

**Building Resilient IP and Feminist Actors and  
Voices for an Equitable Energy Transition  
(BRAVE) Project**

**Terms of Reference for  
Mid-Term Evaluation**

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# 1. Background of the evaluation

## 1.1. Project context

The urgent global energy transition promises enormous opportunity for shared wealth creation and speed if it is grounded in public trust, built through shared prosperity and business respect for human rights. The Building Resilient IP and Feminist Actors and Voices for an Equitable Energy Transition (BRAVE) project operates in the context of this global shift, aiming to ensure the clean energy transition is just, inclusive, and rights centred. The project focuses on Mexico, Nepal, and Tanzania, three countries undergoing significant energy transitions. It recognizes that if the transition is not grounded in public trust and respect for human rights, it could lead to abuses, conflict, and delays undermining climate goals.

Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and women human rights defenders (WHRDs) are at the core of this project. These groups are highly vulnerable and disproportionately impacted by the rapid expansion of renewable energy (RE) projects and mining of transition minerals on their lands. Although IPs comprise roughly 5% of the world's population, they account for about 15% of those living in extreme poverty. At the same time, over half of the known critical mineral reserves essential for clean energy such as lithium, cobalt, nickel are located on or near IPs' territories.

Indigenous women face intersectional discrimination and often heightened dangers when they stand up as defenders of their environment and rights. They are particularly vulnerable in the context of the energy transition and are often overlooked as key stakeholders in the process by businesses and governments. At the same time, they are leading struggles to protect their communities, land, and environmental and human rights, in the face of poor business practice. According to BHRC's data, attacks on such WHRDs often include a specific gender dimension, such as sexual violence, threats to children, or misogynist defamation. Further, BHRC research shows that Indigenous women in particular experience multiple forms of discrimination and violence in challenging patriarchy, racism and abusive economic practices threatening their lands, territories, and cultural/spiritual practices. This reality underscores the stakes: communities who have contributed least to climate change risk bearing the heaviest burdens of the transition, through loss of land, livelihoods, and culture.

## 1.2. Project Overview

The BRAVE project, implemented by the Business and Human Rights Centre (BHRC) in partnership with Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI) and local partners, was

launched in January 2025 with funding support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. The project seeks to help build an inclusive energy transition centring business respect for human rights, fair negotiations, shared prosperity, Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and the protection of HRDs, that is guided and informed by IPs, WHRDs and their communities. In practical terms, the Project works to ensure that:

- Indigenous Peoples and WHRDs have a voice in decision-making on specific projects in the renewable energy value chain (transition minerals extraction and various forms of renewable energy deployment) affecting them and are equipped to safely assert their rights.
- Businesses in the renewable energy value chain transform their business practice to include human rights due diligence, transparency, FPIC, equitable benefit-sharing, and zero tolerance for attacks on defenders.
- Governments and policymakers support a human-rights based, gender-equal approach to the energy transition through policies, investments, and diplomatic engagement.

To achieve these aims, the Project employs a multi-pronged approach with three main components:

- Capacity building to increase IPs and WHRD ability to advocate for their rights and a just transition with policymakers and the private sector through trainings, knowledge sharing, and cooperation between communities.
- Facilitating effective dialogue using established networks and new mechanisms between IPs, WHRDs, and the private sector across the RE value chain. This aims to improve corporate human rights practice, building business understanding of the opportunity of a just transition achieved through shared prosperity.
- Conducting action-oriented research with a strong gender lens, to increase corporate transparency and promote human rights responsibilities of businesses to support advocacy efforts.

