

Irish Aid Civil Society Support Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR

Terms of Reference for Technical Assistance

1. Introduction

Ireland as a donor is committed to the idea that everyone has a role to play in reducing poverty and that citizens have a right and a responsibility to participate in and influence decisions that affect their lives. Civil society organisations allow citizens to come together to act collectively and participate in the development of their own communities and countries, whether through demanding better services from the state; holding their government to account; or by acting together to respond to their own needs.

In Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR, Irish Aid adheres to this commitment and recognises that a vibrant civil society sector is an important dimension for sustainable development. Civil Society Organisations are not just channels for delivering much needed services, particularly to the poor and hard to reach, but also can make a strategic contribution to development processes, strengthen accountability of government, pilot new approaches and provide innovative ideas to inform government policy.

Given this context, Ireland, through the Irish Aid programme managed by Embassy Hanoi provides support to Civil Society Organisations in Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR through a number of budget lines and funding mechanisms:

- The Vietnam Civil Society Facility (approx. €1,730,000 per annum)
- The Regional Initiatives (Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR) (approx. €650,000 per annum)
- Clearance of Mines and Unexploded Ordnance (Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR) (approx. €1,200,000 per annum)

The overall objective of Irish Aid's support to Civil Society Organisations is to increase and improve Civil Society's role in the national development and democratization process. The specific objectives of the Civil Society support are to increase Civil Society capacity to engage in governance and development activities. It is anticipated that by providing grant and non-grant support to Civil Society Organizations, the human, material and technical capacities of civil society will increase and their sustainability, accountability and constituency will improve. This will lead to a situation of enhanced contribution, participation and engagement of Civil Society Organisations in governance and development activities.

Funding of Civil Society Organisations under the Irish Aid programme in Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR is overseen and managed by the Embassy of Ireland staff in Hanoi. Embassy staff oversee policy direction, undertake sample monitoring visits and are fully responsible for partner management and financial oversight.

Given the geographical spread of Civil Society partners and the number of partners supported, external technical assistance has been employed by Embassy Hanoi over the past number of years to support: (i) Organisational Capacity Assessments; (ii) monitoring of individual projects against stated objectives; (iii) support for capacity building and networking; and (iv) to help coordinate CSO efforts and strengthen their capacity to contribute to a harmonized and effective response and to capture this in an aggregate monitoring framework of Irish Aid's support to Civil Society Organisations.

This technical assistance has provided additional assurances for oversight, programme quality and coherence and comprehensiveness of support. The cost of the external technical assistance is approximately 5% of the total allocation of funds to Civil Society Organisations.

2. Objective

This tender is aimed at procuring the services of an external consulting partner/firm to provide technical assistance for Civil Society Organisations funded by Irish Aid for the period January to December 2016 for:

- (i) Organisational Capacity Assessments;
- (ii) Monitoring of individual projects against stated objectives;
- (iii) Capacity building and networking; and
- (iv) Facilitating the coordination of CSO efforts supported by Irish Aid.

3. Scope of Work

3.1. Organisational Capacity Assessments / Organisational Development

- To conduct in-depth organisational capacity assessment of applicants for Civil Society funding, using standard templates and reports – to include organisational and governance structures necessary to receive, manage, expend and report funding in a manner that is transparent and efficient; sound financial management and integrity etc;
- To support CSOs to strengthen systems and/or develop organisational capacity plans when necessary.

3.2. Monitoring of Civil Society funded projects

- Develop Monitoring Frameworks (monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes which contribute to the achievement of projects' objectives) for discussion and approval by Irish Aid;
- Develop Quarterly Monitoring Plan for CSO projects, as well as recommend field trip plan for Irish Aid management;
- Conduct monitoring visits and meetings with grantees (at least one visit a year to a project);
- Prepare monitoring reports and meeting notes for Irish Aid;
- Review bi-annual and annual project reports to highlight outstanding issues and recommendations for Irish Aid;
- Maintain the database and online Results Framework to record projects' results;
- Conduct Monitoring and Evaluation training for Irish Aid's grantees when required;
- Maintain contact with grantees to update the projects' progress and to review projects' Results Frameworks;
- Accompany Irish Aid delegation to visit project when required;
- Prepare briefings and reports on projects when required;
- Attend meetings with Irish Aid on Monitoring and Evaluation.

