

TERMS OF REFERENCE

External Evaluation of the EU funded “Raising Civil VOICES – Acting Together for Inclusive Democracy, Peace, and Justice in South Sudan” 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2027.

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1. Background

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), together with its partners the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and the Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice (CIGPJ), is implementing the EU-funded project: “Raising Civil VOICES – Acting Together for Inclusive Democracy, Peace, and Justice in South Sudan.”

The European Union-funded project has been running from 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2027 (36 months) with an overall grant amount of EUR 2.6 million. The project contributes to an enabling environment for inclusive and transparent democratic processes in South Sudan. It focuses particularly on strengthening the participation of women and youth in democratic processes and decision-making, as well as strengthening the capacity of civil society to exercise civic rights and engage in political and electoral processes.

The main areas of intervention include capacity building for women, youth and civil society, civic and voter education, support to grassroots organisations, surveys, policy dialogue, civil society monitoring, international exchanges and public awareness activities. Activities are conducted in Juba, in all states across South Sudan, as well as in Nairobi and Kampala. An external evaluation will be conducted to assess the project's achievements, identify lessons learned and provide recommendations for future programming.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the relevance, performance and results of the project and to support organisational learning and future programming. The evaluation will assess the project against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Moreover, the evaluation will assess the added value of EU support, including the extent to which EU funding and engagement contributed to results, partnerships, policy dialogue and approaches that would have been more difficult to achieve otherwise. It should also consider cross-cutting aspects, in particular gender equality, youth participation, inclusion, conflict sensitivity and local ownership. The evaluation should provide practical and forward-looking recommendations that can inform the design and implementation of future FES and partner programming.

3. Scope

The evaluation will cover the project as a whole, including its two specific objectives:

1. Strengthening the ability of women and youth to meaningfully participate in democratic processes and decision-making; and
2. Strengthening the ability of South Sudanese citizens and civil society to exercise their civic rights and responsibilities in democratic and electoral processes.

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The evaluation should assess the extent to which the intended outputs and outcomes have been achieved, the factors influencing implementation and results, and the project's contribution to broader changes. The evaluator should consider the highly dynamic political and security context in South Sudan and distinguish, where possible, between project contribution and wider contextual developments. Particular attention should be given to the project's approaches to capacity development, policy dialogue, civic participation, engagement with women, youth and civil society organisations and political advisory work.

4. Methodology

The evaluator shall propose an appropriate methodology proportionate to the size and nature of the intervention and adapted to the operational and security context of South Sudan. The evaluation should apply a mixed-methods and theory-based approach, using the project's intervention logic and the OECD-DAC criteria as the main analytical framework. A contribution analysis approach is recommended to assess the project's contribution to observed changes while distinguishing, where possible, the influence of external factors.

Methods may include:

- review of project and monitoring documents;
- semi-structured virtual and in-person interviews with key stakeholders, partners, participants and beneficiaries;
- focus group discussions, where feasible; and
- selected case studies or contribution stories.

The evaluation should be conducted primarily from Juba, with limited travel within South Sudan where necessary and feasible. Remote interviews should be used wherever appropriate. Findings should be triangulated across sources and methods. Gender equality, youth participation, inclusion, conflict sensitivity and local ownership should be considered across the assessment. All data collection shall be conducted in accordance with appropriate ethical and safeguarding standards. This includes obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and data protection, securely handling interview and other primary data, and applying Do No Harm and conflict-sensitive approaches. Particular attention shall be given to safeguarding respondents and avoiding potential risks for individuals discussing politically sensitive issues or expressing views on democratic, civic or electoral processes. FES welcomes alternative methodological approaches, particularly those that place a stronger emphasis on political influencing and advisory work, where appropriate to the objectives of the evaluation.

5. Core Guiding Evaluation Questions

The following questions provide the core framework. The evaluator shall refine and operationalise them in the Evaluation Matrix included in the Inception Report.

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Relevance

- To what extent were the project's objectives and interventions relevant to the needs and priorities of women, youth, civil society and other target groups?
- To what extent did the project respond to the changing political and electoral context?
- To what extent were the approaches appropriate to the capacities and needs of target groups?

Coherence

- To what extent was the project coherent with relevant South Sudanese processes related to democracy, civic participation, peace and governance?
- To what extent were project components mutually reinforcing and complementary to the work of other relevant actors?

Effectiveness

- To what extent did the project achieve its intended outputs and outcomes?
- Which approaches contributed to the observed results, and what factors facilitated or constrained implementation?
- To what extent did the project strengthen the participation and capacities of women and youth, and the ability of civil society and citizens to engage in democratic and electoral processes?
- To what extent did political influencing, advisory work and policy dialogue contribute to the project's objectives?
- To what extent were the project's monitoring evidence and indicators, including relevant logframe/ Gender Equality Results Framework (GERF) data, of sufficient quality, completeness and reliability to assess progress and results?

