

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Monitoring & Evaluation Consultancy

“Empowering Women Leaders Combating hate speech and disinformation - Strengthening digital literacy and effective digital response”

1. Organization background

Centre for Equality and Justice (CEJ) is a women’s organization based in Colombo, working primarily with war-affected women from the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities and the rights of those affected by political violence and other forms of civil unrest. CEJ also works on issues of democracy, rule of law, and social inclusion and brings a gender perspective into all its work. CEJ engages with policymakers, and government officers and strengthens grassroots-level women’s capacities to claim their rights. CEJ also works closely with youth across Sri Lanka on key areas such as preventing violent extremism and reconciliation

2. Project background

During the past decade, with the advancement of technology and the increased popularity of social media networks, the number of users in the digital space has increased. With such increased accessibility, trends in increased hate speech narratives, disinformation and misinformation campaigns have been identified in South Asia and Sri Lanka particularly. In Sri Lanka, transitioning from the 3-decade-long conflict, the digital space has formed narratives that favour the majority and feed on the existing ethno-religious divide. Past violence has displayed instances where online violence instigated and amplified offline violence on marginalised individuals, including women human rights defenders and activists. These misinformation campaigns have benefitted past governments to come to power by spreading hatred online to create narratives that persecute marginalised groups and ethnic minorities and stultify efforts on building social cohesion.

Social media influencers play an important role in this, and have grown in prominence over the past decade to become an important part of the information and disinformation network. They serve as an effective alternative to mainstream media channels and information sources, and can often influence the behaviour of their large and loyal follower bases. This influencing power on audience behaviour makes influencers prime sources of information as well as disinformation in the modern digital space. Strongly loyal followers are easily persuaded to act and think in ways advertised or conveyed by the influencers, giving influencers considerable power to effect change in wider society, specifically their key follower

demographics. Due to their social status and influencing power, influencers are also prime targets, as well as proponents of digital hate speech. This hate speech could also turn into quantifiable actions within society making it crucial that influencers actively promote a safe and ethical digital space. There is a critical need to provide influencers with the requisite knowledge and tools to engage in the digital space safely and also to spread awareness on socially relevant issues in a manner that is conducive and promotes reconciliation and social cohesion.

To address these issues, CEJ is implementing a project **“Empowering Women Leaders Combating hate speech and disinformation - Strengthening digital literacy and effective digital response”** to capacitate 25 young women influencers on the linkages between gendered online hate speech, disinformation, and its impact on social cohesion, and effective digital responses to combat the same.

3. Scope of work

CEJ seeks the services of a consultant to carry out monitoring and evaluation of the activities that take place throughout the project period. The consultant will initially develop a comprehensive M&E framework based on the project proposal. This will be completed in a consultative process with CEJ. The focus will be on developing relevant M&E tools for each activity beyond pre and post evaluations, based on the implementation of activities, input, output and outcomes. Subsequently, the consultant will work in close coordination with CEJ staff and will report to the Executive Director of CEJ to carry out the monitoring during the course of the project and evaluation towards the end of the project. This consultant will assess the design of the project, implemented activities and its scope and measure them against the intended project and donor objectives. The consultant will note the practical and contextual challenges faced during implementation and their impact on the overall project activities.

The following activities will be carried out in the span of 9 months from November 2022 to August 2023.

Phase 1 (November 2022):

- Attend meetings with CEJ and the donor as required.
- Review project-related documents
- Develop relevant monitoring tools for the project activities
- Develop an M&E design and workplan
- Brief project staff on the relevant tools

Phase 2 (November 2022 - May 2023)

- Monitor and evaluate ongoing activities with the project staff
- Review and give feedback on the data gathered using the M&E tools.
- Monitor and evaluate the implemented activities in terms of their sustainability, expenditure and overall progress.

Phase 3 (April 2023)

- Conduct an evaluation using appropriate methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of the project in accordance with the guidelines put forward by CEJ/donor.
- Develop a comprehensive and informed M&E report of the project based on the requirements of CEJ and the donor.

4. Deliverables

- 4.1 Attend a briefing meeting with CEJ by TBD.
- 4.2 Submit an overall project evaluation plan to CEJ by TBD.
- 4.3 Submit specific M&E tools for each activity to CEJ by TBD.
- 4.4 Complete/conduct 5 discussions with the stakeholders involved in the project, and evaluate the effectiveness of the project in accordance with the guidelines put forward by the donor.
- 4.5 Monitor and evaluate the implementation of activities in terms of their sustainability, expenditure and overall progress.
- 4.6 Develop and submit a comprehensive and informed report of the project based on the requirements of CEJ and the donor.

5. Qualifications and experience

- Education: University Degree preferably in Social Sciences.
- Experience: At least 5 years of experience in the M&E task in development projects implemented by national/international NGOs/UN bodies/ Government.
- Experience in liaising with youth and stakeholders at a professional level.
- Language Requirements: Fluency in written and spoken English and Sinhala/ Tamil.

6. Consultancy fee

The Consultant is required to quote an all-inclusive fee for the assignment. The amount will be agreed upon between CEJ and the Consultant, as per the Financial Guidelines of CEJ.

7. Timeline/Duration

The proposed time period of the consultancy will be between 1st November 2022 to 1st May 2023.

When applying, kindly clearly state the title and project name in the subject line of the email. Only short-listed candidates will be notified. Interested candidates may send a resume to suhanya.cej@gmail.com with names and contact details of two referees by 4th November 2022.