

Terms of Reference

For the independent final evaluation of the EU-funded project “Building Inclusive Democracy: Civil Society, Parliamentarians, Media, and Youth Strengthen Good Governance in Bhutan”

Position:	Lead External Evaluator (working in tandem with a Bhutan-based Co-Evaluator)
Type of contract:	Short-term consultancy
Project name:	Building Inclusive Democracy: Civil Society, Parliamentarians, Media, and Youth Strengthen Good Governance in Bhutan
Location:	Bhutan and remote
Type of work:	Remote and in-situ (travel to Bhutan for approx. 1 week)
Assignment period:	November 2026 – January 2027 (evaluation activities starting in November, submission of final report in January)
Languages required:	English, Dzongkha an advantage
Date of publication:	24 September 2026
Deadline for application:	12 October 2026

DW Akademie and its partner **Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD)** are calling for proposals from consulting firms/individuals for the final evaluation of the EU-funded action “Building Inclusive Democracy: Civil Society, Parliamentarians, Media, and Youth Strengthen Good Governance in Bhutan”.

The evaluation will be conducted by a Lead Evaluator contracted through this call and a Bhutan-based Co-Evaluator identified by the project consortium. The Co-Evaluator will contribute local contextual knowledge, support stakeholder coordination and data collection in Bhutan, facilitate communication where appropriate, and provide feedback on the analysis and findings. Overall responsibility for the evaluation design, methodological rigor, analysis, conclusions, recommendations, and final report remains with the Lead Evaluator.

I Background

DW Akademie is Deutsche Welle's center for international media development, journalism training and knowledge transfer. Our projects strengthen the human right to freedom of expression and unhindered access to information. DW Akademie empowers people worldwide to make independent decisions based on reliable facts and constructive dialogue. DW Akademie is a strategic partner of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). We also receive funding from the Federal Foreign Office and the European Union and are active in around 70 countries. <https://akademie.dw.com/en>

Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD) is one of the first registered Civil Society Organizations in Bhutan which works with a cross-section of society on issues that concern youth, environment, society, governance and education, using media as a *modus operandi*.

Together, the consortium implements the project “Building Inclusive Democracy: Civil Society, Parliamentarians, Media, and Youth Strengthen Good Governance in Bhutan” to strengthen the capacities of CSOs, policy makers, the media and youth to actively contribute to democratic processes and dialogue in the country. The three-year program is financed by the European Union under its External Actions and runs from February 2024 to January 2027.

As the project approaches completion, an independent final evaluation will be conducted between November 2026 and January 2027. The evaluation will assess project achievements, lessons learned, and the sustainability of project results, following selected OECD-DAC evaluation criteria. The lead evaluator will be supported by a local co-evaluator with strong contextual knowledge and access to relevant stakeholders in Bhutan.

II Objective and focus of the evaluation

While the evaluation also serves accountability requirements towards the donor, its primary purpose is organizational learning and the generation of evidence to inform the design of future projects, strategic decision-making, and further development of technical approaches implemented by DW Akademie and BCMD.

The evaluation will focus on the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance:** Is the intervention doing the right things? To what extent does the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of its target groups?
- **Coherence:** How well does the intervention fit? How consistent is the intervention with other actors' interventions (harmonization, coordination, complementarity)?
- **Effectiveness:** To what extent has the project achieved its objective and planned outputs according to the logical framework? Which factors enabled or hindered achievement of results? How effective were project adaptations in response to changing circumstances?

- **Efficiency:** Have project results been delivered within the budget and time frame? How efficient was the management support? How efficient was the use of instruments?
- **Impact:** What evidence can be found that the project contributed to higher-level development effects (e.g. structural changes, changes of attitudes or capacities in the beneficiaries, ...)? Have there been any unintended positive or negative effects?
- **Sustainability:** To what extent are the results likely to be sustained after the end of project funding?

Some of the criteria shall be given greater consideration than in others. The priorities will be discussed in a joint kick-off meeting.

The evaluation should leverage the complementary strengths of both evaluators: The Lead Evaluator ensures methodological rigor, while the Co-Evaluator provides local context, stakeholder access, and interpretation of findings.

