



Terms of Reference for the final evaluation

of the “Ulaanbaatar Process: A Civil Society Approach to Building Peace in Northeast Asia” project, co-funded by the European Union

Deadline for responding to this Tender: **Friday 19 July 2024 (CEST 23:59)**

Background

The project, *Ulaanbaatar Process: A Civil Society Approach to Building Peace in Northeast Asia (NEA)* (the action), was coordinated by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) in close cooperation with the Japanese NGO Peace Boat (GPPAC-NEA Regional Secretariat) and the Mongolian NGO Blue Banner as implementing partners. The implementation period was 36 months, from 1 February 2021 to 31 January 2024.

The project focused on the Ulaanbaatar Process, a **unique** civil society dialogue for peace and stability in Northeast Asia, seeking to strengthen civil society’s role in facilitating effective regional Track 2 dialogue to (i) complement the long-stalled yet newly progressing Track 1 engagements and (ii) develop an institutionalised regional peace and security mechanism for NEA.

The prime objective of this action was to support civil society in NEA to actively contribute to enhancing and maintaining inclusive and sustainable regional peace and stability, operating in an institutionalised regional network mechanism. This action has been considered a long-term investment for a peaceful Korean Peninsula that will ensure meaningful and sustained civil society participation in an otherwise politically frozen peace process. Specific objectives were:

1. To strengthen the position of civil society in NEA as a network and to enhance the capacity and skills in network-building and multi-stakeholder approaches to take collective action as part of a sustainable network for inclusive conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
2. To create and secure space within the Ulaanbaatar Process (UBP) network for active cross-society engagement and meaningful involvement of women and youth leaders during which they actively participate and exert their influence, and ensure recommendations of civil society and dialogue processes on conflict prevention and peacebuilding are representative of the diverse perspectives of women and youth.
3. To engage with and complement official (regional and international, including the EU) processes for peace in the region and develop recommendations on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which are representative of the diverse perspectives of women and youth and are taken up to dialogue processes.

Objectives

The evaluation is the final evaluation of the action, as proposed by the implementing partners (GPPAC and Peace Boat) in their project proposal: An external evaluation will be commissioned upon the conclusion of the three years. This individual/organisation will examine reports and conduct interviews to evaluate the project in its entirety. The external evaluation will assess the implementation of activities and initiatives, focusing on inputs, outputs, and core deliverables as specified in the annual work plan. Additionally, it will examine this action’s role in other projects, its alignment with the overall strategy, and any subsequent changes that have been agreed upon.

GPPAC and Peace Boat, as implementing partners, will commission and coordinate the evaluation, which will take place during the final reporting period (July - August 2024) once all main activities have been completed.

The evaluation will document the project’s achievements, activities, and expected results in relation to the initial proposal. It will also capture the lessons learned and provide recommendations for project partners, stakeholders, and the broader GPPAC network. Additionally, the evaluation will inform the EU about the extent to which project goals were met and offer guidance for future support in the conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts in Northeast Asia and potentially beyond.

Purpose

This call is to secure the services of an evaluating team to undertake the final evaluation of this project. It has the following two purposes:

- 1) The **accountability purpose** of the evaluation is:
 - (a) to assess the relevance of the action for the project stakeholders;
 - (b) to assess the log frame matrix and whether activities contributed to achieving results and project goals, and also assess the project's overall impact.

- 2) The **learning purpose** of the evaluation is:
 - (a) *to harvest the outcomes of the action to use them for learning from the project and follow-up at the regional level;*
 - (b) *to assess which elements of the action were most successful in conflict prevention, and formulate critical factors that are applicable to advance the network approach in other GPPAC regions;*
 - (c) *To collate the lessons learned from the action and assess the cooperation between the implementing partners and the key donor (the European Union).*

The evaluation should identify the potentially most promising directions for continuation or follow-up of the action.

