Terms of Reference - Conduct training for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on research and evidence generation

1. Background

In alignment with the broader context of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Bhutan and their evolving role, the need for robust research and evidence-based policymaking has been identified as a crucial aspect. The Civil Society Organizations Act of Bhutan, enacted in 2007, laid the foundation for the growth of CSOs, currently numbering over 52 registered entities. Despite this growth, the full potential of CSOs as independent actors in good governance and policy development remains constrained due to various challenges.

The existing landscape, as highlighted in the 2019 CSO Legal Resource Mapping (LRM), underscores a lack of an enabling political environment for CSO engagement in development processes and policymaking. Issues such as unclear procedures, limited inclusive policies, and gaps in commitment and implementation impede the effective participation of CSOs. The 2020 Public Perception Study on CSOs and the Final Evaluation of Support to Civil Society in Bhutan 2022 both confirm increasing recognition of CSOs' contributions but acknowledge limitations in their engagement in key legislative and policy processes.

Recognizing this gap, the 42-month project titled "Towards Empowering Bhutanese Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for Good Governance and Inclusive Development," initiated in January of the current year, aims to strengthen Bhutanese CSOs. One of its primary objectives is to enhance the capacities of CSOs, enabling them to act as informed advocates for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

As part of this comprehensive strategy, the action will focus on research and evidence generation as essential components. To address the need for current information and reliable evidence, the project will conduct two rounds of training in key thematic areas, including research and evidence generation, monitoring and evaluation for two participants from each of the 15 targeted CSOs.

National consultants will play a crucial role in supporting the development of training packages tailored to the specific needs of CSOs. The training will equip participants with competencies in research methodologies, evidence generation. Moreover, the action goes beyond capacity building by supporting research and evidence generation activities identified by CSOs during the training sessions.

The coordination of these research activities will be overseen by the designated entity, SC Bhutan, ensuring synergy and collaboration among CSOs in contributing to evidence-based policy recommendations. In essence, the project recognizes that strengthening CSOs in research and evidence generation is a pivotal step towards enhancing their role as active contributors to good governance and inclusive development in Bhutan.

2. Objective

The objectives of this capacity-building assignment are to:

The objective of this consultancy is to design and deliver a comprehensive training program aimed at enhancing the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on research and evidence generation.

The primary objectives of the training are as follows:

1. Equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to conduct robust research. This includes training participants in various research methodologies, data collection techniques, and data analysis methods, enabling them to design and implement research projects that generate robust evidence to inform their advocacy, programming, and policy engagement efforts.

2. Promote evidence-based practices within CSOs, emphasizing the importance of utilizing research findings and empirical evidence to guide decision-making, program design, and resource allocation.

3. Scope of work

- Design a tailored training program that addresses the identified capacity gaps (research and evidence generation) and aligns with the learning objectives and needs of participating CSOs.
- Development of interactive learning methods, presentations, practical exercise forms, tools, case studies, and group discussions to enhance engagement and facilitate knowledge transfer.
- Deliver interactive training sessions using a combination of in-person workshops for 2 days.
- Administer pre and post-tests for training programs to assess participants' learning outcomes.
- Offer guidance and mentorship to help CSOs develop research protocols (around specific needs and priority areas), collect and analyze data, and utilize evidence for decision-making and program improvement.
- Document the entire training process, including needs assessment findings, training program development, training delivery activities, participant feedback, and outcomes achieved.
- Prepare comprehensive training and assignment completion reports summarizing key findings, lessons learned, success stories, and recommendations for further support or follow-up interventions.
- Disseminate training materials, resources, and case studies to CSOs and other stakeholders.

4. Expected deliverables and duration.

The expected deliverables are as in the table below.

Outputs/ Deliverables	Duration
a. Submit inception report (detailing approach to the assignment and detailed work plan with timeline)	2 days

	3 days
b. A comprehensive training program tailored to the identified needs and priorities of CSOs, including detailed outlines of training modules, session plans, and learning objectives.	7 days
c. Development of training materials and resources, such as slide decks, handouts, case studies, exercises, and reference materials to support the delivery of each training session.	6 days
d. Conducting interactive training sessions for CSOs based on the developed program and materials.	2 days
e. Final Training report (Including pre and post-test results)	2 days
f. Assignment completion report	2 days

*All documents submitted as part of the deliverable should be submitted in an acceptable standard layout and format.

5. Methodology

The capacity-building initiative should utilize a participatory and learner-centred approach. It will need to combine interactive workshops, case studies, group discussions, and practical exercises to ensure active engagement and effective learning.

6. Scope of price and payment

Consultants shall quote all-inclusive daily fees in Ngultrums for the contract period. The term "all-inclusive" implies all costs (daily professional fees, daily subsistence allowances while travelling away from their workstation, communications, consumables, etc.) that could be incurred by the consultants in completing the assignment. The training days are tentatively planned for 3 days in Paro. Payments shall be made as reflected below upon verification of completion of deliverables.

1. 30% upon submission of the Inception report and detailed work plan.
2. 70% upon the submission of the training report and assignment completion report.

7. Qualification, Experience and Skills:

- Master's degree (preferably a doctoral degree) in a relevant field such as social sciences, public policy, international development, evaluation, or a related discipline
- Proven track record in designing and delivering capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of CSOs

- Expertise in research methodologies, evidence generation, and M&E practices, with a deep understanding of the principles, theories, and best practices in these areas.
- Experience in developing training curricula, facilitating interactive workshops and sessions, and providing ongoing support and mentorship to participants.
- Thorough understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and dynamics unique to civil society.
- Possess strong facilitation and communication skills, including the ability to engage diverse audiences, foster participatory learning environments, and communicate complex concepts in a clear and accessible manner.
- Consultant must have a minimum of 10 years working experience.
- Must have a valid Tax Payer No. (TPN).

8. Consultancy duration

The consultant will be contracted for a maximum of 20 - 25 working days from April 8, 2024 – May 28, 2024.

9. Client contact person

Dezang Dema
Program Officer
BTI