

Mid-term review of the Norwegian Human Rights Fund Colombia's Forest, Environmental and Human Right Programme Terms of Reference

2024

1) BACKGROUND

The Norwegian Human Rights Fund (NHRF), in its commitment to support the protection of the environment, the forest, and the ethnic and environmental rights of local communities, indigenous peoples, afrocolombians, and civil society organisations, established the Forest, Environment and Human Rights Programme in 2021, thanks to the support of the Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) through the COL-22/0002 agreement 2021-2025 *“Support to IPLCs and Civil Society in Colombia”*, managed through the Norwegian Embassy in Colombia.

The Programme aims to provide funding to marginalised and vulnerable groups through direct grant making with the objective of supporting proposals from local communities for the recognition and strengthening of their rights and to promote sustainable development in order to conserve biodiversity and reduce deforestation. For this purpose, the NHRF focuses in four thematic areas of work that are closely related to the project outcomes:

- Contribution to the protection and restoration of the natural forest and the reduction of its deforestation and degradation.
- Protection of community organisations and environmental defenders
- Recognition and respect of ethnic, territorial, and environmental rights
- Improved livelihoods in terms of income, capacity, food security and environmental sustainability

On the other hand, the NHRF develops a strategy to contribute to capacity development to support the sustainability of civil society organisations and build solidarity and support for human rights defenders in Colombia. This work is done through capacity building sessions, experience sharing, and common analysis, as well as through accompaniment by the NHRF. At the same time, the NHRF implements actions (including advocacy) to strengthen alliances, and support for organisations and human rights defenders.

During 2021-2023 the NHRF Colombia Office through the COL-22/0002 agreements supported 27 local organisations and 9 strategic partners (organisations intended to enhance the expected outcomes of the local projects and to strengthen the local organisations in areas identified as organisational weaknesses). The selection of grantees was done through one open call for proposals and one call by direct invitation. The supported organisations develop their work in 71 municipalities in 14 departments of Colombia.

During the three years the NHRF in Colombia continued its support for civil society organisations during several important contextual events, such as the lifting of the state of emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The armed conflict intensified in many regions during 2022, and human rights and environmental defenders still faced threats and aggressions, particularly in rural areas. The presence of armed actors in many regions led to forced displacements, dependence on illicit economies, food insecurity, and geographical limitations on mobilization, resulting in various human rights violations. Environmental defenders who opposed extractive projects were particularly vulnerable and faced

murder, criminalization, or persecution, making Colombia one of the countries with the highest risk in the world in this regard. Among them, women, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant communities, and peasants were particularly affected.

The COL-22/0002 agreement between the NHRF for its work in Colombia and the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá states that an assessment focusing on progress to date shall be carried out in the third year of the project and be submitted, together with a management response.

The NHRF is thus seeking consultants to undertake a review that can assess the results and impacts of the support given to local organisations in the period 2021-2023. The review will also assess changes and effects experienced by the target groups as results of NHRF support.

2) INTRODUCTION

The Norwegian Human Rights Fund's mandate is to promote and protect human rights. Since its inception, the NHRF has sought to be a flexible, courageous, and global actor that provides direct support to local organisations working for the rights of vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups. The NHRF prioritizes initiatives where affected communities and people on the ground mobilize and take the lead in the struggle for their rights.

The NHRF was established in 1988 and sprung out of Norwegian civil society, academia, and trade unions. As of 2018, the following organisations and institutions contribute strategically, professionally, and financially to the NHRF's work and are represented in the NHRF's Board:

- Amnesty International Norway
- Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
- The Atlas Alliance
- The Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations
- The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions

The NHRF supports human rights organisations and -initiatives working for the protection of the rights of vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups through initiatives such as legal assistance, advocacy work, documentation, and rights education.