Subject and focus (scope)

The evaluator will review and summarise the available evidence of the quality, accountability, and impact of the project activities. The evaluation will consist of online desk research, data collection and analysis, interviews (with project implementors, if required), and final reporting, including comments, debriefing, and presentation. The final version of the evaluation report must be submitted before September 30 at the latest.

Main evaluation topics

Following the [five OECD/DAC criteria](#), the following evaluation questions could be addressed :

- 1) **Relevance**
 - o To what extent are the project objectives still valid for the region, the partner organisations, and the beneficiaries?
 - o What was the relevance of the proposed theory of change, and did the assumptions identified during the project design hold true?

- 2) **Effectiveness**
 - o To what extent has the project achieved its expected results (both at the outputs and outcomes levels)?
 - o What major factors influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the expected results? (Also consider any that were possibly beyond the control of the project)
 - o To what extent was the project successful in ensuring inclusive multilateral dialogue and active cross-society engagement within the region and beyond?
 - o To what extent was the project successful in the engagement with relevant decision-makers at different levels (national, international)?

- 3) **Efficiency**
 - o Have the budget funds been used efficiently?
 - o Was the project managed as planned? If not, what issues occurred and why?
 - o Were there any possible spillover effects and/or synergies with other initiatives?



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4) Impact

- o How many women, men, young people, and people benefited from the project (immediate impact)?
- o To what extent did the project manage to strengthen civil society in NEA to operate in an institutionalized regional network mechanism and to actively contribute to enhancing ongoing and emerging peace processes in the region?
- o Which positive and/or negative effects/impact in terms of inclusivity can possibly be attributed to the project?
- o Which positive and/or negative effects/impact did the project have on the project stakeholders?

5) Sustainability

- o To what extent will the project's benefits continue after the project's end?
- o What are the lessons learned from this project that can be taken into account for similar projects in the region and possibly for similar projects in other regions?

Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation will begin with an inception phase of reviewing documents provided by GPPAC and partners and a subsequent inception report will include the formulation of the exact evaluation questions and a feasible activity plan to achieve the objectives of the final evaluation. This will be followed by a period of research, including desk research, interviews, and preparing a draft report. The final report will consider feedbacks on the draft report.

During the evaluation, a combination of primary data collection (interviews and, if necessary, focus group discussions with project partners' staff, beneficiaries, donors, and other relevant project stakeholders) and secondary data review (annual reports, survey results, minutes, and summaries of meetings, communication materials produced within the project, etc.) is expected.

The ADA guidelines specify the evaluation guidance. The OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards are to be applied, and compliance needs to be comprehensible in the evaluation. The OECD/DAC document is downloadable [here](#).

The main project documents are in English, and evaluation reports are to be written in English.

The indicative number of working days foreseen is 20. The following indicative division of work days for the respective steps and tasks of the final evaluation are foreseen:

- **0.5 day:** briefing;
- **3 days:** initial desk research (document review);
- **2 days:** preparation of inception report: drafting, incorporation of the comments from the project team, and its finalisation
- **6 days:** data collection and analysis (interviews, focus group discussions, analysis of relevant documents, etc.)
- **4 days:** drafting of evaluation report
- **0.5 day:** debriefing, including reflective discussion of the initial report findings with the project team
- **3 days:** finalisation of the evaluation report, including the incorporation of comments and feedback from the project team and additional research to fill any identified gaps (if needed)
- **1 day:** presentation of the final evaluation report to the donor (the EU), the regional network members and potentially, members of the broader GPPAC network for learning purposes

The evaluator must cover the costs of any necessary travel, accommodation, per diems, and possible translation services, and these should, therefore, be included in the evaluator's offer. **The total maximum available budget for the evaluator is EUR 20,000.**



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Timetable

Tendering and offers: July 2024

Tenderers provide an offer with an outline of the proposed evaluation methodology (max 2 pages), CVs of experts proposed for the assignment (preference for a team of a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 experts), and an indication of the availability of the proposed expert(s) during the planned evaluation period.