Results to include:

- Empowered rightsholders through knowledge exchange and capacity-building between/with IPs and WHRD leaders in the target countries. The strength of existing IPs and WHRD movements in Mexico offer learnings for Nepal and Tanzania through experienced leaders sharing best practices on protection, alternative RE models (focusing on co/shared benefit), and successful advocacy strategies. Activities, including national, regional, and international convenings will address particular risks to IPs and WHRDs in the transition, building resilience and skills to secure their place at the table with duty-bearers, in their national contexts and globally. Empowered, they will be well-placed to influence critical corporate accountability legislation, regulation, policy and practice.
- Transformed business practice in the context of the transition through exposing corporate abuse and better practice to promote corporate understanding of rights-centred approaches to the transition, including IP and co-led energy models; IP rights and knowledge; and risks for IPs and WHRDs in

the RE value chain. This will clarify the business case for a sustainable, rights-centred transition. By integrating gender-sensitive evidence into tools like the RE and Human Rights Benchmark, HRDs Database, Shared Prosperity Models, and global/regional Transition Mineral Tracker (TMT), we will enhance corporate transparency and accountability, reduce opacity in the RE value chain, and establish evidence of better practices.

- Duty bearers operating along and regulating the RE value chain in the target countries support a just transition centred on human rights and gender equality. Through dialogues between IPs, WHRDs and their communities, with business and government (building on BHRRC and IPRI's tested models and established networks), including those facilitated by embassies, and key spaces such as the Universal Period Review (UPR) and UN treaty body processes, rightsholders will be able to showcase differentiated impacts of corporate abuse and make the case for a rights-centred transition.

The project is being implemented in Mexico, Nepal, and Tanzania, with awareness-raising activities targeting duty-bearers in the Global North and at the international level. The target countries, where energy transitions are underway, offer opportunity to improve corporate human rights performance, integrate IPs and gender perspectives into the energy transition, and enhance safe rightsholders participation in related decision-making processes. In Nepal and Tanzania, the project contributes to Finland's strategic commitments to reduce inequalities and strengthen women's participation, informing support for climate resilience initiatives and investment.

The target countries have strong histories of IPs and WHRD leadership, critical for effective advocacy around human rights in business, development of IPs-centred, gender-sensitive corporate policies, and defender protections in the transition both in-country and as case studies for the world. Mexico has 23.2 million IPs, with significant RE potential and existing transition mineral mines on or close to their territories; IPs have already won cases against large RE companies for rights abuse there. Nepal, where IPs are 40% of the population, is highly climate vulnerable with significant RE potential. Tanzania is richly endowed with transition minerals, but shrinking civic space poses specific challenges to IPs and other communities facing rights abuses in the context of the transition. The Project's work aligns with Finland's development policy priorities, such as reducing inequalities and promoting gender equality and climate resilience.

### **1.3. Results of previous evaluations**

No prior external evaluation of this project has been conducted. This Mid-Term Evaluation will be the first comprehensive assessment of the Project's design and results. It will build on internal monitoring data (e.g. baseline studies, periodic progress reports, and the results framework with indicators) but will bring an external, objective

perspective. The timing is intended to inform strategic adjustments for the final implementation phase and to ensure accountability to stakeholders, including the donor, implementing partners, and most importantly, the Indigenous and women human rights defenders at the heart of the project.

## **2. Rationale, purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

This evaluation will assess the project's progress and performance thus far, identify strengths and challenges, and provide actionable recommendations to maximize the project's success in its remaining duration. The evaluation is also expected to provide lessons learned and best practices related to the planning and implementation. The findings will directly inform decision-making for the remaining project period. If certain approaches are less effective, resources and strategies can be considered and redirected. Conversely, if some activities show promising impact, they can be scaled up or intensified. It will also feed into strategic discussions on sustainability and possible follow-up initiatives.

The evaluation results will be used by a range of stakeholders, the project's management team at BHRRC and IPRI, as well as local CSOs, will use the evaluation findings to improve implementation. MFA Finland will use the evaluation to gauge the effectiveness and value of their investment.

The priority objectives of this evaluation are to:

- **Assess progress and effectiveness:** Determine the extent of progress towards the project's stated outcomes and impact. This includes evaluating how effectively the Project has achieved its output targets and intermediate results.
- **Evaluate relevance and design:** Examine the continued relevance of the Project's design and strategy in the current context. Are the objectives and activities addressing the real needs and priorities of Indigenous communities, women defenders, and other stakeholders in each country?
- **Review efficiency of implementation:** Analyse how efficiently project resources (financial, human, time) have been used to deliver outputs. Efficiency also includes looking at the project's adaptive management how flexibly and responsively the team has dealt with challenges during implementation.

