Terms of Reference

Subject: Pre-Final Assessment and Final Evaluation
Project: The Charter Project Africa - PANAF/2020/420590

The European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) is recruiting a consultant, a team of consultants, or a legal entity (hereafter: the "Evaluator") to conduct the final evaluation of the 'Charter Project Africa' (hereafter: the 'Project'). The Project was funded by the European Union (EU) through the African Governance Architecture Support Project (AGA-SP). The evaluation is set to happen in two distinct phases:

1. The *Pre-Final Assessment*, taking place in the 2 months following the completion of the Evaluator's selection process;

2. The *Final Evaluation*, to be conducted after the Project's end date, i.e. 30 June 2024.

1. Background

The Project aims to empower civil society across Africa in representing citizens at continental level, working with the African Governance Architecture (AGA), and promoting democratic governance in the African Union (AU) member states.

It follows two parallel pathways towards achieving this goal:

- Strengthening civic initiatives, particularly those led by youth, in their ability to leverage knowledge, data and technology to analyse, monitor and promote the implementation of the African Charter of Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG);

- Increasing collaboration with African Union policy makers, national decision-makers and civil society organisations to jointly address challenges to democratic governance.

The main target groups of the Project are:

- *Civil society organisations (CSOs)*, including pan-African networks & initiatives, in particular those led by youth and women, collective action groups, watchdog organisations, and think tanks;
- *Digital activists in civic technology* (software engineers, data scientists, digital strategists & influencers, digital rights advocates);
- *Media actors*, in both traditional and new media, for example multimedia storytelling initiatives & fact-checkers;

- *National decision makers*, such as government officials & advisors, politicians (& parliamentarians), community leaders, local authorities;
- *African Union officials*, in particular those situated in the African Governance Architecture (AGA), i.e. in AU Organs, such as the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), and in the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

The Project activities are organised along five main components:

1. ***Civic technology and digital engagement:*** a digital platform curates ACDEG-relevant content, along with relevant open source software code and data, and a directory of digital democracy experts, serving as a repository for campaign activities carried out at national, regional and continental levels. Online processes engage citizens and activists in dialogue and learning. Civic tech initiatives and activists are supported.

2. ***Democratic Governance Initiatives (DGIs):*** initiatives funded by the Project and launched at national, regional, and continental level represent, as a whole, a central element of the Project, enabling and enriching and connecting to all other activities. The unifying and linking element between all DGIs will be the ACDEG. DGIs are implemented by civic organisations.

3. ***Regional engagement:*** coordinated multi-stakeholder policy dialogue & advocacy processes - online and offline - unfolding primarily at regional level are launched. These focus on ACDEG implementation within RECs, yet feature an underlying analysis and consensus-building on the viability of cooperation between pan-African civic initiatives with the AGA.

4. ***AGA support & matchmaking:*** knowledge brokerage is provided to strengthen mutual understanding and thus engagement between AGA policy makers and civic initiatives - coordinated through a 'Civil Society Secretariat'. Integration of activities and synergies between partners and AU policy processes is facilitated.

5. ***Policy analysis & strategy:*** context analysis and policy research are carried out, particularly on the AU governance infrastructure and drivers for cooperation at continental, regional and national level. This sheds light on the political economy of ACDEG implementation. Methodological tools support civil society representatives in adapting their engagement with the AGA.

2. Context

The Evaluator under this contract is expected to:

1. Carry out the Pre-Final Assessment in the 2-month period following the completion of the selection process. The assessment should be finalised by the end of February 2023. This should look at the activities implemented since the beginning of the Project (1 January 2021) until the period in which the assessment starts.

2. Conduct the Final Evaluation at the end of the Project implementation, which started in January 2021 and is set to end on 30 June 2024. The full evaluation process is to be completed by October 2024. The Evaluator might travel to specific target countries throughout the assignment, if deemed necessary and if the evaluation could not be completed otherwise.

3. Purpose

Both afore-mentioned assignments are oriented towards both accountability and learning.

The *Pre-Final Assessment* shall consist in a formative analysis of the Project which could inform the rest of the implementation, its engagement with stakeholders, potential follow-up actions and ultimately its sustainability strategy.

