



Terms of Reference for the evaluation of Core Support to Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS)

Date: December 25, 2023

1. General information

1.1 Introduction

Established in 1998, the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS) is an independent, non-profit policy think tank dedicated to helping improve the quality and capacity of public policy decision-making in Georgia, at the central as well as at local levels, through research and analysis, the training of policymakers and policy analysts, and public education about the strategic issues, both domestic and international, facing Georgia and the Caucasus.

Vision: We seek to contribute to a democratic, inclusive, and internationally integrated Georgia that is well-equipped to face the challenges of the modern world.

Mission: We strive to advance democracy and foster a political and economic environment in Georgia that encourages better regional cooperation, creates a friendly and stable investment climate for human capital development, ensures Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and enables an inclusive, secure, resilient, and peaceful society.

GFSIS as a think tank that works on Georgian and regional security issues also provides training to different categories of professionals, e.g. civil servants from various state authorities, experts, media representatives, NGO representatives, etc.

GFSIS has been receiving Core Support from Sida since 2015. Upon successful completion of the first intervention, based on a GFSIS request to the Swedish Embassy in Tbilisi, Sida contributed provision of Core Support covering the period of January 2022 through December 2024.

One of the continued responses from Sweden to the challenges such as organizational sustainability and development is providing support to GFSIS. Moreover, Sida's provisions of

continued Core Support strengthen GFSIS' resilience and adaptability to Georgia-specific changing environments.

The overall objective of GFSIS is to support the strengthening of a democratic Georgian state. For this GFSIS pursues the following specific Goals and Objectives.

Goals: Reinforced Georgian Institutions | Enhanced National Security | Strong, Independent, Sustainable GFSIS

Objective: 1) Informed policy development, an inclusive decision-making culture, and elevated quality of national security discourse. 2) Empowered gender-balanced participation in decision-making processes at all levels. 3) Contribution to European and Euro-Atlantic integration. 4) Consolidated strong international support of Georgia's standing in the international arena and efficient shared-value partnerships. 5) Diversified resources and enhanced capacity integrated into sound corporate governance contributing to the advancement of the GFSIS' programs and launching new initiatives.

GFSIS' Three-pillar Approach

GFSIS' three-pillar approach – research, capacity building, and public outreach activities – is all directed at improving the public policy process and enhancing the understanding of current policy issues/concerns at all levels and among all stakeholders.

Research – Our research dimension focuses on producing research and analysis-based policy papers and articles focusing on both nation and state-building processes by giving a deeper insight into the complexity of the geopolitical circumstances and security threats in the Caucasus region.

Capacity Building – The capacity-building dimension aims to enhance the professional knowledge and skills of all targeted stakeholders mentioned above to improve good governance practices through inter-agency and inter-sectoral approaches to address foreign and domestic policies. In addition, GFSIS delivers capacity-building activities in vulnerable communities, including female and male youth groups throughout the regions of Georgia that include skills-based training on nationwide and regional developments.

Outreach – Public awareness raising on topics of national and international importance and the creation of a critical mass are key components in the GFSIS' approach. This entails organizing thematic discussions, conferences, and other events across the country to educate the target audience on pertinent national, security, and foreign policy issues and to build discourse among interested stakeholders. We facilitate public discussions and talks with high-level diplomats and international scholars together with GFSIS experts. Our platform welcomes all interested stakeholders for debates on pertinent developments.

Within the framework of the SIDA core support, GFSIS has enhanced its human capital capacity to support its sustainable and organizational development. As a result, GFSIS updated and created various documents such as Strategy; Stakeholder Analysis/Theory of Change; Results Framework.

The updated **Strategy** encompasses GFSIS' vision, mission, and values and describes the GFSIS' approach to achieving its goals and objectives.