While the NHRF's **strategic goal** is that marginalized and vulnerable individuals and other groups who experience human rights violations and injustices are able to claim their rights and have them fulfilled; the NHRF has identified the following three **key strategies** or tools to reach our goal:

1. Direct financial support for human rights work
2. Networking and capacity building
3. Communications, advocacy, and strategic alliance building

The NHRF will continue to direct our support to human rights work within the following interlinked thematic areas:

- Fight against impunity and for access to justice
- Dismantling discrimination, inequality, and marginalization
- Protecting human rights defenders and the right to defend rights.

To meet the challenges that human rights defenders are facing, we have identified key outcomes under each thematic area, which will be used to guide our support to and prioritization of work that

contributes to these key outcomes in the next five years. This includes support to work related to the women, peace and security agenda; climate change and the links between land/territory, indigenous peoples' rights and the environment; the business and human rights sector; and digital rights and digital security in the defence of rights; and continuing our focus on the protection of human rights defenders.

The NHRF Colombia country office works through two programmes: The Peace and Human rights Programme and the Forest, Environment and Human Rights Programme.

3) PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The objective of the assessment is to evaluate the results achieved through the support to Colombian civil society organisations from January 2021 to December 2023, through the NHRF Colombia Office COL-22/0002 agreement 2021-2025 "*Support to IPLCs and Civil Society in Colombia*" (around 60M NOK) and to provide strategic advice for the further development of the programme. The review shall assess effectiveness, relevance, coherence, impact, and potential sustainability of the results achieved by the civil society organisations in Colombia through the support by the Fund.

The inception phase of the review should be used to further specify the scope of the evaluation in terms of e.g. delimitations and aspects to be evaluated, which shall be presented and justified in the draft inception report.

Findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be used as input for the further development of the programme. The following areas and review questions should be addressed when assessing the results achieved by the NHRF and its partner organisations. It is expected that the review questions will be further developed and detailed by the Consultant in the tender and that a full review design is presented in the inception report.

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the results achieved by the supported CSOs contributed to intended outcomes for the programme?

Impact

- To what extent has the programme contributed to the intended impact in Colombia between 2021-2023, and to other changes in Colombia across the thematic areas of the program?

Relevance

- To what extent is a log frame an adequate tool to measure results at portfolio level in this kind of support with a bottom-up approach?
- To what extent is the support relevant to solve challenges in the different regions of Colombia and to different populations?

Coherence

- To what degree is the support provided to local CSOs and networks aligned with the Norwegian Embassy's priorities?

Documents available for the evaluation are the agreement with the donor, programme proposal/description, annual reports, review of selected reports/documents by partner organisations and internal documentation of monitoring and follow up of individual projects for the period 2021-2023, earlier relevant reviews/evaluations.

4) METHODOLOGY

The methodological framework is to be specified by the Consultant in the tender, according to the objectives for the assessment. The assessment design, methodology, and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully presented in the inception report. The proposal should include field work in geographical areas where the projects are being implemented with the aim of gathering direct information from the grantee partners and their beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the fieldwork will depend on the sample selected by the consultant.

The ongoing projects supported by the NHRF include actions in rural areas of the following departments: Amazonas (2 projects), Antioquia (3 projects), Bolívar (1 project), Caquetá (4 projects), Cauca (2 projects), Cesar (1 project), Chocó (3 projects), Guaviare (2 projects), Meta (3 projects), Nariño (1 projects), Putumayo (3 projects), Quindío (1 project), Santander (1 project), Valle del Cauca (1 project), Bogotá (8 projects).

It is expected that the review will be conducted with a participatory approach that allows for the active participation and input from local stakeholders and beneficiaries. The Consultant shall actively try to balance inputs and influence from different categories of stakeholders over the evaluation process and results. Particular attention should be given to stakeholders who have otherwise little influence over strategy and decision making in aid, including marginalized groups.

It is also important to aim for a range in sources of information and consult not only direct stakeholders but also reliable external third-party sources such as representatives of the Colombian state and the international community working within the field in order to assess the results and impact of the intervention.

