



TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Endline Evaluation (External evaluation)– ACED Project

Project Title:	Active Citizens for Elections and Democracy (ACED)
Project Period:	January 2024 – April 2026
Evaluation Period:	January 2024 – April 2026
Partner Organization:	National Peace Council (NPC) of Sri Lanka
Donor:	European Union (EU)
Location:	25 districts across Sri Lanka and the Maldives
Submission Deadline:	May 15, 2026

1. Introduction and background

At the time of the project’s formulation and initiation, democracy in Sri Lanka and Maldives was facing significant and evolving challenges, including political interference, weakened pluralism, corruption, and threats to electoral integrity. In Sri Lanka, the situation was marked by a deep economic crisis, shrinking civic space, and the postponement of elections, raising serious concerns about democratic governance, public trust, and the protection of fundamental rights. Public discontent was rising, alongside growing demands for accountability and the restoration of free and fair electoral processes. In contrast, the Maldives was navigating a fragile but promising democratic transition following decades of authoritarian rule, with the government under Ibrahim Mohamed Solih expressing commitment to democratic reform and electoral transparency, while still facing risks of political reversal, misinformation, corruption, and significant gender disparities in political representation. In both countries, structural barriers continued to limit the meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups. Within this context, civil society organizations emerged as critical actors seeking to safeguard democratic space, strengthen citizen engagement, and promote inclusive, credible electoral processes, thereby informing the design and initiation of the project.

In both Sri Lanka and Maldives, the project focused on mobilizing key stakeholder groups—women, youth, civil society organizations (CSOs), political party members, electoral bodies, and voter communities—to strengthen democratic participation and safeguard electoral processes. While most groups were aware of their right to vote, they lacked sufficient understanding of their role in protecting democratic space, ensuring inclusive participation, and promoting accountability. Major constraints included low representation of women, limited political literacy, misinformation, structural and cultural barriers, and restricted access to voting for marginalized groups. The project responded by building capacity, promoting voter education, advocating for women’s and youth quotas, strengthening CSO and media engagement, and supporting electoral reforms such as transparency measures and advanced voting. Through targeted training, advocacy, and collaboration with institutions and political actors, the intervention aimed to enhance political awareness, encourage informed and inclusive participation, and address systemic barriers to democratic governance in both countries.

The project was implemented through a partnership of five experienced civil society organizations from Sri Lanka and Maldives, the National Peace Council (NPC), People’s Action for Free and Fair Elections



(PAFFREL), Association of War Affected Women (AWAW), Centre for Communication Training (CCT) in Sri Lanka, and Women and Democracy (W&D) in the Maldives. These organizations brought strong technical expertise and management capacity, with long-standing experience in peacebuilding, election monitoring, governance, women's empowerment, and community mobilization. NPC, as the lead applicant and implementor of the project, contributed extensive experience in advocacy and inter-religious and community networks across the country, while PAFFREL added deep expertise in election monitoring, legal reform, and voter education. AWAW brought a strong track record in women's leadership, reconciliation, and governance initiatives, and CCT contributed its grassroots engagement with marginalized Malayaha Tamil communities. In the Maldives, W&D provided specialized expertise in women's political participation, voter education, and policy advocacy. Collectively, these organizations demonstrated credibility, established networks, and the ability to engage effectively with electoral bodies, political actors, and civic groups. Their complementary strengths, prior collaboration, and alignment with ongoing democratic reform efforts enabled a well-coordinated and contextually grounded implementation of the project, responding to public demand for improved governance and democratic accountability.

Working countries: Sri Lanka and the Maldives

Working Districts in Sri Lanka: Ampara, Anuradhapura, Badulla, Batticaloa, Colombo, Galle, Gampaha, Hambantota, Jaffna, Kalutara, Kandy, Kegalle, Kilinochchi, Kurunegala, Mannar, Matale, Matara, Monaragala, Mullaitivu, Nuwara Eliya, Polonnaruwa, Puttalam, Ratnapura, Trincomalee, Vavuniya.