GFSIS' **Theory of Change** is illustrated in the **Stakeholder Analysis**. The document describes in detail the whole process of achieving the ultimate Outcomes, which are in line with the Objectives set in the GFSIS Strategy. The Stakeholder Analysis explains the GFSIS approach and the specific activities of each stakeholder. Our strategic goals and objectives are strongly rooted in the Theory of Change, which also reflects the UN Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

GFSIS' **Results Framework** is an integral part of the organization's institutional Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PMEL) system that is based on the Theory of Change (ToC) approach and focuses on gradual behavioral changes of the targeted stakeholders to achieve the long-term objectives of the organization. The anticipated changes are achieved through GFSIS' three-pillar approach (mentioned above) – research, capacity-building, and public outreach activities - all directed at improving the public policy process and enhancing the understanding of current policy issues/concerns at all levels and among all stakeholders. Results Framework provides thorough indicators/progress markers and respective means of verification per GFSIS long-term outcomes/objectives.

GFSIS' Results Framework

The results framework diagram reflects the pathways of change ranging from short-term outputs to long-term impact, which corresponds to the GFSIS' objectives encompassing all stakeholders. Consequently, it identifies the following three levels of the results-based management system (RBM): Performance, Results, Impact.

All these documents will be shared with the evaluator upon signing the Contract.

1.2 Evaluation object: Intervention to be evaluated

The evaluation object is Sida's contribution to the GFSIS' Core activities. The overall objective of the Core Activities is to contribute to good governance practices including participatory and inclusive policy-based decision-making processes by Georgian institutions and that Georgia is better prepared and represented in its integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

The overall main **Objectives** of the current contribution/Core Support are as follows:

1) Informed policy development, an inclusive decision-making culture, and elevated quality of national security discourse.

- 2) Empowered gender-balanced participation in decision-making processes at all levels.
- 3) Contribution to European and Euro-Atlantic integration.
- 4) Consolidated strong international support of Georgia's standing in the international arena and efficient shared-value partnerships.
- 5) Diversified resources and enhanced capacity and sustainability of GFSIS integrated into sound corporate governance contributing to the advancement of its programs and launching new initiatives.

The following Outcomes are related to the main objective:

- Public sector institutions enforce good governance through well-informed policymaking and driving inclusive reforms to make progress toward achieving Georgia's long-term development vision;
- Political party systems are democratically advanced, inclusive and gender-responsive;
- Youth, both female and male become leaders of change at the national arena;
- Inclusive, coherent and socially just Georgian society contributing to the European and Euro-Atlantic integration process;
- International CSOs, think-tanks and opinion-makers influence their respective governments to advocate for and accelerate Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and contribute to the security environment;
- GFSIS remains strong, independent and strengthens its sustainability.

2. The assignment

2.1 Evaluation purpose: Intended use and intended users

GFSIS intends to procure a consultant for evaluating the Sida funded „Core Support to Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies,“ implemented by the latter since January 2022.

The purpose or intended use of the evaluation is to help Sida and its partner GFSIS assess the progress of the ongoing Core Support to learn what works well and less well and under what circumstances, most importantly, why.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are:

- GFSIS
- Embassy of Sweden in Tbilisi
- Sida
- Other donors

The evaluation is to be designed, conducted and reported to meet the needs of the intended users and tenderers shall elaborate in the tender how this will be ensured during the evaluation process.

2.2 Evaluation scope

The evaluation should be focused on all activities of GFSIS carried out through the Sida Core Support from January 2022 through December 2023 that aim at achieving GFSIS objectives against agreed results with Sida that are reflected in the Results Framework.

2.3 Evaluation objective: Criteria and questions

The objectives of this evaluation are to assess the progress and results achieved by the Project with an emphasis on the following: 1) Evaluate the Outputs and Outcomes of the Project; 2) Frame and summarize lessons learned; 3) Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the project and formulate recommendations as an input to discussions concerning the preparation of a possible new phase of the project.

The evaluation questions are:

Relevance: Is the intervention doing the right thing?

- To what extent have the intervention objectives and design responded to beneficiaries, country development (European and Euro-Atlantic integration) policies and priorities, and have they continued to do so if/when circumstances have changed?
- What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Effectiveness: Is the intervention achieving its objectives?

- To what extent has the Project achieved and/or contributed to its objective and intended outcomes? (compare the Project's success markers against set targets) If so, why? If not, why not?
- Has the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?

Impact: What difference does the intervention make?

- To what extent has the project or program generated, or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, high-level effects?

Sustainability: Will the benefits last?

- To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?