III Scope of work

The Lead Evaluator, in close collaboration with a Bhutan-based Co-Evaluator, is expected to apply a mixed-methods approach combining document review, stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions where appropriate, and analysis of monitoring data. The evaluator will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Participation in a virtual kick-off meeting.
2. Review all relevant project documents (proposal, logframe, reports, indicators) and develop an evaluation framework aligned with the project objectives.
3. Prepare a work plan outlining the methodology, data collection tools, and timeline.
4. Design and implement appropriate data collection methods (e.g. interviews, surveys, etc.), ensuring ethical standards such as informed consent and confidentiality.
5. Gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data.
6. Assess project performance against the six OECD DAC evaluation criteria.
7. Collect data for 2-3 Impact Stories.
8. Prepare the final evaluation report, including findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations for potential follow-on projects.
9. Present the key findings and conclusions to the project team (online session).

The evaluation should consider perspectives from:

- CSO representatives
- Journalists and media actors

- Parliamentarians and policymakers
- Youth participants
- DW Akademie and BCMD staff
- Relevant external stakeholders

The evaluator will have access to all internal monitoring information and relevant project documents. Information obtained by the Contractual Partner in the course of this Contract, including but not limited to contracts, documents, writings, notes, digital records, and oral communications concerning the affairs of DW and third parties, **may not be processed using general artificial intelligence**. This prohibition extends to the use of such information in aggregated or anonymized form if it can be traced back to the original data of DW or the respective third party.

IV Qualifications and Experience

- Proven experience in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of development cooperation projects; experience in evaluating EU-funded projects is an asset.
- Demonstrated expertise in data collection and analysis (qualitative and quantitative).
- Excellent analytical and drafting skills.
- Fluency in English.
- Familiarity with the Bhutanese media and CSO landscape is an advantage.
- Knowledge of and experience in media development is desirable.
- Experience in inclusive governance is an asset.
- Experience conducting evaluations in South Asia or similar contexts is an advantage.
- Strong organizational, communication, and facilitation skills.
- Intercultural competence and experience working in diverse contexts.
- Experience working with national researchers, consultants, or co-evaluators in development cooperation settings is desirable.

V Expected Services

Working arrangements

- Max. 20 working days including travel.
- The consultant will travel to Bhutan for approx. 1 week for data collection (supported by a local Co-Evaluator) and will otherwise work remotely in regular collaboration with the Co-Evaluator, BCMD and DW Akademie project staff.

- All communication with DW Akademie will be in English. The Co-Evaluator will provide support with Dzongkha language communication where required.
- The lead evaluator will serve as the main contact person for DW Akademie.

Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for delivering the following:

- Brief inception report outlining the evaluation framework, methodology, data collection tools and time plan.
- Draft evaluation report with (preliminary) evidence-based findings and conclusions for the six evaluation criteria as well as clear, actionable recommendations for potential follow-on projects.
- Presentation and discussion of the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation in an online debriefing session with the project team.
- Final evaluation report not exceeding 30 pages, incorporating feedback from the project team and including an executive summary and all relevant annexes.

VI How to apply

Interested applicants should submit a proposal including the following:

- Proposal and a draft work plan, providing insight into the applicant's methodology and evaluation approach.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Description of relevant experience in project evaluation, including a brief statement of motivation.
- Detailed budget (including daily rate in EUR and travel cost)

Offers in English should be submitted in one pdf by 12 October 2026, via e-mail to dw-akademie.bhutan@dw.com.

VII Selection Criteria

Proposals will be assessed based on:

- Relevant evaluation experience
- Technical approach and methodology
- Knowledge of governance, civil society or media development
- Cost-effectiveness

VIII Payment

In return for the fulfilment by the provider of its obligations under the contract, Deutsche Welle/ DW Akademie undertakes to pay the provider the amount in EUR or USD as follows:

- 100% post-payment.
- Availability of a bank account that accepts money transfer in EUR or USD is mandatory.
- Deutsche Welle will pay after completion of all deliverables upon presentation of a final detailed invoice.