Terms of Reference
External Evaluation of Irish Aid Funded Project “Promoting Inclusiveness and Representation in local governance”

1. Introduction

Oxfam’s **overall development goal** is “Poor and ethnic minority men and women have better living conditions and greater voice in matters concerning their own development”.

Oxfam’s vision is of a Vietnam where all forms of poverty and injustice are tackled by enabling women, marginalized and discriminated groups to voice their own agenda and exercise their rights. Where distribution of the benefits and costs, opportunities and risks, of growth are equitably shared and where vulnerable groups are no longer excluded.

The governance program of Oxfam focuses on processes and mechanisms for social accountability of government institutions to the poor and ethnic minority communities to pursue an **overall objective** that “Government plans and policies are consistently prepared and implemented in participatory manner and accountable to poor/ethnic minority men and women”.

Within the scope of 5 years from 2012 - 2016, OGB set an **specific objective** that “Demonstrated commitment from Government, Civil Society (CS) and poor/ethnic minority men and women to engage constructively on key development issues, plans, policies and programs and to use evidence.”

The governance project funded by Irish Aid is a part of Oxfam’s governance programme.

**Project introduction:** The Oxfam’s project: “Promote inclusiveness and representation in local governance” (2012-2015) was funded by Irish Aid. The project has major interventions in Lao Cai province, meanwhile it also has other research, and advocacy interventions at national level and triggering the M-Score initiative at Quang Tri province.

---

1 M-score: is initiated by Oxfam and Quang Tri People’s Council to collect people’s feedbacks through a mobile phone scorecard to measure quality of public administration services and performance of public officials in serving citizens.
**Project’s objective:** The project is to promote the inclusion and representation of poor people especially ethnic minorities and women in the policymaking, implementation, and monitoring at the commune, district, and province levels in Lao Cai Province

**Project’s expected outcomes:** For 3 years, the project aims to achieve the following expected outcomes:

- Poor citizens, especially ethnic minorities and women are more confident and able to engage actively in policy making, implementation, and monitoring in their communities.
- Mass organizations and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in localities effectively represent ethnic minority and women’s needs and are more active in policy monitoring.
- The quality of representation for poor people, especially minorities and women, on people’s councils at the provincial and commune levels in Lao Cai is improved through strengthening individual and organizational capacity, promoting the leadership of women, and improving the overall people’s council legal framework.
- The quality of SEDPs is improved.
- The process of creating the SEDPs at all levels is more participatory, evidence-based, results-oriented and resource-linked. Monitoring and evaluation and thematic issues (pro-poor, gender sensitive, DDR/CCA) are integrated in planning processes.
- Research/study on different local governance reforms to be conducted to assess the risks and opportunities of decentralization to the local levels of government, which will be used as input for policy advocacy to promote the inclusion and representation of poor people especially ethnic minority and women in local governance.

**Project’s strategies and approaches:**
In three years, Oxfam’s project has been promoting the inclusion and representation of poor people especially ethnic minorities and women in four areas of change:

- Empowerment of marginalized groups
- Strengthening Representative Bodies
- Strengthening Civil Society
- SEDP Planning

The intervention strategy in each area of change focuses on developing the capacity of a core group of individuals or organizations in the first year and works with these groups of individuals to expand the scope of the interventions to other beneficiaries in subsequent years. In terms of the timing and location of the interventions, with component related to planning reform, we selected a pilot set of communes first before expanding to other communes as well as to the district and provincial levels in subsequent years. With elected body reform, given that the district level people’s councils have been
abolished in Laocai, we supported both the commune and provincial levels and facilitated cooperation between these two levels. Civil society development and empowerment interventions occurs at the grassroots levels, while we also support mass organizations such as the Fatherland Front at the provincial and district levels so that they can strengthen their monitoring roles. In parallel to the interventions, the project features an innovative research and advocacy program, which provides evidence to connect our work on the ground with national-level dialogues. This research strategy is also a vital component of advocacy work at the local and national levels and VNGOs are considered partners in these the research and advocacy component.

In accordance to the Agreement with Irish Aid, there is a need to conduct an external evaluation to assess the result its funding

2. **Objectives of the Evaluation**

The final evaluation aims to assess systematically and objectively the project’s results to date.