## **3. Scope of the evaluation**

The evaluation will cover project activities and achievements from the project's start of January 2025 up to February 2026. It will assess the cumulative progress over this period. All three target countries — Mexico, Nepal, and Tanzania — are included in the evaluation scope. The evaluation will examine each country context separately and consider the overall, cross-country dimension of the project. This means country-

specific findings (e.g. effectiveness of activities in Mexico) as well as an assessment of the South–South exchange aspects that link the countries. Activities at the international level such as engagement with UN mechanisms or global advocacy will also be included, to the extent they are significant in the results framework.

The evaluation encompasses all key thematic components of the project: IPs’ rights, women’s rights/gender equality, HRD’s protection, corporate accountability in renewable energy, and policy advocacy. Cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender, and inclusion are inherently part of the project’s design; the evaluation will explicitly integrate these into its analysis.

The scope includes examining all levels of results as per the project results framework. The evaluation will place most emphasis on the outcome level, as this is where mid-term changes should be evident. Outputs will be reviewed to gauge performance and delivery, but the evaluation will move beyond counting outputs to assessing quality and how outputs are contributing to outcomes. The Impact level will be examined in terms of likelihood and early evidence, recognizing that full impact may not be realized yet at mid-term.

The evaluation will cover the perspectives and roles of all major stakeholder groups involved in or affected by the project. This includes: the primary target groups, Indigenous leaders, WHRDs, and their communities participating in the project activities, implementing organizations (BHRC, IPRI, and local partners in each country), private sector representatives engaged by the project (renewable energy companies, mining companies, investors as relevant), government officials or duty-bearers, and the donor representatives. The evaluators will seek input from each of these groups to ensure a well-rounded assessment.

There are no major intentional exclusions in the scope however, the evaluation is not expected to rigorously assess areas outside the project’s direct control. For instance, while it will consider the coherence of this project with other initiatives, it will not evaluate those external initiatives themselves. If any limitations or necessary narrowing of focus emerge during the inception phase for example, if security issues prevent reaching certain stakeholders, the evaluators will clarify those and adjust the scope appropriately in consultation with the evaluation commissioning unit.

## **4. Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions**

The evaluation will be guided by the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) as well as specific criteria related to human rights and gender equality. The following key evaluation questions are proposed, organized by criteria. These questions reflect the priority issues the evaluation will address, based on the project’s goals and the information needs of stakeholders:

Relevance:

- To what extent does the project respond to the real needs and priorities of IPs, WHRDs, and their communities in the context of the energy transition in Mexico, Nepal, and Tanzania? Are the project's objectives and design well-aligned with the local contexts and evolving stakeholder needs?
- Has the project adapted to any significant changes in context (political, economic, social, or environmental) to maintain its relevance?

Coherence:

- How well does this project complement, add value to, or coordinate with other related initiatives and interventions? This includes other donor or government programs on renewable energy, Indigenous rights, or climate justice in the three countries. Is the project avoiding duplication and leveraging synergies with these efforts?
- To what extent are the project's components (capacity building, dialogues, research) coherent with each other and with the broader strategies of BHRC and IPRI? Are there consistent messages and objectives across all activities? Do the project's internal management and communication structures ensure a unified approach in the three country contexts?

Effectiveness:

- What progress has been made toward the project's intended outcomes (and outputs) as defined in the results framework?
- What factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the outcomes so far? How has the project mitigated challenges or leveraged on facilitating factors?
- How effectively has the project integrated a gender lens and human-rights based approach into its implementation and results? Are women (especially Indigenous women and WHRDs) fully involved and benefiting equally from the project activities (trainings, leadership roles, etc.)? Is the project addressing the specific protection needs and voices of women human rights defenders?

