



**Civil Society for
Poverty Reduction**

CSPR PROJECT MID-TERM EVALUATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE COVER SHEET

Project Title:	<i>Accelerating citizen's efforts towards pro-poor national development planning and implementation</i>
Estimated Project Start/End Date:	<i>1st January, 2019- 30th November, 2023</i>
Funding Partner:	IM Swedish Development Partner

1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Since 2000 the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction has ensured that civil society effectively and meaningfully participates in the design, formulation and implementation of the National Development Plans (NDPs) and further monitor the NDPs to ensure government provides a means by which Zambia can effectively strategize on reducing the escalating levels of poverty. Between 2015 and 2017 CSPR led CSOs coordination into the 7th National Development Plan consultative processes from national to subnational level and submitted to government a Report entitled: "Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP:2017-2021): A Civil Society Perspective" and officially launched with MNDP in December, 2016. During the implementation of the 7NDP (2017-2021) the Civil Society Organisations have been monitoring the extent to which government is being accountable in the fulfilment of its targets in the Plan and also implementing programmes to contribute to the 5 Pillars of the 7NDP.

Since 2019, with extended support from IM Swedish Development Partners up to 2023, CSPR has been implementing a project titled, *Accelerating citizen's efforts towards pro-poor national development planning and implementation*. The goal of the project is to influence the inclusive and transparent implementation of the pro-poor programmes in the 7th National Development Plan by 2022.

The project which is being implemented in Mufumbwe and Nchelenge district as well as at National Level, has 3 expected outcomes as follows:

- i. Youth and women are economically empowered to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the 7th National Development Plan by the year 2022.
- ii. Local communities and Citizens hold their duty bearers accountable for the full implementation of the 7th National Development Plan.
- iii. Civil Society and Media are able to effectively participate in the 7th National Development Plan process by government.

The Project has used three (3) main strategies in achieving its objectives and these are: economic empowerment (through self-led savings groups); social accountability (through community-led activities in monitoring the implementation of NDP programmes at District Level) and networking and coalition building (through the Civil Society Cluster Working

Groups' participation in monitoring the 7th National Development Plan and civic space advocacy).

So far, the Savings groups have been established in Mufumbwe and Nchelenge District and are fully functional through their annual savings cycles. The Village Parliament in Nchelenge has also identified priority development areas for government to focus on by the end of the 7NDP and they are monitoring the progress. The Civil Society Cluster Working Groups are also making contributions to the NDP reviews and further monitoring performance of the Plan as a Network. The Civic Space monitoring advocacy was recently initiated, and more milestones have been achieved in terms of evidence gathering and awareness raising.

As the Project reaches its mid-point, CSPR in partnership with IM Swedish will undertake a Mid-Term Evaluation in the Third quarter of 2021 to take stock of the performance and lessons on the project which will inform decision making in the last phase of implementation by the Project Management Team.

2. THE EVALUATION

2.1. Purpose

The Purpose of this Mid Term Evaluation is to provide an overall assessment of progress and achievements made against planned results, as well as assess and document challenges and lessons learnt in the first phase of the project.

This Mid-Term Evaluation is a milestone activity in the project cycle which determines, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the expected project outcomes. It will therefore assess the achievements so far of the project against its stated outcomes, including a re-examination of the validity of the project design. It will also identify significant factors that are facilitating or impeding the delivery of outcomes.

2.2. Objectives of the Mid-Term Evaluation

2.2.1. Performance Assessment

To review the extent to which the implemented activities between 2019 and mid-2021 have achieved the project objectives as set out in the Project Design. This will involve assessing how the implemented activities have impacted on the poverty and vulnerability of the targeted beneficiaries in the 2 Districts where the project is being implemented. This living conditions in the sampled areas will be assessed against the baseline conditions at the commencement of the project.

2.2.2. Lessons Learned

To document key lessons from the implementation of activities over the 2 and half year period and how the knowledge generated on the project has been managed to inform decision making on the remaining phase of implementation.

