



Terms of Reference for External Project Concept Note Assessors

1. Background

The Civil Society Support Programme Phase2 (CSSP2) is a capacity development programme designed to support Ethiopia's civil society to contribute to responsive and accountable governance for better equitable and inclusive access to services and improved environment for the promotion and protection of the human rights of all Ethiopians.

CSSP2 is funded by the people of United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, and Norway. The value of the fund is about £17m for programme duration of three years (2018–2021). The programme is managed by the British Council, in consortium with Pact UK and Social Development Direct. To provide closer support to CSOs, the programme established five regional Hubs (at Dessie, Dire Dawa, Assosa, Hawassa and Addis Ababa) reporting to the secretariat in Addis Ababa.

Grant making is one of the key programme strategies to support CSOs to invest on issues and mechanisms that create an enabling environment in which there is an increasing space for constructive dialogue 'and requisite action' between citizens and government on issues of common concern. Through a rights-based approach (RBA), the programme gives particular emphasis to poor women and men and girls and boys affected by social marginalisation, geographic remoteness, under resourcing and overlooked development issues all over the country.

Currently, CSSP2 structured its investments on Three Strategic Themes with focus areas under each Theme for targeted intervention as illustrated in the table below.

Strategic Themes	Focus areas
1. Gender Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender based violence• Land rights• Women political participation
2. Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Substance abuse• Decent work• Youth voice
3. Citizen-State Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social minorities inclusion• Stronger, better CSOs• Trust and confidence

2. Purpose of the Call

The purpose of the Call is to invite interested individual experts with relevant qualification and experience to support the assessment of Grant Project Proposals/Concept Notes submitted by civil society organisations (CSOs) for funding.

CSSP2 will use the external assessors where and when it feels there is technical gap and time pressure to process large volume of applications.

Selected assessor will assess Concept Notes submitted by CSOs under the call for CSSP2 Strategic Grants in line with the criteria set in the guidelines for applicants and collate assessment results with notes in the spreadsheet (grid) prepared for the same.

3. Role and Specific Tasks of Assessors

The external assessors will have the following roles and specific tasks.

- Take part in meetings and/or introductory orientation session organised by the CSSP2 management for the execution of the assignment;
- Thoroughly read the guidelines for assessment together with evaluation criteria and other programme documents to be shared at the beginning of the task.
- Undertake objective assessment of Concept Notes (CN) submitted by CSOs in line with the guidelines for applicants, including the published evaluation grids/criteria;
- The assessors will be provided with Concept Notes submitted by CSOs that pass **administrative and eligibility screening** by CSSP2 Management. The administrative and eligibility screening will be recorded and documented.
- Each CN will be assessed by two assessors (internal or external) working independently of each other.
- The assessors will submit their evaluations through CSSP2 Management to the grants team who will compile all the assessments, check the quality and coherence of the assessors' scores and comments.
- The assessors will be invited to the grant team to justify and discuss his/her assessment of the Concept Note in cases of significant variation among assessors ranging from 9 points in the overall score to rejection.
- During the course of assessment, each assessor should liaise directly with the CSSP2 Management only which afterwards will liaise with the grants team as necessary.
- The assessors must provide a comment for each score in each sub-section, and they must provide an overall comment on the strengths and weaknesses of each CN.
- The assessors must ensure that their comments and scores are coherent, and that a high score is not accompanied by negative comments, and vice versa;
- Eventually, the assessor must provide a justified opinion if the proposal should be proposed for funding or not.
- The overall assessment should be based on the scores obtained under each subheading, added up by heading and the final score is the arithmetical average of the scores given by the assessors.
- The assessors are required to submit their evaluations and all documents including Concept Notes to the CSSP2 Management, who will provide the completed evaluation grids and other documents to the grants team at the end of the evaluation phase.

The CNs will be ranked based on their score and will be taken forward for full proposal development through co-creation approach with the CSSP2 team and final consideration for funding, provided that partners fulfilled other requirements, such as safeguarding.

4. Selection Procedure and Requirements

Selection of assessors will be based on the following criteria.

- A. Relevant experience and qualification.** This will account for **70%** of the assessment score. Assessors shall be selected based on evidence of their experience in undertaking similar assignments. Having expertise in CSSP2 strategic themes will be an asset. Applicants will be

assessed based on information/evidence in their application and interview (optional) with short-listed candidates to ensure that they possess the required skills and sufficient professional experience.