The *Final Evaluation* shall, firstly, target the Project's implementation dynamics and the level of achievement of its objectives. It shall help consortium members' staff to understand the results of their work and help both EU (funder) and GIZ (co-funder) staff to understand the results of the Project it funded. Secondly, it shall gather lessons learnt, challenges faced, and best practices and use such insight to generate recommendations that can help the consortium members as well as the EU design and undertake similar initiatives in the future.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the *Pre-Final assessment* are:

1. To assess the progress and effectiveness of Project activities carried out since its inception and identify potential areas for improvement;
2. To suggest adjustments to Project strategies, activities, or engagement approaches to enhance effectiveness and achieve better outcomes;
3. To examine the Project's current sustainability potential and recommend ways to ensure the project's long-term viability and impact beyond its completion.

The objectives of the *Final Evaluation* are:

1. To assess the extent of effectiveness of the Project and the contribution to outcome level results in relation to its two specific objectives (and the three related outcomes matrices);
2. To generate learning and insight on a number of aspects further detailed below;
3. To provide specific recommendations based on the findings and insights gathered for the implementation of similar future initiatives.

5. Preliminary questions

Below is a list of <u>preliminary</u> evaluation questions ordered firstly by assignment (e.g. related to the Pre-Final Assessment and the Final Evaluation) and secondly by evaluation criteria. This list of questions may be adjusted, reduced and/or further refined by the Evaluator during the inception phase of both the assessment and evaluation process.

However, for what concerns the Final Evaluation, all criteria should be tackled by the evaluation. Further, where applicable, each question should be broken down by consortium member, to enable the generation of member-specific learning summaries (see 8. Deliverables and timeline).

Pre-Final Assessment

- Where has been the Project most successful or promising so far?
    - Has the engagement strategy with African Union organs proven successful?
    - How has the Project so far engaged with the target groups and ensured their participation and ownership?
    - Which stakeholders engaging with the Project are most likely to ensure the achievement of the outcomes?
    - Is the thematic focus of the Project still relevant to the context and geographic areas it targets?
    - Has the tech component the potential to effectively leverage knowledge, data and technology to promote democratic governance?
    - Could DGIs and their civic tech tools contribute to further enhancing the capacity of civic society organisations to advocate for democratic governance and engage with AGA organs?
- What recommendations arise for the remaining Project implementation period?
- What evidence is gathered from the Project implementation which could be used to inform the design of follow-up actions?
    - What are concrete activities that would support the realisation of the intended outcome in the future?
    - What approach should be taken to efficiently and effectively operate at national, regional and continental level?

- How do the organisational mandates and thematic priorities within the consortium influence the Project's ability to work comprehensively and engage a wide range of stakeholders across different political systems at national, regional, and continental levels?
- What strategies or mechanisms are or should be in place to ensure the sustainability of the Project beyond its completion?

Final Evaluation

Relevance

Overarching question(s)

- Has the Project been sensitive and relevant to the political economy and policy contexts in which it unfolded?
- Did the Project's problem statement hold true?
- How were the needs and priorities of target beneficiaries taken into account throughout the Project life cycle?

Specific question(s)

- To what extent did the overall aim of the Project and its constituent parts fit with the reality of the contexts over the course of the Project in the 11 target countries and in the continent as a whole?
- How has the Project reacted to turbulent political developments (multiple elections, violent protests, limitation of fundamental freedoms, internal conflicts, etc.)?
- Has the Project been able to address beneficiaries' needs and challenges arising from such political developments and not initially foreseen? Are there any identifiable strategies that allowed the Project to continue to achieve its objectives while adjusting to the changing political contexts? Were strategies and inputs identified appropriate to achieve expected results?
- Did the Project align with the priorities and strategies of relevant stakeholders, such as AU and AGA organs, national decision makers and civil society organisations?

Effectiveness

Overarching question(s)

- To what extent has the Project achieved its objectives?
- To what extent were implementation strategies effective in delivering expected results?

Specific question(s)

- Were there any unexpected barriers or challenges that affected the effectiveness of the Project? If so, how were they addressed?
- Which objectives did the Project not achieve and why? What would have been possible strategies that could have mitigated this?
- How well did the Project engage with relevant stakeholders and partners to maximise its effectiveness?
- Did the Project effectively monitor and evaluate its progress and make adjustments as needed?
- What were the main factors or conditions that contributed to the Project's success in achieving its objectives?
- Was the Project recognised/perceived as a pan-African initiative? Was it well known and positively received by the different stakeholders?
- Was the communication strategy adopted adequate for the number of target areas and for its continental aspirations?
- How did the Project contribute to sustainable and long-lasting impacts beyond its completion?
- What are lessons learned and recommendations for the future?