2.2.3. Recommendations

To generate evidence-based recommendations which will inform the design or rescoping of the project in the last phase of implementation. The recommendations should also embrace innovation and resilience building, given the effects of emergencies such as the Covid19 on development projects in Zambia.

2.3. Scope of Evaluation

The criteria of the Mid-Term-Evaluation will focus on the following areas:

Criteria	Core Question
Relevance	How were the implemented project activities between 2019 and 2021 consistent with and responsive to the needs of CSPR beneficiaries in the 2 implementation districts including at national level?
Efficiency	How were the available resources used in a cost-effective manner measured against the quality of outputs and achieved results during the plan implementation period?
Effectiveness	To what extent were the desired project objectives achieved at outcome and at impact/goal level?
Sustainability	Will the achieved results and benefits continue even after the end of the close out of the project interventions at institutional, community and national level?
Impact	What has been both the positive and negative change in poverty and vulnerability levels which has occurred as a result of the project interventions between 2019 and 2021?

The Mid-Term Evaluation will therefore assess the following:

2.3.1. Project Design

Review the project design and its relevance as well as responsiveness to the emerging development context and poverty situation in Zambia.

Assess the design of the Project Theory of change and the extent to which its intervention logic is best designed to achieve the short-term, medium-term, and long-term results of the project.

Results framework analysis:

- Are the project objectives, outcomes, indicators and targets clear, practical, and feasible within the project time frame?
- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's results, indicators and targets and determine if there are any specific revisions required for the remaining period.
- Assess the extent to which the RFM supports the effective monitoring of mainstreaming issues on Gender, Environment Sustainability/Climate Change and Conflict Sensitivity.

2.3.2. Project Progress towards Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts

- Assess the extent to which the project has delivered its outputs measured against its annual aggregated targets.
- Assess the progress made towards realising the project outcomes and the required interventions for the achievement of the targets by 2023
- Review the quality of the product scope (deliverables) and their usefulness to the institution, stakeholders, and project beneficiaries;
- Identify barriers to achieving the project objectives and targets in the remainder phase of the project;
- Identify significant unexpected effects, whether beneficial or detrimental.
- Effectiveness of the established structures and innovations on the project

- How did the Project contribute to strengthening both the civic and economic participation of beneficiaries in the in the implementation of the 7th National Development Plan?
- Review the systems and capacity in place for registering and responding to risks on the project

2.3.3. Factors Affecting Implementation

a) External factors:

- To what extent does the broader *policy environment* remain conducive to achieving intended results, including policy impact and replication of the lessons being learnt from project implementation? Specifically, in this regard, to what extent do critical assumptions (refer to log frame) on which project success depends still hold?
- Assess how the Covid19 pandemic has affected the rate of implementation and the achievement of the Project objectives. Further review the project adaptability and resilience to the evolving Covid19 situation.
- Are there *any other factors external to the project* that are affecting successful implementation and results achievement?

b) Institutional and implementation arrangements (Internal Factors).

Are the project's institutional and implementation arrangements suitable for the successful achievement of the project's objectives or are there any institutional obstacles that are hindering the implementation or operations of the project, or which could benefit from adjustment? Among other issues, assess:

- Capacity of the implementing agency, including with respect to annual work planning, financial management and reporting, and M&E.
- Adequacy of technical and advisory support staffing.

2.3.4. Sustainability

- Review the feasibility and timeliness of the of the Exit Strategy and Closeout Plan
- Assess as to whether the results achieved on the project can be sustained through the existing institutions, stakeholders, and beneficiaries.

2.3.5. Learning

- Identify good practices and lessons learned.
- Based on project successes, identify areas where knowledge generation and sharing are required;
- Documentation of the main challenges of the project and recommendations on how to overcome the challenges

2.4. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation methodology and design will be developed by the evaluator(s) in close collaboration with the Project Management Team during the inception phase of the evaluation. The evaluation questions mainly call for qualitative methods, preferably an outcome harvesting approach.