The required profile of each of the experts is provided below along educational and experience criteria.

Education

- A minimum of master's/first degree in development economics, development studies, social sciences or related discipline.
- A thorough knowledge of civil society related issues, with particular emphasis on the context of civil society in Ethiopia.

Experience

- Experience in development programmes and projects at different levels (national, regional, sub-regional) and capacity development issues facing civil society in Ethiopia.
- An in-depth knowledge of CSSP2's Strategic Themes covered by the current Call for Proposals will be required.
- Applicants should **indicate the specific theme** among the three CSSP strategic themes on which they have **more** expertise and in depth knowledge in their application so that applicants will be clustered by theme and evaluated accordingly.

The Expert must satisfy the following specific criteria:

1. at least 6 years relevant professional experience;
2. demonstrated experience in sectors such as civil society, engagement and advocacy, promotion of rights, good governance and sustainable livelihoods;
3. demonstrated knowledge of activities of different categories of civil society organisations and their engagement with diverse groups of people in Ethiopia;
4. specific experience in projects design, proposals assessment and/or post-implementation review and evaluation in programmes of support to civil society;
5. Experience on rights-based approach has an added advantage;
6. fluency in speaking, reading and writing in English (assessors will evaluate Concept Notes written in English and prepare their assessment in English)

B. Cost of the assignment (financial proposal/offer).

This will account for **30%** of total assessment score.
That is cost per project Concept Note assessment in Birr inclusive of all costs.

The assessors are expected to possess equipment such as laptops necessary for implementation of tasks.

5. Deliverables

Each assessor is expected to prepare and submit the following:

- (1) Completed assessment grid/spread sheet for each Concept Note assessed, including comments based on observation of key aspects of the Concept Note.

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- (2) Ranking list of scored Concept Note in ascending order based on total scores from the highest to the lowest (on a spread sheet file). The detail assessment grid and summary form will be shared to the assessors at the start so that assessors will prepare their evaluation reports accordingly.
 - (3) Provision of clarifications on assessment processes and results, as will be requested by the CSSP2 Management Team

All reports will be submitted in hard copy and electronically to the CSSP2 Management Team.

6. Place, Duration and Standard Input Measure

Assessors will be required to work at their homes. The actual assessment work will start immediately after the deadline for submission of Concept Notes and following completion of administrative compliance and eligibility check to be conducted by CSSP2 Management Team.

Expected number of days of expert input is calculated on the basis of number of Concept Notes to be assessed per day. For the present call for Concept Notes under Strategic Grants the standard is **up to five** Concept Notes per day. Thus, the duration of the contract will depend on the number of Concept Notes to be evaluated.

7. Conflict of Interest

In order to ensure the impartiality of assessors, the assessors should be independent from the institutional structure of the Programme (CSSP2), CSOs submitting the Concept Notes and other parties involved. For instance, the assessor should not have submitted a Concept Note or be a member of the management body of an organisation that has submitted a Concept Note. Each assessor will be required to sign a declaration conflict of interest. The assessors selected must demonstrate appropriate ethical conduct and must respect the confidentiality of the information and documents to which they will have access.

8. Coordination, Reporting and Liaison

The external assessors will be working under the supervision of the CSSP2 Management Team, with overall guidance to be provided by the Team Leader and closer coordination by assigned Grants Manager. Coordination, reporting and liaison will be undertaken through the CSSP2 physical address provided in this ToR.

9. Application process

Interested individual candidates are requested to submit all of the following requirements in a sealed envelope to be considered.

- (1) Letter of Interest, CV, Copies of diplomas, certificates and references that may be requested before the contracting.
- (2) Evidence of experience in undertaking similar assignment from funding agencies/donors.
- (3) Cost per project Concept Note assessment in Birr inclusive of all expenses and fees.

10. Deadline

The interested candidates should submit the requirements mentioned under Section 9 above on or before **22 July 2019** through email to information@cssp2-et.org (with (Memekiya.Woldegerima@et.britishcouncil.org & Jebessa.Senbeta2@et.britishcouncil.org in cc) in a sealed envelope to CSSP2 Office located at Bole, Addis Ababa next to Ethiopian Skylight Hotel 6th floor on the SEVITA Building during working hours.

For more information: Tel. +251-116153 411