Efficiency

Overarching question(s)

- Has the Project used its resources well?
- How have organisational mandates and thematic priorities within the consortium affected the ability to work comprehensively, i.e. with a wide range of stakeholders in the different political systems at national, regional and continental level?

Specific question(s)

- How has the organisational set-up (each partner responsible to implement activities in a specific regional area, with some of them with a more continental mandate within the project) impacted Project implementation and impact?
- Did Project activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions?
- How have consortium partners worked together in support of achieving the Project objectives? What were the challenges faced and what lessons learned can we take forward to enhance future similar initiatives?
- How well did the Project leverage partnerships and external resources to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness?

Coherence

Overarching question(s)

- Has the Project supported and/or undermined other initiatives (including state initiatives) in the same policy area?
- How coherent was the overall approach and implementation of the Project in achieving its stated objectives and outcomes?
- How well did the different components of the Project (civic technology, democratic governance initiatives, regional engagement, AGA support & matchmaking, policy analysis & strategy) work together in a coordinated and coherent manner?

Specific question(s)

- To what extent have activities implemented by consortium partners built/drawn on complementary activities led by other partners to achieve synergies in line with the Project objectives?
- How well did the Project align and integrate with other relevant initiatives and programs within the same policy context?
- Were there any mechanisms or strategies in place to foster collaboration, coordination, and coherence among consortium partners and other stakeholders engaging with the Project or involved in related initiatives?
- How well did the different components and activities of the Project align with each other to create a cohesive and integrated approach?
- Was civic technology coherently integrated across the different components of the Project in promoting democratic governance and empowering civil society organisations?
- Were there synergies and coordination between the DGIs and other project components, such as civic technology and regional engagement, to create a comprehensive approach to democratic governance?

Sustainability

Overarching question(s)

- What is the likelihood of the Project's results being sustained in the future? Which elements of the Project are more or less sustainable? How has the Project been able to address this?

Specific question(s)

- What are specific actions to take by both stakeholders and international donors (including the EU) to sustain and build on the Project's achievements? In which areas

would repeat or follow-up activities be helpful in ensuring sustainability? Which partners should be considered, in light of the different dynamics of AGA organs?

- What are the recommendations for similar support actions in future? Where could consortium members have built in more sustainability to their activities over the course of the Project?
- To what extent has any overlap/engagement with other (similar) initiatives affected sustainability?

EU added value

Overarching question(s)

- What has been the added value of the intervention being funded specifically by the EU compared to other donors?

Specific question(s)

- To what extent the EU and GIZ support contributed to the success of the Project?
- How has the collaboration with other initiatives within the AGA-SP programme of the EU been beneficial to the Project?

6. Methods

The Project's results chain was defined in a logical framework during the design phase.

The logical framework includes three outcomes, which were broken down by the project team using **Outcome Mapping.** The project team therefore has been tracking instances of progress for each of the three outcomes and the associated progress markers. The Evaluator shall consider the descriptions of progress as one of the key sources of evidence.

Internally, the project team has already used the descriptions of progress to identify specific outcomes following the **Outcome Harvesting** method. In other words, concrete behavioural changes of social actors are identified. The Evaluator shall consider to review and substantiate a number of said outcomes.

The Evaluator shall also consider to explore methods such as **Social Network Analysis, Contribution Analysis** or **Narrative Assessment** to answer one or more of the evaluations questions.

Other methods to be used include **interviews** and **focus groups** (including with the project team).

7. Deliverables and timeline

Pre-Final Assessment

- *Assessment Report,* describing the methodology used for the assessment and featuring:
  - A summary of the Project's progress and achievements since its inception;
  - A findings section based on the guiding questions (see 5. Preliminary questions);
  - A provision of actionable recommendations for the on-going project implementation, sustainability potential and any other follow-up actions.

Final Evaluation

- *Inception report,* containing an evaluation matrix that outlines the final evaluation questions and provides details on how (and with which methods) these will be answered.

- *Evaluation report* (in English), also including:

  - An executive summary (not exceeding 5 pages; in both French and English);
  - An infographic (not exceeding 1 page; in both French and English);
  - Learning summaries targeted to each of the seven consortium members (not exceeding 5 pages each, in English for EPD, ECDPM, Code for Africa, DWF and in French for Gorée Institute and AfricTivistes);
  - Other innovative forms of communicating evaluation findings are optional, but strongly suggested.