The Consultant should consider appropriate measures for collecting data and presenting sensitive or confidential information, to avoid harm to stakeholder groups. The anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants shall be protected when requested and/or as required by law, the context, or ethical considerations. The rights and welfare of all participants in the evaluation shall be protected and informed consent obtained.

The review shall conform to OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. The Consultant should use the OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and specify how quality assurance will be handled during the review process.

5) TEAM

The review should be conducted by at least two people. The team must have one main contact person. Preference will be given to locally based Colombian consultants.

Qualifications:

- English and Spanish speaker(s).
- Knowledge of social, environmental, or related sciences.
- Demonstrated strong knowledge of human rights work and NGO organisational development.
- Extensive experience with evaluation, monitoring, and learning work, ideally within human rights and environmental protection.
- Demonstrated experience with the use of participatory methods.
- Demonstrated experience working with civil society organisations, indigenous populations, and small-scale farmer communities.

- Experience with grant management organisations/funding mechanisms.
- Knowledge of issues associated with the protection and restoration of forests and the reduction of deforestation, sustainable livelihoods, and ethnic, territorial and environmental rights, as well as the field of protection of human rights defenders.
- Extensive work experience from Colombia
- Gender-balanced team

6) TIME FRAME

INCEPTION REPORT AND FINAL REPORT

The review process should ideally start no later than February 12.

The review shall be carried out between February and May 2024. The Consultant shall provide a detailed time and work plan for the tender that shall be further elaborated in the inception report. The plan should outline the roles and responsibilities of the respective team members. The timing of data collection from stakeholders is tentatively planned to be done in March 2024, with the detailed planning settled in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the inception phase.

The **inception report** is expected to be delivered on **29th February 2024**. The purpose of the Inception report is to establish a shared understanding regarding all parts of the evaluation process. With this report the evaluation team clarifies what it has learned about the evaluation object so far, how it understands the scope and the purpose of the evaluation, and how it plans to solve the task. This report shall be approved by the NHRF before the data collection starts, unless explicitly agreed with the NHRF. It shall describe all key parts of the planned evaluation, including:

- A brief overview of the information collected in desk review, identifying information gaps and a strategy to fill those gaps.
- The overall analytical and methodological approach (evaluation design). An evaluation matrix may be considered to explain how the evaluation design responds to the Terms of Reference.
- All methods planned for data collection, and how they relate to each other, including how triangulation of methods and multiple information sources will be used to substantiate findings and assessments. This will include search and selection strategies; a sample selection and other key choices made with regard to data collection; and an outline of tools.
- Strategies for data analysis
- A discussion on the degree to which the proposed methodology will enable conclusions on contribution/attribution of identified results.
- An explicit elaboration and justification of any deviation from the tender document.
- A discussion on constraints and limitations, including aspects regarding the independence of the evaluation.
- A preliminary schedule for field visits.
- Any particularly sensitive issues, for instance regarding confidentiality or ethical aspects, shall be discussed, including a plan for how these issues are to be managed.
- A detailed work plan, specifying the roles and responsibilities of each evaluation/study team member, and a preliminary outline of the final report.

The final report is expected to be delivered on May 3rd, 2024. It must be in English and should not exceed 30 pages (excluding annexes). It should, inter alia, include an executive summary, methodology, limitations, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and all findings must be traceable to the supporting evidence. The methodology and methods used shall be described and explained, and all limitations shall be made explicit, and the consequences of these limitations discussed. When the final report has been approved by the FNDH, it will be made available to the public.

The report(s) shall convey insights in an informative, clear and concise manner, to the extent possible in a form that is understandable even for readers not familiar with the field. Language shall be concise, and the use of abbreviations and acronyms and footnotes limited to a minimum.

A draft report should be presented electronically to the NHRF no later than April 12, 2024. Written comments on the report by the NHRF should be provided no later than April 19, 2024. FNDH will provide feedback to the consultant team. The team shall consider all feedback on the draft report and prepare a revised draft (the final draft report).