Working Atolls in Maldives: 10 Atolls

2. Project Summary

Overall Goal: Protect human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy in Sri Lanka and in the Maldives

Outcome	Focus Area
Outcome 1	Protected enabling space and improved integrity, transparency and accuracy of electoral processes, utilising in-country learning across Sri Lanka and Maldives (SO1. To utilise in-country learning across Sri Lanka and Maldives to protect enabling space and improve integrity, transparency and accuracy of electoral processes)
Outcome 2	Political pluralism and inclusion supported/ enabled by sharing and utilising in-country learning (SO2. To support political pluralism and inclusion by sharing and utilising in-country learning)

3. Purpose and Objectives

Overall Purpose:

Protect human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy in Sri Lanka and in the Maldives



Specific Objectives

SO1: To utilise in-country learning across Sri Lanka and Maldives to protect enabling space and improve integrity, transparency and accuracy of electoral processes

SO2: To support political pluralism and inclusion by sharing and utilising in-country learning

4. Scope of the Evaluation

Aspect	Details ■ Relevance - Is the project addressing the real needs? ■ Effectiveness - Are the objectives being achieved? ■ Efficiency - Are resources used well? ■ Impact - What changes has the project created? ■ Sustainability - Will the results last after the project ends?
Geographic	All 25 project districts and 10 atolls in the Maldives
Thematic	All components under Outcomes 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Strengthening of the enabling space for elections,● Specific reforms to improve integrity, transparency accuracy of, and inclusion in elections,● Increasing and strengthening the space for plural participation – minorities, women and youth and diverse political ideology.
Target Groups	Women political leaders, CSOs and networks, women activists, Youths, Electoral officials and other monitors, voter communities, members of political parties, local government authorities and partner organizations

5. Methodology

The evaluation will employ a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Component	Description
Desk Review	Project proposal, logical framework, mid-term report, activity reports, event reports, monitoring data, pre/post-test results
Primary Data	Key Informant Interviews (NPC staff, donors, staff of partner organizations, women activists, women political leaders, youth and members of political parties, CSOs networks); Focus Group Discussions (target groups); Site visits and virtual interviews
Participatory Approaches	Trauma-sensitive methods for vulnerable populations; debriefing workshops for stakeholder validation
Data Analysis	Triangulation; disaggregation by gender, ethnicity, age, district;

6. Consultant Qualifications



The evaluation will be conducted by a team led by one consultant, with the flexibility to include additional team members as proposed by the lead consultant.

Lead Consultant (with team)

- Advanced degree in Peace/Conflict Studies, Development Studies, Human Rights, or related field
- Minimum 6 years of experience evaluating democracy and election related projects or human rights programs or coexistence and social cohesion programs.
- Demonstrated experience with DAC criteria and mixed-methods evaluations
- Strong understanding of Sri Lanka and South Asian context
- Excellent analytical and writing skills in English
- Experience working with Civil society organizations, and multi-sectoral programs

Team Member(s) (as proposed by lead consultant)

- In-depth knowledge of Sri Lanka's political, social, and cultural context
- Experience with marginalized communities (Tamil, Muslim, plantation, indigenous, LGBTIQ+)
- Fluency in Sinhala and/or Tamil (written and spoken) and excellent English skills
- Experience with participatory, trauma-sensitive, and Do No Harm approaches

Independence

Consultants must have no prior involvement with the ACED project and no conflict of interest with NPC or its partners. They must sign a confidentiality agreement and adhere to ethical standards.

7. Timeline and Work Plan

The evaluation will be conducted between April 7, 2026 to 15 May 2026 with final report by 15 May, 2026. Total estimated working days: 39 days.

