

# Terms of Reference

## Consultancy for conducting a National Assessment on Inclusion, Representation, and Meaningful Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the 6<sup>th</sup> General Election

### National Election Board of Ethiopia

#### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Services Description:** Consultancy service for conducting a National Assessment Study on Inclusion, Representation, and Meaningful Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the 6<sup>th</sup> General Election

**Client:** National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)

**Duty Station:** Addis Ababa

**Duration:** Three months from the date of contract signing

**Expected Start Date:**

#### II. BACKGROUND

The National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) is an independent Institution established in accordance with Article 102 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Since its establishment, NEBE has organized offices at both the federal and regional levels, and has conducted six general elections.

Since 2019, an important step was taken in reforming the National Election Board, as it was deemed necessary to strengthen democracy in Ethiopia and to enable citizens to exercise their right to elect and be elected by way of free, fair, and peaceful elections. This was to be achieved by improving the credibility, independence and implementing capacity of the NEBE. Subsequent electoral proclamations, the National Election Board of Ethiopia Establishment Proclamation No. 1133/2019 and Electoral, Political Parties Registration and Election's Code of Conduct Proclamation 1162/2019, were promulgated.

Since its re-establishment in 2019, NEBE has successfully conducted one general election and three referendums.

The 2021 general elections were thus conducted under a reformed election legislation with a new leadership at the helm of the Institution and with very committed teams of staff members at HQ and at field offices. A participatory and wide-reaching lesson-learning exercise was held during March and April 2022. A UN-led AM (National Assessment Mission), conducted in July 2022 noted that NEBE has “established a solid reputation among all stakeholders based upon its remarkable achievements during the 2021 national elections, in the midst of very challenging circumstances. The 2021 national elections have increased expectations of the electorate and other stakeholders for better planning and implementation of electoral operations moving forward, and a more conducive environment for inclusive elections”. One of the 11 areas identified for improvement is the “inclusion of persons with disabilities”.

In order to do this effectively, NEBE wishes to enhance its knowledge base of issues affecting participation of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) during elections; to assess further and in more depth its own performance on inclusion of persons with disabilities in its election administration and operation; and to draw lessons for future programming in the immediate, short and longer term.

The Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration, and Election’s Code of Conduct Proclamation No. 1162/2019 incorporated a provision intended to provide favorable conditions for the participation of persons with disabilities, as shown under Article 52 of the proclamation. Regardless efforts were also made to ensure awareness and inclusion by taking important steps through directives and training actions. Directives were made to incorporate provisions that ensure the participation and representation of persons with disabilities in the election process. Training and capacity building was provided to the election Board and election officials. Good and important partnerships have been established with civil society organizations working on disability rights and disability inclusion.

However, the unfortunate reality is that the focus on either “increasing voter participation or providing voter education or observing elections or political party institution building” etc all tend to overlook factors which exclude and alienate persons with disabilities from political engagement. The “persons with disabilities” nomenclature needs to be unpacked according to gender, disability type etc, as there are layers of alienation and exclusion.

Person with disabilities' rights to participate in political life is protected in national, regional and international legal frameworks of human rights; namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as well as the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). Ethiopia has ratified the ICCPR and is a signatory to CRPD. These conventions establish clear benchmarks for

disability-inclusive election laws and practices which in turn initiate actors' efforts to develop international standards of electoral access and political participation for citizens with disabilities.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), specifically under Article 25, guarantees the right to participate in political life for all eligible individuals. Similarly, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) ensures the right to participate for every individual through Article 13. Furthermore, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) reinforces and contextualizes this commitment to disability, unequivocally reaffirming the right to political participation for all people with disabilities and ensuring they are treated on an equal basis with others.

Having this in mind, the National Election Board of Ethiopia is seeking to hire the services of a consultant to lead a nationwide assessment study to determine:

- The adequacy of NEBE Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration, and Election's Code of Conduct Proclamation No. 1162/2019, and Directives to address the inclusion of persons with disabilities in its election;

- NEBE's efforts and overall set-up (resource capacity, operations including messaging and communications, polling station identification, resource allocation, engagement with political parties etc) to enhance inclusion in election work, particularly in major elections (general elections, local election); and

- Accessibility barriers, practices and perceptions, policy environment, partnerships etc amenable to enhancing the agenda of inclusion and political participation of Persons with Disabilities.

In addition to improving access and meaningful participation in the electoral access for persons with disabilities, such a study can assist funding partners and stakeholders in addressing the specific barriers facing this segment of the community to participate in elections. The assessment is expected to draw lessons and recommendations phased in appropriate timeframes.

