelines

The assignment is expected to commence from **June 2025 and with preliminary findings shared by 30 July 2025**. **The final report should be submitted to Oxfam Ireland not later than 25 August 2025**.

8. Qualification and experience

• The lead consultant must have a minimum of 10 years of demonstrable experience in carrying out impact evaluations, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, evaluation design and implementation with a focus on socio-economic evaluations.

• Capacity to design and carry out qualitative and quantitative research (Attach 2 samples of recent evaluation reports conducted)

• Strong analytical, reporting and presentation skills.

• Capacity to manage processes, strong communication and facilitation skills especially in multi-cultural and diverse contexts

- Knowledge of the digital rights context and how to advocate for it

- Language skills: Fluent in English, understanding of local languages highly desirable

- Multi-disciplinary teams on the ground will be highly valued

- Demonstrated experience in the mainstreaming of gender and age analysis in development projects

- Evidence of understanding and application of feminist principles

- Experience in program evaluation for multi-year, multi-country EU-funded projects preferred.

9. Ethics and safeguarding of project beneficiaries.

The consultant/s undertaking the evaluation study are responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the study (preparation and design, data collection, data analysis, reporting and dissemination). Oxfam's Safeguarding and Anti- Fraud policies will be annexed and signed by the consultant/s. The Consultant/s are responsible for managing any potential ethical risks and issues and must put in place, in consultation with the Oxfam Team, processes and systems to identify report and resolve any ethical issues that might arise during the implementation of the study. Ethical approvals and reviews by relevant national and institutional review boards must be sought where required.

10. Selection process

- Quality of methodological approach, feasibility, etc.

- Experience and competencies of the evaluator(s)

- Financial viability and value for money for costs associated with the delivery of activities as laid out in the proposed methodology

- Innovative ideas relating to methods proposed, implementation, validation, presentation of results

11. How to apply

The application files (bids) will include the following: cover letter, technical and financial proposals with subject:

Mid-term Evaluation for the ReCIPE *Project.*

The bid will indicate:

- Curriculum vitae of the evaluator and/or evaluation team and company registration.
- Two samples of recent similar evaluations and/or study(s) conducted.
- Two referrals for people who will be involved in this work.

- Outlines for:
    A) Proposed methodology (survey approach, sampling methodology and techniques for sample size calculation, data collection and analysis techniques).
    B) Detailed workplan.
    C) Estimated budget (preferably in euro and proposed payment method)

Proposal bids must be submitted no later than **23:00 on May 14, 2025,** to susana.castano@oxfam.org

Any questions regarding this TOR should be sent to the same email address.

Annex 1. Full application, Logframe and Interim report

Full application

Logframe

Interim report submitted to the EU

Annex 2. Evaluation Calendar

Type of activities	Timeline of each activity
1. Launch of bidding /dissemination of ToR	29 April – 14 May 2025
2. Evaluation of bids	14 May - 20 May 2025
3. Contracting	21 May 2025
4. Entry meeting	30 May 2025
5. Preliminary findings report	30 July 2025
6. Presentation at stakeholder workshop	15 August 2025
7. Final Report	25 August 2025