

Terms of Reference for External Project Evaluation

Project title:	Strengthening the rights and climate resilience of forest-dependent Adivasi communities in India
Partner Organisation(s):	KHOJ, BADLAO Foundation
Project Lifespan:	01.08.2022 to 30.04.2026.
Geographic coverage: region, country	Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand (India)
Funding from:	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development (BMZ)
Evaluation Commissioning Manager:	Ritesh Tripathi (Prog. Lead) Badlao Foundation



I. Context and rationale of the project evaluation

Context

KHOJ and BADLAO are implementing this project across the two central-eastern states – Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. This evaluation is being carried out in the fourth year of the project and will present a final analysis of the project's all-over impact.

Brief description of the project and its impact logic

The project aims to reduce the vulnerability of communities by strengthening governance over natural resources and advocating for inclusive forest governance policies. The project partners will work to create a larger stakeholder base to advocate for the rights of forest-dwelling communities, especially Scheduled Tribes and women, recognizing their central role in resource management and ensuring their equal and effective participation in decision-making processes related to forest governance.

Furthermore, it is planned to integrate climate adaptive practices for strengthening forest-based livelihoods and collectivise women, to enhance their leadership skills, increase their voice, build knowledge for practical and strategic leadership skills, impart entrepreneurial skills and link them with markets to increase their incomes. The project will attempt to influence the state and local administrations to adopt the learnings, replicate the initiatives and scale them up by incorporating them into their programmes.

Both partners have extensive experience in facilitating forest rights claiming processes, particularly regarding Community Forest Resource Rights. They have also built village institutions and build capacities among targeted communities and their institutions (Gram Sabha, FRCs & CFRMCs) about this law and its provisions. During this process, it became apparent that, despite numerous claims having been filed with state governments, the recognition process was extremely slow. Where rights were recognised, they were incomplete in many respects.

The project is a continuation of initial phase called 'Improving the Livelihoods of Forest-Dependent Communities through Securing Forest Tenure Rights and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources' which was implemented from 2018 to 2022.



II. Objectives and use of the evaluation

- To assess the results achieved (intended and unintended) against the outputs, outcome and impact of the project (the **impact matrix** shall be used for the presentation of the evaluation results)
- To assess the progress towards economic and social security through empowered community institutions and sustainable forest management
- To assess the actions towards influencing government policies which has existing legal provisions empowering communities to take decision on access and control over their resources
- To assess the status of community institutions and its role in governing forest resources
- Assessment of the role of women in forest management and impacts of titles on women
- To assess how the project has contributed to the leadership of women
- To assess how the project has contributed in collective process of knowledge sharing at state level with other CSOs.
- To assess the knowledge/information creation and dissemination to other CSOs in the state.

Primary and secondary audience of the evaluation

Primary audience:

The project partners expect this evaluation to highlight aspects of the project that might need modifications and improvements and obtain recommendations, lessons learnt and good practice for future programming and projects. The BMZ as back-donor wishes to know whether the project produced the desired outputs, outcomes and impact.

Secondary audience:

Stakeholders of the intervention, likeminded organisations in the project country and in Germany, private and public donor.



III. Scope of the evaluation, expected results and critical learning questions

Temporal and geographical scope of the evaluation, **(sub)measures** to be examined in particular

- To assess the results achieved (intended and unintended) against the outputs, outcome and impact of the project
- To assess the progress towards economic and social security through empowered community institutions and sustainable forest management
- To assess the progress towards influencing government policies which has existing legal provisions empowering communities to take decision on access and control over their resources
- To assess the status of community institutions and its role in governing forest resources
- Assessment of the role of women in forest management and impacts of titles on women
- To assess how the project has contributed to the leadership of women