The MTE should therefore consist of three main stages, Document Reviews, Field Visits, and Interviews with key stakeholders on the Project.

Document Reviews

The evaluators will undertake both desk review and field studies to successfully conduct this evaluation. Key reference documents for the desk review include:

- i. Project Proposal
- ii. Partner Agreement between CSPR and IM Swedish
- iii. The Results Framework
- iv. 7th National Development Plan Annual Reports and Mid-Term Review Report
- v. 2020 Sustainable Development Goals Voluntary National Report for Zambia
- vi. Annual Project Reports for 2019, 2020 and the Semester 1 2021 Report
- vii. Annual Sector Progress Reports for Education, Health, Social Protection, Agriculture, Infrastructure and Water and Sanitation at National and District Level

Field Visits

The project implementation areas which will be visited for assessment are Nchelenge District in Luapula Province and Mufumbwe District in North-Western Province. In Nchelenge the evaluation will primarily focus on the savings groups and in Nchelenge the focus will be mainly on the social accountability initiatives.

Key Informant Interviews

The main stakeholders who will participate in the evaluation as key informants include:

- i. Ministry of National Development Planning
- ii. Ministry of Finance
- iii. Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
- iv. Members of the Civil Society Cluster Working Groups on the 7NDP
- v. Any other relevant individual of institution affected by the project.

The evaluator(s) are requested to formulate a brief overview of the proposed methodology based on the evaluation questions and objective of the evaluation. On the basis of available documentation, the evaluator(s) they are then requested to further elaborate on methodology, tools, and timeline in an inception report. The evaluator(s)' gender and child sensitivity and awareness is supposed to be methodologically integrated in the process.

2.5. Expected Deliverables and Schedule

Considering the geographic spread of the project area as well as the scope of the assignment, the consultant shall develop and submit a detailed schedule for assignment and distribute the days accordingly among the different tasks. The following deadlines should provide a timeframe for the Evaluation.

- Inception Report – 13th August, 2021
- Draft Report – 28th August, 2021
- Final Report – 2nd September, 2021

3. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Technical Proposal

The organisation would like to invite interested lead evaluators to submit both Technical and Financial proposals for this assignment covering the entire Terms of Reference. The proposals should include the lead evaluator's CV, two references, a sample of the lead evaluator's work, a short outline of the work plan and proposed budget, and the CVs of the envisioned co-evaluators.

Besides showing the presence of the team requirements, the proposal should show:

- Correct understanding of the Terms of Reference,
- Creative approach towards answering the Evaluation Questions, particularly showing which evaluation methods will be used, how data can be collected at community level and how the 'attribution' question will be addressed.

3.2. Requirements and Competencies

Eligible consultant's consortiums are expected to have the following academic qualifications and competences:

- Must have a minimum of a Master's Degree in Social Sciences. A postgraduate qualification in Demography or Statistics will be an added advantage;
- Must have at least 3 years of continuous professional experience in the preparation of reviews and evaluations processes;
- Must have at least three years of professional experience in different approaches for design, monitoring and evaluation of projects;
- Must have at least three years of professional experience in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and review of projects;
- At least one of the Evaluation Team members must be female
- Must demonstrate knowledge and understanding on the policy processes in Zambia
- Must be willing to work with national professionals and project-level staff;
- Must be able to demonstrate high level of computer literacy

3.3. How to Apply

*All electronic applications must be emailed to cspr@csprzambia.org and copied to christabel.ngoma@csprzambia.org and milazi.shimaala@csprzambia.org. They should be referenced with the Subject: "**CSPR ACE-7NDP PROJECT EVALUATION**".*

No physical applications will be admitted.

All queries must be addressed to the email indicated above.

APPLICATIONS MUST REACH CSPR NO LATER THAN 10TH AUGUST 2021 BY 13:00HRS.