### **III. Objectives:**

#### **General objectives**

The overall objective of this national assessment is to identify challenges of inclusion, representation, and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in elections; conduct a sample audit on the physical accessibility of polling stations established during the 6<sup>th</sup> general elections; and propose measures that can

be taken by NEBE and other relevant stakeholders to ensure inclusion, representation and meaningful participation of Persons with Disabilities in election and related activities.

### **Specific objectives**

- Assessing the inclusion, representation, and meaningful participation of Persons with Disabilities in the 6th general election,
- Evaluating and auditing the physical accessibility of selected polling stations established for the 6th general election,
- Highlighting types of disability specific challenges in electoral processes,
- Identifying categories of barriers; legal, capacity (material including financial, procedural, physical /facilities, attitudinal, and information), institutional,
- To review the norms and challenges related to the Inclusion, Representation, and Meaningful Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the electoral process in a comparative perspective with a view to drawing on relevant experience from similar Electoral Management Bodies

## **IV. SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT and KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **A) Proposed approach to the study/assessment**

The approach proposed by NEBE is for a Lead Consultant to lead this piece of work. The LC will work with a selected group of CSOs (an Advisory Group (AG) specializing in disability and inclusion. The LC will liaise between NEBE and the Advisory Group. The advisory group will be a sounding board at critical junctures of the assessment/study, and the LC will see to it that this is so. The Advisory Group will be engaged on a voluntary basis.

### **Role of Advisory Groups (AG)**

- Critique and provide input to the TOR,
- Advise on the scope of the assessment
- Assist NEBE review consultant's proposal, inception, interview formats and reports
- Participate in validation workshop,

**B) Geographical: coverage of the assessment:** - Addis Ababa, Oromia, Sidama, Central Ethiopia, South Ethiopia, and South West Ethiopia Peoples 'Regions.

## **The assessment will be conducted in three phases:**

1<sup>st</sup> phase- , Problem statement, literature review, identifying methodology of the study; preparing inception plan;

2<sup>nd</sup> Phase- Data collection, analysis and forwarding of conclusions and recommendations; (including case studies or video clips

3<sup>rd</sup> Phase- Validation and dissemination of the study

### **I. Scope of the work**

The following major activities and related tasks are expected to be performed under this consultancy

- Inception plan that details a feasible work-plan with a specific methodology for the study. ; present the IP to a NEBE-organized event, gather input and enrich the methodology with the participation of the advisory group.
- Review, research and gather relevant information (interviews and FGD with PwD CSOs/media, PP, NEBE, partners, and donors engaged in this area of work, observation reports etc) regarding PwDs in elections.
- In-depth desk review (NEBE reports, CSO observation reports, Directives, the Proclamation, any national-level policy documents, operational plans, implementation and M and E reports, communication, and other NEBE materials etc).
- A succinct and well written set of findings from the assessment in English and Amharic.
- Phased recommendations (what can NEBE do immediately, in the short-term and in the longer term and in what areas and how?)
- Share the draft assessment report to NEBE/the Advisory Group.
- Facilitate validation workshop and incorporate feedback from NEBE and other stakeholders to enrich the final report.
- Submit the final assessment report to NEBE.

### **II. Expected deliverables**

- Development and submission of inception plan detailing the working methodology, tools and action plan,
- The main deliverable of the assignment will be an assessment paper with a minimum of chapter framework as outlined below:
  - Executive Summary

- Introduction
- Objectives of the assessment
- Limitation of the assessment
- Methodology of the assessment
- Findings Chapters
- Conclusions & phased and specific Recommendations
- List of documents reviewed
- Some concrete well written case studies, video clips
- List of participants (informants, FGD members) to the assessment
- List of Regions covered
- Good sequential photos and video clips of parts of the process. NEBE will support by providing documentation and collection of photos and video clips.
- Close consultation with NEBE/GESI/Advisory Group in preparing the final inception report;
- Assessment design with appropriate methodological framework including an assessment matrix; making pre-field arrangements: hiring field staff, logistic arrangement and getting ethical clearance;
- Execution phase: data collection and field work report,
- Draft assessment report,
- Comprehensive final assessment report.

## **V. Language:**

- The Language of the Report should be in English and the final version of the assessment report will be translated into Amharic.

## **VI. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The services of the consultant is expected for a period of three months, starting from the date of contract signing.

