



Call for Proposals

**STUDY ON NGO RESILIENCE UNDER DIRECT
GOVERNMENT ATTACKS
TERMS OF REFERENCE**



Apply by 19th July 2024

Introduction and Background

The Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) is a national platform for NGOs in Uganda. Its mission is to provide a sharing and reflection platform for NGOs to influence governance and development processes in Uganda and enhance their operating environment. UNNGOF envisions an NGO sector that is coherent, respected and well-informed, actively contributing to citizens' well-being and safeguarding their rights. In collaboration with the East African Civil Society Forum (EACSO), UNNGOF seeks to conduct a study on CSO Resilience in the face of government control and attacks. The findings of this study will inform discussions with policymakers, donors and NGOs on how NGOs can engage effectively in engaging in closing civic spaces.

Authorities in Africa have a long history of harassing, arbitrarily detaining, and generally interfering with the work of human rights defenders, advocacy and accountability CSOs. These threats to civic space and basic freedoms manifest themselves through the raids on and illegal searches of NGO Offices, arbitrary arrests and detentions of civil society activists, and verbal and incendiary attacks on the sector by government officials among others. Across the East African region in particular, we continue to witness a drastic curtailment of the freedom of association, assembly and expression.

The shrinking political and civic space, heightened levels of corruption and growing levels of inequality are the markers of post-liberation democracy on the African continent.

The infractions against civil society, despite the presence of a regulatory framework and laws that lay out avenues for structured engagement like in Uganda, have severely affected civil society organising, operations and engagement on critical issues in the country. In South Sudan, the operating environment political unrest has led to the closure of most CSOs with some going into hiding for fear of political persecution. The poaching of top CSO leaders and technocrats by the Government in Kenya remains a major issue of concern. In Tanzanian CSOs face constant threats of deregistration while in Rwanda the law grants leeway for local government to co-opt and control the activities and budgets of CSOs within their area of operation.

In spite of this, many NGOs continue to operate and deliver their mandates with some building robust institutional resilience, adopting strategies that are unique and effective. However, these strategies and resilience models are not well documented for mutual learning. It is against this background, that seek applications from competent individuals to conduct a study on NGO resilience under direct government attacks in selected 3 partner states of the East African Region.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of this study is to enable us to better understand the preparedness, response strategies, and resilience of NGOs to shrinking civic space in 3 select partner states of the EAC.

Specifically, the study will seek to:

- a) Understand the myriads of regulations governing CSO engagement in the region and how NGOs are surviving the weaponization of these laws and regulations.
- b) Document and analyze selected cases of infractions and NGO responses; What the issues were, the nature, and gravity of actions, and the nature of responses of beneficiaries and donors/development partners if any.
- c) Identify possible best practices in CSO Push-Back on threats to civic space: identify and acknowledge the exact pushback actions/initiatives across the region, their successes, and failures and foster learning from them.

The study will therefore seek to answer the following questions:

- i)What does resilience in light of the weaponization of NGO regulation look like for NGOs in the East African region?
- ii)What kind of proactive responses and risk-responsive planning strategies constitute resilience?

iii)What are the major challenges (internal and external) that NGOs face in preparing themselves for response and resilience in the face of assault?

iv)What internal preparedness (i.e. institutional resilience) and external solidarity for collective resilience factors exist or should exist for resilience in light of threats to civic space?

v)Through political economy analysis and situation awareness, what NGO leadership and culture enables agility, innovation, and creativity for NGO resilience?

vi)What are some possible suggestions/recommendations for nurturing and growing resilience in NGOs?

Methodology

The study will apply robust and credible methodologies combining qualitative and quantitative approaches that give statistically significant results. The analysis will ensure that the findings are relevant, easily accessible, widely utilizable and can be regularly updated. Applicants are expected to propose an appropriate methodology for the study. Applications will be evaluated on the suitability and viability of their proposed methodology.

Key Deliverables

- Inception report detailing the methodology and process for undertaking the study?
- Literature review report;
- List of key informants and interview guide and transcribed key informants' interviews;
- Draft analytical reports for discussion and inputs by the Clients; and
- Final draft Report with concrete recommendations and actions as per objectives of the study.

Duration of Assignment

The entire consultancy shall take not more than 30 days. An inception report shall be provided by the successful consultant within 05 days after the award of the contract.

Recommended Qualifications & Expertise

- Experience in conducting research using participatory techniques; and with civil society sectors across East Africa
- Knowledge and understanding of the NGO operating environment and its attendant challenges.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the civic space and governance arena in East Africa
- Demonstrated competency in producing analytical reports.
- Fluency in English (both written and spoken).
- Good reporting and presenting skills

Proposal Submission

Interested candidates should submit detailed technical and financial proposals to the Executive Director, by email to procurement@ngoforum.or.ug

Applications should have the following requirements:

- A detailed technical proposal detailing the proposed methodology and a clear work plan.
- A financial proposal providing a breakdown of the total costs as per person day rates, and any other costs anticipated in undertaking the process of the assignment.
- Detailed CV of the consultant with a full description of the profile and experience.
- Contact details of at least two independent referees with in-depth and proven knowledge of the applicant's expertise and relevant work experience.
- A cover letter outlining the suitability of the consultant, motivation, and summarizing relevant experience.
- Deadline for submissions: **Friday 19th July 2024**