Phase	Activity	Days
Phase 1: Inception	Document review, methodology development, tools design, inception report	7 days
Phase 2: Fieldwork	KIIs, FGDs, site visits, debriefing with NPC	17 days
Phase 3: Analysis & Drafting	Data analysis, triangulation, drafting report	10 days
Phase 4: Validation	Draft report submission, debriefing workshop, feedback incorporation	3 days
Phase 5: Finalization	Submission of final deliverables	2 days
Total		35 days

Final Report Deadline: May 15, 2026



8. Key Deliverables

Deliverable	Description	Deadline
1. Inception Report	Detailed methodology, final data collection tools, work plan, field visit schedule (with district selection rationale)	April 13, 2026
2. Draft Evaluation Report	Complete draft addressing all evaluation questions with preliminary findings and recommendations	May 10, 2026
3. Debriefing Workshop	Presentation of preliminary findings to NPC, partners, and stakeholders for validation (Colombo)	May 11-13, 2026
4. Confidential Organization Reports	Individualized reports for NPC with specific findings/recommendations (if applicable)	May 15, 2026
5. General Evaluation Report	Comprehensive final report covering overall findings, conclusions, and recommendations (English)	May 15, 2026
6. Short Version Report	Concise summary (5-7 pages) of key findings and recommendations for wider dissemination	May 15, 2026
7. Raw Data	All anonymized data collected (interview transcripts, FGD notes, survey responses) in organized digital format	May 15, 2026

9. Report Structure

The final report must include:

1. Cover Page (project details, evaluators, date, project number)
2. List of Abbreviations
3. Executive Summary (2-3 pages with key findings and recommendations)
4. Introduction (background, evaluation purpose and objectives)
5. Methodology (methods, sampling, limitations, ethical considerations)
6. Findings (organized by DAC criteria with evidence and disaggregated data)
7. Conclusions (synthesis of findings, overall assessment)
8. Recommendations (actionable, prioritized, and targeted)
9. Annexes (ToR, list of interviewees/FGD participants, data collection tools, itinerary, documents reviewed)

Length: 30-40 pages (excluding annexes)

10. Management and Coordination



- **Contracting Authority:** P. Benignus, Project Manager, National Peace Council (NPC) of Sri Lanka (ben@peace-srilanka.org)
- **NPC Support:** All project documents, monitoring data, contact information for stakeholders,

11. Budget and Payment Schedule

The budget should include: professional fees (daily rates × 35 days), domestic travel, accommodation and per diem, workshop/meeting expenses, and any other direct costs.

Payment Schedule:

- 30% upon contract signing
- 40% upon submission and acceptance of draft report
- 30% upon submission and acceptance of final deliverables

12. Application Process

Interested consultants should submit:

1. **Technical Proposal** (5-10 pages) including:
 - o Understanding of the ToR and project context
 - o Proposed methodology and approach (with rationale)
 - o Proposed team composition, roles, and responsibilities
 - o Detailed work plan and timeline
 - o Examples of 2-3 previous relevant evaluations
 - o Ethical considerations and Do No Harm approach
2. **Financial Proposal** with detailed budget breakdown
3. **CVs** of all proposed team members (max 3 pages each)
4. **Contact information for three professional references**

Access the application template here:

[Template - Endline external evaluation proposal - Top job - NPC.docx](#)

Note: Additional information, including the full project proposal and logical framework, will be provided to shortlisted candidates upon request. **Submission Deadline:** 02 April 2026

Submit to: ben@peace-srilanka.org

Contact details: 0742795311 (Ben)

Subject Line: "Application: ACED Project Endline Evaluation – [Consultant Name]"

13. Evaluation and Selection Criteria



Criteria	Weight
Relevant experience and qualifications of the team (Election, democracy, human rights, Sri Lanka context)	30%
Quality and appropriateness of proposed methodology	30%
Understanding of the project context and evaluation questions	20%
Cost-effectiveness (value for money)	20%

14. Ethical Considerations

- Adherence to highest ethical standards: informed consent, confidentiality, "do no harm"
- Trauma-sensitive approaches for vulnerable populations (war-affected, survivors of violence, marginalized groups)
- Respect for cultural, religious, and ethnic sensitivities
- Anonymized personal data handled confidentially per data protection standards
- Briefing on NPC's safeguarding policies and Code of Conduct
- No identifying information shared without explicit consent