Deliverable	Indicative timeline
Assessment Report	2 months after start of assessment process
Inception Report	3 weeks after start of evaluation process
Draft Evaluation Report	3 months after start of evaluation process
Final Evaluation Report	3,5 months after start of evaluation process
Presentation of Evaluation Report - at consortium level; - at consortium and donor level.	Approximately 4 months after the start of the evaluation process

8. Budget

The maximum total budget available under this contract is EUR 40 000 including VAT and/or any other taxes. Any travel costs (and related costs) need to be covered within that budget.

The budget will be split in two instalments, to be transferred to the Evaluator after the completion of the afore-mentioned assignments (see 2. Context):

- For the *Pre-Final Assessment*, the maximum total budget is EUR 10,000;

- For the *Final Evaluation*, the maximum total budget is EUR 30,000.

9. Qualifications

The Evaluator - as a whole - must fulfil the following criteria:

- Proven and strong track record of conducting project evaluations in the field of democratic governance, citizens' engagement and digital democratic innovations;
- Proven experience with the suggested or similar evaluation methods is an asset;
- Prior experience of working in Africa on Pan-African and continental projects;
- Good knowledge of the African Union and the African Governance Architecture, in relation to its internal structure, functioning, as well as the mandates of the different organs;
- Excellent knowledge of English and French is required;
- Understanding the policy landscape and the agenda of the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS, EAC and SADC) is an asset;
- Knowledge/understanding of civic tech (both the civic and tech component) is not mandatory but considered a strong asset.

10. Steering Committee

An internal Steering Committee will be established to coordinate the evaluation on behalf of the consortium. The committee, led by the EPD Head of Programmes, will be the first line of contact with the evaluation team leader.

11. Use of the evaluation

In view of the stated objectives of this evaluation, the intended users and uses of the evaluation are the following:

Consortium members

… shall understand, learn from and communicate the effectiveness of the Project;

… shall understand how to improve and enhance their work in the area of the Project;

… shall draw conclusions for future initiatives in interventions that include one or more EPD members.

EU and GIZ

… to achieve an overview of the effectiveness and relevance of the Project;

… shall draw lessons learned on how to tackle priorities addressed by the Project.

12. Documents to be consulted (preliminary list)

The following documents will provide the Evaluator with background information and insight into project implementation and achievement of the objectives:

- Project proposal (Description of the Action attached to the contract);
- Results chain (Logical Framework attached to the contract);
- Interim reports submitted to the EU;
- Internal reporting information, centralised on the Project's online monitoring and evaluation tool;
- Research and policy documents produced over the course of the Project, including:
  - Mapping of the target groups;
  - Deliverables produced by subgrantees;
  - Analysis of the ACDEG and research publications.
- Relevant documents on the African Governance Architecture and its organs;
- Mid-term evaluation report of the funding programme run by the EU.

13. Selection process

The selection process will proceed as follows:

1. Applicants are requested to submit an *__expression of interest__* filling out the template, to be sent at the latest by **Sunday, 1 October 2023** at giovannatanzi@epd.eu. Subject line: 'Charter Project Africa - Evaluation - *NAME SURNAME*'

2. **ONLY shortlisted applicants** will be invited to submit a **technical and financial offer** which will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee against the criteria listed in *Annex VI*. Candidates scoring at least 75/100 with regard to the evaluation grid (*Annex VI*) for their technical offer, will have their financial offer considered. EPD reserves the right to enter into a negotiation with the candidates on the financial offer proposed by them, before finalising the selection process. The technical offer will be weighted with 80%; the financial offer will be weighted with 20%. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Instructions on the technical and financial offers are available in *Annex I – Instructions to tenderers*.

The selection process will be finalised after candidates shortlisted in the second step of the process have been interviewed by the Evaluation Committee and agreement on the financial offer has been found.

14. Data treatment

EPD collects and treats your private data in compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 i.e. hereby requests personal data only for recruitment purposes, pursuing a legitimate interest in a reasonable way, and will delete them after it is judged no longer necessary to archive. Shortlisted applications will be provided to the Funding Agency to ensure compliance with EU procurement rules in external action projects. By bidding to this tender, you authorise EPD to treat your personal data accordingly.

List of annexes

Annex I   Instructions to tenderers

Annex II   Tender submission form

Annex III   Financial identification form

Annex IV   Legal entity file

Annex V   Organisation & Methodology

Annex VI   Evaluation grid