## **VII. REPORTING**

The Consultant will work closely with and report to the Gender and Social Inclusion Department of NEBE. The first draft report will be presented to GESI. This will be followed by a validation workshop involving the board, relevant managers, and other stakeholders.

## **VIII. RECRUITMENT QUALIFICATIONS**

### **- Management and supervision**

The Lead Consultant shall be a national with experience of conducting large scale research studies, evaluations etc., and will report to the Gender and Social Inclusion Department (located in the HQ of NEBE). The Operations and other Departments will be consulted as required. The LC will liaise with the AG as described above. NEBE will also liaise with the AG (jointly with the LC) as described above.

### **- General requirements :**

- Is registered and licensed to operate in Ethiopia
- At least 5 years of previous experience and knowledge of similar activity.
- Have a track record of successful assessments, surveys and community-based participatory research in development and preparation of high-quality outcome reports.
- Is willing to travel to all the targeted regional states, woredas and communities.
- Is able to obtain the required approvals and clearances from local authorities to conduct the required data collection. NEBE will support this process with official letters of cooperation for the consultant.

### **- Required approach**

The assessment will adopt mixed research methodologies for primary data collection. The assessment consultant conducting the study will propose the relevant methodological approaches and the sample size. To ensure inclusion and representativeness of the evidence to be generated, the selected sample should be well diversified in terms of gender, age, education, occupation, social status as well as locations (urban/rural, pastoralist, agrarian regions). The research consultant will be responsible for the overall development of the methodology that should include the data collection tools and approaches. The assessment should include interviews and discussions with persons with disabilities who managed to reregister, vote, attend consultation, participate or accesses information on election.

## **Specific qualifications and experience required**

The Lead consultant should have the following essential qualifications:

- Minimum master's degree specializing in disability and special needs, political science, law, human rights, or related fields.
- Minimum of seven (7) years for Masters' Degree and four (4) years for PhD in the areas of disability rights promotion interventions and / or research and participatory methodologies focusing on working directly on social protection and inclusion
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in conducting similar assessment
- Experience in the area of election will be an advantage,
- Demonstrated understanding of inclusion and gender concepts,
- Excellent written and spoken Amharic and English.

The lead consultant will work with the advisory group who shall have the following qualifications /experience:

- Knowledge and experience in working with people with disabilities.
- Proven experience in conducting and analyzing social and behavioral research.
- Ability to facilitate an at-scale, cross-country qualitative research study in Ethiopia
- Experience in data analysis including analysis of behavioral indicators, knowledge, perceptions, attitudes etc.
- Strong and proven experience in integrating and analyzing research findings; developing and writing research reports; and disseminating findings.
- Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work independently, proactively and innovatively
- Ability to multi-task and work under pressure
- Client Orientation
  - Contributing to positive outcomes for the client.
  - Anticipates client needs as the Study Progresses
  - Works towards creating an enabling environment for a smooth relationship between NEBE and its stakeholders in the course of the assessment.
- Core Competencies
  - Demonstrated understanding of the NEBE's fundamental values and principles as outlined in the NEBE documents and familiarity with proclamations
  - Highest standards of integrity, discretion and loyalty.



- Promotes enabling environment for open communication.

## **IX. Financial Proposal and PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

### **Financial Proposal**

#### **- Lump sum contracts:**

The financial proposal shall specify a total lump sum amount (including a breakdown of costs for fee, and number of working days).

#### **- Payment by installments**

- Advance payment 20% up on delivery of unconditional bank guarantee
- First payment 30% up on completion, acceptance and delivery of first draft report
- Final (2<sup>nd</sup>) Payment 50% up on completion and delivery of final report and NEBE's acceptance.
- Payments will be based on deliverables and will be made in local currency, within 5 days upon delivery and NEBE satisfactory review of services specified in the Terms of Reference. NEBE reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if outputs are incomplete, or for failure to meet deadlines

## **X. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS**

The evaluation of the consultants' performance will be based on:

- Completion of tasks as specified in ToR;
- Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables;
- Quality of work;
- Demonstration of high standards of work.

The following percentage points shall be given for each criterion listed below

- A) For experience of the consultant..... 10%
- B) For method applied in doing the assessment ..... 50%
- C) For ability to transfer knowledge ..... 5%
- D) For competence of key professionals engaged in the consultancy service ..... 30%
- E) For participation of Ethiopians..... 5%

We encourage persons with disabilities to apply for the assignment.  
Please contact Procurement Department @ NEBE

**-END-**