Briefing

The initial consultations with the project partners on the evaluation task and inception report (together and individually as needed during several days before and in the process of initial desk research, up to 8 hours in total foreseen)

Initial desk research (documents review)

Annual reports, survey results, minutes and summaries of meetings, communication materials produced within the project, etc.

Inception report

The evaluator will produce an inception report (the first week of August) which will be shared and approved by project partners (GPPAC, Peace Boat, and Blue Banner). It will include the final evaluation questions, final methodology, identified interviewees, additional documents for analysis, the structure of the final evaluation report, and potentially other elements (to be confirmed during the briefing).

Data collection and analysis

The evaluator(s) will analyse relevant documents, conduct interviews and focus group discussions, etc. These will be done online.

Report drafting

The evaluator will draft the report in English, which should contain at most 20 pages without annexes. The draft report should be submitted before August 15. Comments will be provided by the project partners by August 22.

Debriefing

The debriefings will likely take place during online meetings/consultations with the project partners.

Report finalisation: August 2024

The evaluator will finalize the report based on the comments received from project partners. The final version should not require any additional editing and must be ready by September 30.

Evaluation team

Criteria for the evaluator(s):

- Experience in the development cooperation field, preferably in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, preferably with a good working knowledge of the region.
- Fluency in English is a must; knowledge of a regional language would be an advantage (Korean).
- Experience in evaluating EU-funded projects would be an advantage.

Preference for an evaluation team of a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 experts.



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Reports

The evaluator will produce three reports (inception report, draft report, and final report). The final report will be between 15 and 20 pages in length (excluding annexes).

The draft and final evaluation report need to be structured according to the OECD/DAC criteria and the evaluation questions. The quality of the reports will be assessed according to the evaluation quality criteria of the OECD/DAC:

- Were the terms of reference fulfilled, and is this reflected in the report?
- Does the report contain a comprehensive and clear summary?
- Is the report structured according to the OECD/DAC criteria and the evaluation questions?
- Does the report describe and assess the intervention logic and design?
- Are the conclusions and recommendations based on findings clearly stated in the report, and are they derivable from the latter?
- Does the report clearly differentiate between conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned?
- Is it comprehensible how the evaluator has achieved their findings?
- Are the recommendations and lessons learned realistic, and is it clearly expressed to whom the recommendations are addressed?
- Are the methods and processes of the evaluation sufficiently documented in the evaluation report?
- Were the most significant stakeholders involved consulted?
- Were the most important documents considered, and is the latter's content reflected in the report?
- Does the report present the information in a presentable and clearly arranged form?
- Is the report free from spelling mistakes and unclear linguistic formulations?
- Can the report be distributed in the delivered form?

Coordination/Responsibility

During the preparatory and implementation phases, the evaluator will work closely with the project partners (GPPAC, Peace Boat, and Blue Banner).

GPPAC will be in charge of the contracting and this Terms of Reference for the final evaluation and initial cooperation regarding exchanging relevant project documentation and data. Peace Boat and Blue Banner will provide more detailed documentation and data, as well as logistical support. Logistical support can include assistance in arranging interviews/focus group discussions, access to relevant documents, etc. The Project Coordinators and other relevant staff will be available for specific information at the content level.

Annexes

- Project proposal
- Logical Framework and Activities Matrix
- Annual reports

The annexes will be provided to interested parties upon request.



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Application and selection process

Please send your application to m.joseph@gppac.net by **Friday 19 July 2024 (CEST 23:59)**

Write “EU NEA External Evaluation” as the subject of the email.

The application must include:

- A cover letter (max 1 page)
- A CV
- A brief work plan (max 2 pages) outlining how the candidate proposes to conduct the external evaluation over the 20 days, including:
 - approach and methodologies
 - timeline
- 2 examples of previous evaluation reports or similar documents

Interviews with (max 3) shortlisted consultants will take place on the 23rd or 24th July.

Please submit any questions for clarification to m.joseph@gppac.net.