The report, both in draft and in final version, shall include the following:

- **Front page/title page**
- **Acknowledgments**, including a presentation of the team and the process, including the name(s) of the firm(s) responsible for the report, team leader and team members, and division of labour between the team members. Any unresolved differences of opinion within the team should be acknowledged in the report. It must contain a declaration stating, “This report is the product of its authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of data included in this report rests with the authors. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the FNDH or the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá”.
- **Table of Contents.**
- **Acronyms and abbreviations.**
- **Executive Summary** of maximum two pages, presenting the purpose, methodology with emphasis on limitations, and key findings and recommendations. The summary shall be easy to understand for non-experts in the field. The summary shall function as an independent text that can be read and understood independently from other parts of the report.
- **Introduction or background**, A description of the evaluation object, elaborating (when relevant) the programme/intervention logic and the underlying assumptions (the theory of change), emphasizing significant, untested assumptions.
- **Literature review**
- **Methodology.** A description of relevant aspects of data collection and analysis, emphasizing constraints and limitations. Specific information such as data collection instruments may be presented in Annexes.
- **Findings**, presented in one or more chapters. The report should explicitly address the degree to which it has been possible to establish a causal link between interventions and the assumed outcomes, and shall elaborate which methods have been used. It must contain explicit elaboration of any evaluation questions for which it has not been possible to reach conclusions or to make meaningful assessments and why. It must contain any issues relating to the independence of the evaluators. Substantive disagreements expressed by stakeholders to findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned should be acknowledged.

Finally, it must contain all relevant findings presented in a way that specifies to the readers the supporting evidence behind all findings. It is particularly important to specify if some findings are relatively weaker than others in terms of supporting evidence. Observations or considerations that are not substantiated according to recognized evaluation methods shall not be presented as findings but may be framed as hypotheses or questions for further study.

- **Conclusions and recommendations**, presented in a way that establishes an explicit, logical chain where conclusions build directly on the evidence-supported findings, and recommendations derive logically from the conclusions. If the report includes numerous conclusions, they should be prioritized and/or categorized, for example organized according to institutions that have a natural responsibility for follow-up.

- **Annexes** including the ToRs, data collection instruments, list of stakeholders consulted, literature references, and other information if relevant.

The consultants are expected to present the report to the NHRF and possibly key stakeholders in Bogotá in May 2024.

7) BUDGET

The NHRF has a budget of **USD 25.000** (approx. 100.000.000 COP) inclusive of vat/taxes. The consultants must provide a detailed budget including all costs for the assignment, hereunder travel costs for the consultants. It is estimated that the evaluation team would use approximately 40 working days for the assignment.

8) TENDERS

The NHRF requires a tender that includes the elements listed above, and a brief statement of qualifications and motivation by the 31st of January. In addition, a CV for each team member is needed and at least three earlier reference projects and two references per person. If you have products or reports prepared by the consultant, similar to those required in these TOR, please attach them.

The selection process will be conducted based on the following criteria:

- Technical Proposal: a) technical quality of the proposal, b) research strategy, c) methodology, d) development and deliverables, and e) work plan (maximum 50%, minimum 30% out of 100% for the overall proposal).
- Bidder's Background: quality and experience of the assigned consulting team in the evaluation field, as well as their knowledge in the relevant sectoral and thematic area (maximum 40% out of 100% for the overall proposal).
- Budget (maximum 10% point out of 100% for the overall proposal).

Attachments:

*Please contact us to request documents on the list that are not available on our website or if you need more information.

Documents:

- Mandate and guidelines for the Norwegian Human Rights Fund (<https://nhrf.no/what-we-are>)
- Annual Reports 2020, 2021 and 2022 to the Norwegian Embassy in Colombia for the support given through the NHRF Colombia Forest, Environmental and Human Rights programme.
- Results frameworks for the agreements with the Norwegian Embassy, and Theory of change.
- Results frameworks and project documents, reports of the projects supported.
- Documents on the programme and contribution to change in these areas.