Efficiency

- To what extent were financial, human and organisational resources used efficiently?
- Were the implementation structures and division of responsibilities between FES and its co-applicants appropriate?
- To what extent were implementation approaches and resource allocation adapted to changes in the operating context?

Impact

- What broader changes can reasonably be associated with the project's interventions?
- To what extent did the project contribute to changes in the participation, capacities and engagement of women, youth and civil society?
- What unintended effects emerged?

Sustainability

- To what extent are project results, capacities, networks and structures likely to continue beyond the project?
- To what extent did the project strengthen local ownership and the capacity of partners and beneficiary organisations?

- Which approaches have potential for continuation or replication?

Cross-cutting and learning

- To what extent were gender equality, youth participation, inclusion and conflict sensitivity integrated into implementation?
- What key lessons should inform future programming?

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EU Added Value

- To what extent did EU support enable results, approaches, partnerships or geographic reach that would have been more difficult to achieve without EU funding and engagement?
- What specific added value did EU support bring in terms of credibility, convening power, visibility, policy engagement or complementarity with other actors and initiatives?

6. Information and Support Provided by FES

FES will provide the evaluator with relevant project documentation, including the **Description of Action, monitoring data, interim and narrative reports, relevant studies and surveys, and other project outputs**. FES will also support the identification and initial contact of relevant interview partners and stakeholders. The evaluator remains responsible for determining the appropriate sample, methodology and sources required for the evaluation and for maintaining its independence.

7. Deliverables

The evaluator will provide:

- **Inception Report**, including the refined methodology, **Evaluation Matrix**, data collection approach, stakeholder/sample selection, work plan and identified methodological limitations;
- **Presentation of Preliminary Findings** to FES and the co-applicants;
- **Draft Evaluation Report** for review by FES and the co-applicants;
- **Final Evaluation Report**, including Executive Summary, methodology and limitations, findings against the OECD-DAC criteria, conclusions, lessons learned and practical recommendations for future programming; and
- **Final Presentation** of key findings and recommendations.

8. Required Qualifications

The evaluation may be conducted by a **single consultant or a team of consultants**.

The consultant/team should demonstrate:

- relevant advanced academic qualification;
- **at least seven years of professional evaluation experience**, including evaluations of projects of a similar size and complexity;
- experience in governance, democracy, peacebuilding, partnership, civil society or related development projects;
- experience applying OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and qualitative and/or quantitative methods;

- experience in East Africa or in the Horn of Africa is required and **experience in South Sudan is a strong asset**;
- knowledge of gender equality and youth participation; and

The lead consultant or consulting entity must be **legally established/registered in South Sudan or in a member state of the East African Community (EAC)**.

For teams, the proposal should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each team member.

9. Proposal Requirements

Interested consultants or teams should submit:

- technical proposal, including the proposed methodology;
- brief work plan and timeline;
- CV(s);
- relevant references/examples of previous evaluation work; and
- **all-inclusive financial proposal, including required tax payments.**

The financial offer must cover **the 30 consulting days and all costs** of the evaluation from inception through validation and finalisation of the report, including professional fees, flights, local travel, accommodation and subsistence, visas, meetings, consultations, focus groups, communication and data collection costs, where applicable. No additional costs should be assumed unless agreed with FES in advance.

10. Duration, Location and Schedule

The evaluation will be conducted **primarily from Juba**, with limited travel within South Sudan where necessary and feasible. Remote interviews should be used wherever appropriate.

The detailed methodology and schedule will be agreed with FES at the beginning of the assignment.

The evaluation should follow the timetable below:

Period	Step
13 – 25 Oct 2026	Call for Proposals
25 – 27 Nov	Evaluation of applications and selection
30 Nov – 5 Dec	Contracting and Kick-off
7 – 18 Dec	Inception Phase & Inception Report
12 Jan – 12 Feb 2027	Data Collection / Fieldwork
15 Feb – 5 Mar	Analysis & Preparation of Draft Evaluation Report
8 – 17 Mar	Review by FES / Co-applicants and Consolidation of Comments
18 – 24 Mar	Finalisation of Evaluation Report
26 – 28 Mar	Final Quality Check / Submission Preparation
29 Mar 2027	Hand-in of Final Evaluation Report to Donor

11. Independence and Confidentiality

The evaluator/team shall conduct the assignment independently and disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Information and documentation provided by FES and its partners shall be treated confidentially and used solely for the purposes of the evaluation.

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The final report should present evidence and findings transparently, including relevant methodological limitations.

12. How to Apply

Applications should be submitted electronically to email addresses Alafi.Isaac@fes.de and Margaret.Mkavita@fes.de indicating the title of the task **“External Evaluation of the EU funded Raising Civil Voices – Acting Together for Inclusive Democracy, Peace, and Justice in South Sudan”**. FES South Sudan welcomes applications until **25 October 2026** by sending above mentioned and supporting documents. All applications will be assessed transparently and only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.