The evaluation will be to assess the relevance of the project outputs and outcomes to the goal and objectives of the project as well as to the goal and objectives of Oxfam’s governance programme. The evaluation is also used to determine the sustainability of the project; the value of the results to the intended beneficiaries, in particular the most vulnerable groups (e.g. the chronically poor, vulnerable groups, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities etc.).

The knowledge generated from the final evaluations is used to inform Oxfam’s decision making and policy processes for the purposes of increasing the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of its development assistance. The audience is primarily Oxfam’s management and the partners, staff and stakeholders who are directly concerned with the activities under review. Other audiences include the general public, other development organisations, and researchers concerned with development issues.

3. **Scope**

The evaluation should preferably use participatory approaches and there should be consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including beneficiaries, staff, management, government officials, etc.

The evaluation will assess the achievement of the planned outcomes and objectives, and consolidate lessons learnt and make recommendations to relevant stakeholders.

In particular, the evaluation should address the following questions:

- **Relevance**: The evaluation should consider the extent to which the project addresses the needs and priorities of the target.

- **Effectiveness**: The evaluation should consider if the project design was the most effective means of achieving the objectives and the extent to which the objectives have been achieved taking into account the relative importance of each objective. The
evaluation should examine how the inputs (financial, technical and human) contributed or hindered the achievement of the objectives.

- **Efficiency:** The evaluation should assess whether the cost of the project can be justified by its results, taking alternatives into account.

- **Sustainability:** The evaluation should determine if the project outcomes and impacts will be sustained without continuing external financial or technical support.

- **Replicability:** The evaluation should also determine whether a successful project or successful aspects of the project could be replicated.

4. **Expected output**

   A written evaluation report (in English) should be submitted to Oxfam.

   Report should be no more than 15 pages in length (evaluation timetable, list of interviewees, questionnaire etc. should be presented as annexes). Transcripts of key interviews should be submitted to Oxfam separate to the final report.

   A debriefing session will be required at Oxfam to present to the senior management team the key findings of the evaluation reports and to discuss the follow up action necessary with the partners that the evaluators recommend.

5. **Time Frame and Coordination**

   - Evaluation will be carried out from mid July, 2015
   - The first draft of the IA evaluation report is expected to be available by the middle of Aug 2015.
   - The final report is expected to be submitted by the end of August 2015. Detailed schedule is proposed by the consultant and agreed by OGB.

Oxfam’ staffs will have the primary responsibility for coordination with the evaluators.

The evaluators will respect the confidential nature of the exercise and will discuss it only with Oxfam and with the individual programme/projects management or with others only as authorised by Oxfam.

6. **Qualification**

   The consultant will receive technical and administrative support from Oxfam staff as well as partners’ staff in Lao Cai and other local NGOs in Hanoi. The consultant is responsible for the whole process in order to achieve the evaluation objectives and to ensure report quality, therefore, she/he should:

   - Have sound experience in conducting research and evaluation
   - Have background in social science (economics, sociology, development studies)
   - Be familiar with governance and planning system in Vietnam
   - Have good understanding on issues such as Civil Society, Grassroots Democracy in Viet Nam
The consultant should not have been involved in the project in any form.

7. **Budget and payment**
   - Consultancy rates and expenses Consultancy fee (before PIT) is negotiable based on consultant qualification and experience with subject to OGB/donor cost norms.
   - OGB will cover all actual expenditures for travel and accommodation during field trip
   - OGB’s per diem rate (250,000 VND/day including tax) will be applied for consultants when travelling outside Hanoi to cover meals in the fields
   - The total budget for the evaluation will be agreed upon based on the detailed evaluation plan. The first 40% of the contract will be made at commencement and the remaining 60% of the contract will be made upon delivery of final report and subject to satisfactory by Oxfam.

8. **Reference documents**
   - Programme document
   - Project documents
   - Irish Aid proposal
   - Related reports

9. **Submission of Proposal**
The proposal should provide the following information:
   a) Outline of the evaluation approach and methodology to undertaking the assignment
   b) Profile of staff proposed for the assignment
   c) Detailed quotation for the evaluation, showing days and costs by grade

**Deadline of submission: 5pm - 22 June 2015**

Proposals should be submitted via email to:

**Dinh Thi Hong Phuong**

Program Officer

Oxfam in Vietnam – 22 Le Dai Hanh – Hai Ba Trung – Ha Noi

Phone: +84 3945 4448 (ext: 606)

Email: dthphuong@oxfam.org.uk