- The immediate effect of strategic / technical collaborations with research and academic institutions
- The shift in responsiveness of government at state/district level towards recognition of forest rights
- How has knowledge building helped the community in strengthening the livelihood options?
- The response from government agencies at district level for convergence with government schemes and programs, at least for the interventions that the project undertook
- The responsiveness of village institutions on village management plans and progress towards its implementation
- Assessment of different perception of achievement among project key stakeholders
- Assessment of different strategies in the project contributed to achieve the outcomes. Which have been most effective?
- Assessment of both partner's capacity building on the technical know-how
- Contribution of technical partners in building capacity of partners and other relevant stakeholders
- Assessment of progress towards the policy asks and advocacy efforts with government along with other alliance partners
- Gaps in the project implementation strategies

OECD-DAC Criteria

In general terms, this final project evaluation should include an assessment of the project's impact, effectiveness, relevance, efficiency and sustainability:

- Progress towards the projects outcomes or impact (**Impact**);
- the reasons behind the achievement (or not) of objectives (e.g. if the project is not achieving objectives, whether the problem rests in the theory of change, or with difficulties in implementation [including the institutional context], and whether these are leading to unintended [positive or negative] consequences) (**Effectiveness**);
- the extent to which the intervention is suited to the priorities and policies of the people and communities it is intended to benefit, with specific reference to the experiences and opinions of women and other marginalized groups (**Relevance**);
- The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country or sector; the extent to which other interventions (particularly policies) support or undermine the intervention (**Coherence**);
- the degree to which the personal and financial resources of the project or program have been used economically and efficiently (**Efficiency**); and
- Conditions and choices for exiting, scaling up, handover or other types of transitions (**Sustainability**).

Further expected results of the evaluation

In particular, the report should provide information on:

- The results achieved to date and the achievement of the program's objectives through the measurement of the indicators defined in the logical framework (**the impact matrix shall be used for the presentation of the evaluation results**).
- The effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system put in place to monitor the project



IV. Procedure and methodology of the evaluation

Procedure

Broadly, the evaluation will consist of three stages:

Phase one: Complete literature review of all necessary documents provided by KHOJ and BADLAO (such as the project proposal with impact matrix, project contract, baseline, interim reports).

Phase two: The field phase includes

- travel on site
- Coordinating with KHOJ and BADLAO in preparation and planning of the evaluation design, incl. exchange with the project staff and stakeholders
- visits to and exchange with communities, partners etc.
- “Findings sharing & reflection workshop” with project staff to draw conclusions and recommendations
- summary of the information received and the main results of the mission

Phase three: The consultant will write a draft evaluation report and share it with KHOJ and BADLAO in order to obtain feedback. The consultant will integrate this feedback into the final version of the report.

Upon completion of the report, the consultant(s) will organise a virtual presentation of the final results, which is intended for all partners and their interested employees, as a contribution to knowledge sharing.

Methodology

The final evaluation will be characterized by a participatory process that enables the participation of all genders, youth and marginalized groups, taking into account gender equity, cultural differences as well as different literacy levels. All collected data should be disaggregated by gender and should be sensitive to gender justice. It will ensure broad participation of all main stakeholders (target groups, project team, government officials).

In the field, the focus will be on the collection of qualitative and quantitative data.

The envisaged data collection methods and tools as well as the selection of the communities which will be part of the evaluation are to be highlighted and described by the contractor in his/her offer. The **proposals from evaluators** should contain the following methodological topics as a minimum:

- Description of the phases related to the evaluation approach proposed.
- Sources of information for primary data collection.
- Sampling strategies, including area and population group represented in the sample, sampling procedures and sample size.
- Instruments to be used for data collection.
- Different types of data analysis that will be carried out.

The partners acknowledge that this program occurs in a dynamic and complex system, characterized by a large number of interacting and interdependent elements. As such, the contribution of various actors to

achieved outcomes can be difficult to trace back. It is thus suggested to apply [Developmental Evaluation approaches](#) to allow for constant adaptation of the program's interventions, incorporating user-friendly forms of feedback to improve program design and implementation.



V. Evaluation team: qualifications and skills needed

Required profile of the evaluator(s) and description/ composition of the evaluation team

The external consultant(s) should have proven evaluation skills and experience, distinct methodological knowledge and competencies (qualitative as well as quantitative), strong analytical and facilitation skills, technical expertise in the programmatic area and experience working in implementation. The external consultant(s) should be able to facilitate the boarding of data enumerators, which have an understanding of the local context and local language if needed.