Efficiency:

- Are project activities being implemented on schedule and within the expected budget? Have financial and human resources been used optimally to produce outputs of good quality? Have there been any significant delays or cost overruns, and if so, what were the reasons and how were they managed?
- How efficient is the project's management structure in coordinating actions across three countries and multiple partners? Are decision-making processes and communication channels clear and effective between BHRC (global team), IPRI, and local partners? Has the project leveraged existing networks or partnerships cost-effectively?

Impact:

- What significant changes (if any) can already be observed that indicate movement toward the broader impact goal of a just, rights-respecting energy transition?

- Have there been any unintended outcomes of the project so far either positive or negative?

Sustainability:

- What is the likelihood that the benefits of the project will continue after external support ends? Are the capacities built in Indigenous and women leaders likely to be sustained and applied in the long term? Have any structures or processes been put in place that will endure?
- To what extent are the project's partners and beneficiaries taking ownership of the initiatives? For instance, are local organizations or coalitions strengthened to carry on advocacy and support to defenders beyond the project? Have governments or other institutions adopted or institutionalized any approach introduced by the project?

The evaluation questions will be finalised by the evaluators based on their desk research in the inception report.

## 5. Methodology

The choice of methodology will be left for the evaluation team to propose in the inception report. With the aim of having an objective and independent evaluation, the team is expected to conduct the evaluation according to international criteria and professional norms and standards adopted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA; see annexes). The methodology defines methods of data collection and analysis. It is expected that multiple methods are used, both qualitative and quantitative. Consultations with the relevant partners and stakeholders will be conducted, the approach will be participatory and utilization-focused, engaging project stakeholders actively in the evaluation process so that their insights inform findings and they find the results useful. All key findings will be substantiated by evidence from multiple sources wherever possible. If the evaluators must rely on single-source information for any critical point, they will note it as a limitation. Confidentiality will be maintained for all respondents, no statements or comments will be attributed to individuals by name in the report without their prior consent.

Given the involvement of human rights defenders, the team will exercise extra caution to protect identities when needed. For example, if quoting a WHRD about a sensitive issue, they might be referenced generically ("a female Indigenous activist in Tanzania") rather than by name, unless they explicitly wish to be named. Confidential data associated with the project will be shared in anonymized way. The evaluation will follow the MFA Finland's ethical guidelines and any relevant policies from BHRC/IPRI on engaging with vulnerable groups.

This Terms of Reference provides the above guidance on methodology to ensure proposals cover these aspects adequately. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the external evaluation team to develop a detailed methodology. The evaluators will be

encouraged to use innovative or participatory techniques as they see fit, provided they meet the objectives and adhere to the principles of independence and rigor.

## 6. Evaluation process and time schedule

The evaluation will be conducted in several phases over a planned duration of two months (approximately 8 weeks) from the start in March 2026 to completion by end of April 2026. The timeline below outlines the main phases, key tasks, and deliverables, along with an indicative schedule:

Key milestones and deliverables with dates:

Contract start / Kick-off meeting – 2 March 2026

Inception Report – due by 11 March 2026

Remote (online) missions – 16 March to 27 Mar 2026 (staggered per country)

Remote Debrief workshop (draft findings) – 6 April 2026

Draft Evaluation Report – due by 13 April 2026

Final Evaluation Report – due by 24 April 2026

The evaluation team is expected to manage time efficiently. If unforeseen circumstances respondent availability issues require slight adjustments to the timeline, the evaluators should promptly communicate this. Any extension of deadlines would need approval, but given the need to inform ongoing project implementation, the intent is to complete within the stipulated period.

## 7. Reporting

The evaluation team will be responsible for producing the following key deliverables:

- Inception report (draft and final inception reports)
- Presentation of the data collection findings (at the end of the interviews phase)
- Draft final report
- Presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations
- Final report

**Inception Report:** A concise document (approximately 10–15 pages) to be delivered after the initial review and planning phase. The inception report should include: the refined evaluation objectives and questions, a detailed methodology and sampling plan, data collection tools, an evaluation matrix, any revisions to the work plan or timeline, and identified limitations/risks with mitigation measures. The outline of an inception report can be found in the MFA Evaluation Manual, which can be found at <https://um.fi/development-cooperation-evaluation-manual>

**Preliminary evaluation presentations (after data collection):** A presentation (PowerPoint or similar) of findings, delivered to the project stakeholders in a meeting.