3.3. Capacity building and networking

- To support Irish Aid grantees with M&E capacity and systems development as required;
- To provide institutional development support for Civil Society Organisation grantees, including development of strategy, capacity building, training etc.
- Conduct organisational development training for Irish Aid's grantees as required (over the last years, training workshops focussed on advocacy and networking, communication strategy, working with the media, leadership skills for leaders of CSOs, financial management and auditing etc.);

- To facilitate and attend the annual meeting of Irish Aid Civil Society Organisations and support the delivery of training and networking at these events.

3.4. Facilitate the coordination of CSO efforts supported by Irish Aid

- To facilitate the coordination of CSO efforts and strengthen their capacity to contribute to a harmonized and effective response and to capture this in an aggregate monitoring framework of Irish Aid's support to Civil Society Organisations;
- To support and identify opportunities for experience sharing and networking between Civil Society Organisations.

4. Methodology:

- All terms and conditions of the Irish Aid M&E Guidelines and templates on Organisational Capacity Assessment Tools will be referred to. The projects' Results Frameworks will be the core basis for M&E activities.
- The monitoring activities should use participatory approaches and there should be consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including beneficiaries, staff, management, government officials, etc.
- The consulting partner should propose a detailed methodology and timeframe to Irish Aid for consideration and approval.

5. Reporting structure:

The consulting partner will assign an authorized person to liaise with Irish Aid.

The consulting partner will report to Irish Aid's contracting officer. Each deliverable will be delivered in draft for observations before finalization.

6. Qualification

Consulting firms, coalitions, a group of individual consultants and NGOs are eligible to apply. The successful consulting partner will not be eligible to seek grant funds from Irish Aid. A team should demonstrate the following skills:

- Post-graduate degree in economics, social development, organisation management or related fields;
- Extensive knowledge and experience of result-based management, as well as participatory monitoring and evaluation methodologies and approaches;
- Extensive knowledge and experience of organisational development, capacity building, result-based management, as well as strategic planning;
- Extensive experience in providing strategic recommendations for human resource and organisational development;
- Extensive experience in providing strategic recommendations for development of programming/ strategies;
- Extensive experience in advocacy, communication and media, NGO branding;
- Extensive experience in working with development partners, NGOs, and central and local government;
- Demonstrated analytical, communication and report writing skills;
- Training and facilitation experience;
- Fluency in written and spoken Vietnamese and English;
- The consultant(s) should not have been involved in the project design or implementation of projects funded by Irish Aid in any form.

- The permanent consultant(s) should be based in Vietnam (preferably Hanoi) and retain their availability and flexibility to undertake the tasks under this TOR from January to December 2016.

7. Location and Schedule

Irish Aid supports Civil Society Organisations in 26 provinces and cities of Viet Nam and in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

Organisational Capacity Assessments and Organisation Development Support is on a need basis but could be up to 25 per year.

The monitoring team are expected to conduct one visit a year to each project (approximately 25 projects).

Capacity Building, networking support and training is on a need basis with approximately 2-5 events per year.

This assignment is scheduled for January to December 2016. A quarterly work-plan should be developed and approved by Irish Aid before implementation.

8. Budget and payment

Consultancy rates and expenses should not exceed the UN-EU Guidelines for Financing of Local Costs 2015 for Vietnam. Any assumptions in the methodology related to the use of unpaid staff, volunteers should be made explicit.

The total budget for the technical assistance will be agreed based on the detailed M&E plan. 40% of the quarterly budget plan will be advanced to the consulting partner's bank account based on the approved quarterly work-plan. Full payment of each quarter will be made at the end of the respective quarter against reports and receipts for all expenditures and subject to satisfactory completion of consultancy services.

9. Submission of Proposal

Interested partners are invited to submit expression of interest and proposals to chi.nguyen@dfanet.ie by Close Of Business September 30th 2015. The proposal should provide the following information:

- a) Outline of the approach and methodology to undertaking the assignment;
- b) Profile of staff proposed for the assignment;
- c) Detailed quotation for the tasks, showing days and costs.

10. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be assessed by a panel against the following criteria

- Understand the task
- Methodology
- Qualifications of consultants
- Relevant experience of the applicant/consultants
- Costs

Irish Aid may require an interview with the applicant. Should the interview take place, Irish Aid will not cover any costs incurred.