In order to ease the access to stakeholders of all gender identities, it would be ideal to have a team of female and male evaluators during the days of the data collection (for the rest of the evaluation period, however, only one evaluator can be budgeted).

It should be noted that the persons whose CVs will be included in the offer must necessarily be those who will perform the requested evaluation.



VI. Provisional Schedule, budget, logistics and deliverables

Provisional Schedule:

The evaluation cannot exceed the duration of 2 months.

The final report will be submitted to the project partners no later than **15th of April 2026** according to the schedule below:

No.	Activities	No of days
1	Preparation of the evaluation	
1.1		
1.2		
1.3		
2	Site visit: data collection and findings sharing workshop	
2.1		
2.2		
2.3		
3	Evaluation Report (Tentative Timeline) Final report for approval by 15th April 2026	

3.1		
3.2		
Total		

Budget:

The budget should be broken down and presented in the following way in the consultants' offer:

	Unit	Quantity	Per Unit (Euros)	Total cost (Euros)
Consultant(s)				
Fee	day	tbd	tbd	tbd
Per diem (food) during the site visit	day			
Hotel accommodation	day			
Travel Costs to project area				
VAT				
Other Costs				
Total				

Payment schedule: The consultant will prefund his/her expenditures during the field mission which are all covered by the lump sum paid by the project at the end of the mission, upon receiving the final evaluation report in satisfactory quality. A pre-payment of up to 50% of the total amount can be transferred upon request. The maximum total amount of the evaluation cannot exceed 7,00,000 INR.

Logistics: The consultant will be in charge of organizing the accommodation and the means of transport related to the evaluation as well as budgeting them in his/her offer.

Deliverables:

- A draft report will be developed which needs to be submitted to the project partners for review and amendments.

- A final report (max. 30 pages not including appendices) will be developed in English that should cover the following elements:

1. **Cover page** (including evaluation title, project title, geographical coverage, date of finalization of the report, name and (if available) logo of the evaluator(s), recognition of institutional donor support, clear mention of the impossibility to use this report externally)
2. **Table of Contents**
3. **Executive summary** (incl. background, findings and conclusions, recommendations, lessons learnt)
4. **Introduction** (brief presentation of the project, justification and objective, description of the evaluation including approach and limitations)
5. **Project intervention and context**

6. **Methodology** (including description and critical discussion of the approach; protection and consent of participants of the evaluation)
7. **Analysis of the information gathered** (with regard to efficiency, effectivity, relevance, sustainability, impact)
8. **Conclusions**
9. **Lessons learnt and recommendations**
10. **Appendices** (e.g. evaluation matrix, process and timeframe of the evaluation, list of interviewees and people involved in the evaluation, references, questionnaires and any tools for data collection, consent forms, materials for dissemination, etc.)

Where possible, it is encouraged to use visualized elements like accessible infographics to make the report more appealing and easier to read.



VII. Responsibilities and management arrangements

The Programme Lead will liaise with the consultant/consulting agency engaged to undertake the assignment. The partners' staff will take care of facilitating the process of the evaluation in the intervention area, provide logistical advice and give input in the evaluation.



VIII. Dissemination and use of evaluation results

Upon completion of the evaluation report, the consultant will conduct a one-day workshop with the team of the partner organizations in order to share and discuss the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations.

The partners will be responsible for sharing the key findings of the evaluation with the communities, partners and key stakeholders. The evaluation report (or the executive summary) will be made available to institutional donors.



IX. Process of the selection of the evaluator or evaluation team

Proposals (both technical and financial) should be submitted to **Badlao Foundation** by **30th of January**. The final selection will be communicated by **7th of February**.

Selection criteria to be applied:

- Quality of the methodological proposal: aspects that will help us to assess their suitability for that which is proposed in the ToR, quality of the proposal, feasibility, etc.
- Profile and competencies of the evaluation team: knowledge, experience, composition and other necessary competencies, etc.
- Suitability of the financial proposal: for the activities laid out in the methodology, within the financial possibilities of the project.