- Is the current Project implementation model for delivering the results ensuring long-term institutional sustainability?
- To what extent will the project net benefits contribute more to the sustainability of the GFSIS' governance and capacity?

Cross-cutting issues:

- Has the Project contributed to the targeted Youth's further development? How?
- How has gender equality been integrated into the design, planning and implementation of the intervention? To what extent has the intervention contributed to the improvement of gender equality? Has the project had any positive or negative effects on gender equality? Could gender mainstreaming have been improved in planning, implementation or follow-up? Have human rights and climate-sustainable development/climate change resilience been incorporated into the project-related activities?

Final questions are expected to be developed in the tender by the tenderer and further refined during the inception phase of the evaluation.

2.4 Evaluation approach and methods

It is expected that the evaluator describes and justifies an appropriate evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluation design, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in the Start-up meeting phase.

The evaluator is to suggest an approach/methodology that provides credible answers (evidence) to the evaluation questions. Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the evaluator and the consequences of these limitations discussed in the tender. The evaluator shall to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address them. A clear distinction is to be made between evaluation approach/methodology and methods.

A gender-responsive approach/methodology, methods, tools and data analysis techniques should be used¹.

GFSIS shares a utilization-focused evaluation approach, which means the evaluator should facilitate the entire evaluation process with careful consideration of how everything that is done will affect the use of the evaluation. It is therefore expected that the evaluators, in their tender, present i) how intended users are to participate in and contribute to the evaluation process and ii) methodology and methods for data collection that create space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users of the evaluation.

¹ See for example UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group (2014) Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations <http://uneval.org/document/detail/1616>

In cases where sensitive or confidential issues are to be addressed in the evaluation, evaluators should ensure an evaluation design that does not put informants and stakeholders at risk during the data collection phase or the dissemination phase.

2.5 Organization of evaluation management

This evaluation is commissioned by GFSIS. The intended users are the Embassy of Sweden in Tbilisi, Sida, GFSIS.

2.6 Time schedule and deliverables

It is expected that a time and work plan is presented in the tender and further details after the start-up meeting. The evaluation shall be carried out starting from February 1, 2024 with an end date – April 15, 2024. The timing of any field visits, surveys and interviews need to be settled by the evaluator in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the inception phase.

The table below lists key deliverables for the evaluation process. Alternative deadlines for deliverables may be suggested by the consultant and negotiated during the inception phase.

Deliverables	Participants	Deadlines
1. Start-up meeting	The Evaluator/Consultant and the GFSIS Staff	February 1 - 10 , 2024
2. Data collection, analysis, report writing and quality assurance	Evaluator	February 10 – March 10, 2024
3. Debriefing/validation meeting (2 sessions)	Evaluator and GFSIS	March 10-20, 2024
4. Draft evaluation report		April 5, 2024
5. Comments from intended users to evaluators		April 10, 2024
6. Final evaluation report		April 15, 2024

The final report shall be written in English and be professionally proofread.

The report shall clearly and in detail describe the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection and analysis and make a clear distinction between the two. The report shall describe how the utilization-focused approach has been implemented i.e. how intended users have participated in and contributed to the evaluation process and how methodology and methods for data collection have created space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users. Furthermore, the gender-responsive approach shall be described and reflected in the findings, conclusions and recommendations along with other identified and relevant cross-cutting issues. Limitations to the methodology and methods and the consequences of these limitations for findings and conclusions shall be described.

Evaluation findings shall flow logically from the data, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. It should include recommendations on maximizing performance going forward. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Evaluation questions shall be clearly stated and answered in the executive summary and the conclusions.

2.7 Evaluation team qualification

A CV for an evaluator/each team member shall be included in the call-off response. It should contain a full description of relevant qualifications and professional work experience.

The evaluators must be independent of the evaluation object and evaluated activities and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.

2.8 Financial and human resources

The evaluator's proposal shall include the Financial Proposal and be submitted to GFSIS by COB on January 22, 2024, at 18:00 GMT+4 at info@gfsis.org

Interested applicants may send questions about the ToR until January 15, 2024. Please note questions received after this date will not be considered.

Invoicing and payment shall be managed according to the following: The Consultant will receive a lump sum payment after approval by GFSIS of the Final Report.