This presentation will summarize emerging conclusions and recommendations, serving as a basis for discussion.

**Draft Final Evaluation Report:** A comprehensive draft report covering the evaluation findings, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations, structured according to the required format. It should be written in clear English, free of jargon, and in a results-oriented, evidence-backed style. The report should not exceed 30 pages (excluding annexes). An executive summary of 2-3 pages should distill the main findings and recommendations, suitable for a broad audience. The draft will undergo review for factual accuracy, clarity, and completeness.

**Final Evaluation Report:** The final revised report, incorporating feedback from stakeholders as appropriate. The final report will be the public document that can be disseminated.

**Presentation on the evaluation findings:** The consultant is expected to make PowerPoint presentations to BHRC, IPRI and other key stakeholders

All reports and presentations should be submitted in English. The evaluators should provide electronic copies in MS Word (for reports) and PowerPoint/PDF (for presentations). The Final Report might be later be published on the MFA Finland website and/or BHRC platform, so it must be of publishable quality.

## **8. Quality Assurance**

Quality assurance will be built into the evaluation process to ensure credibility and rigor of the findings. The evaluators are required to propose and implement an internal quality assurance system for their work. This may include internal peer review of the report within the evaluation firm or team leader reviews of team members' work (for multi-person teams). The inception report should briefly describe how the team will ensure data quality and report quality. The evaluation will use stakeholder validation (through debrief meetings and circulating draft findings) to test the accuracy of information. By engaging those who provided information with the preliminary results, the evaluators can catch any misinterpretations early. The evaluation team must adhere to ethical guidelines and professional standards throughout the evaluation exercise.

## **9. Expertise required**

Given the scope and complexity of this evaluation multi-country, multi-thematic, rights-based project, unique and comprehensive expertise will be required. The evaluator/team should collectively possess the following expertise and competencies:

**Evaluation Expertise:** The evaluator must have extensive experience preferably 8-10 years or more in leading evaluations of development projects/programs, including complex multi-country evaluations. They should be well-versed in evaluation methodologies (both qualitative and quantitative) and capable of designing and

managing an evaluation from start to finish. Familiarity with OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and utilization-focused approaches is essential.

**Subject matter expertise:** The evaluator/team must demonstrate expertise in human, women and Indigenous Peoples' rights, preferably business and human rights frameworks. Including a team member from an Indigenous background or who has worked closely with Indigenous organizations would greatly enrich the evaluation's cultural competence and be assessed positively.

**Regional/Country Knowledge:** Collectively, the evaluator/ team should have knowledge of the regions/countries in question. This could be achieved through team composition or hiring national consultants.

**Language skills:** Collectively, the evaluator/ team should be able to read/write and speak at the minimum in English and Spanish, with the additional ability to read/write and speak Nepali and Swahili would be advantageous.

## 10. Budget

A specific budget has been allocated for this desk-based mid-term evaluation. All expenses related to the evaluation are to be covered from this budget. Bidders should demonstrate in their budget proposal how they allocate days and costs for each phase. There should be a clear relation between the work plan and budget.

## 11. Mandate

The team is entitled and expected to engage openly with all relevant persons and organizations to gather information for the evaluation. This includes project staff, partners, community members, company representatives and government officials, as pertinent to the evaluation questions. However, it is not within the team's mandate or authority to make any commitments on behalf of the commissioning or implementing organizations. Specifically, the evaluation team is not authorized to make any commitments or promises to any stakeholders regarding changes that will be made, funding that will be provided, or any other action as a result of the evaluation.

## 12. Annexes

The following documents and resources will be provided to the evaluation team at the start of the assignment, to support the desk review and planning:

- Original Project Proposal and Logframe/Results Framework (with baseline values and targets for all indicators).
- Progress Reports (narrative and financial) submitted to the donor to date.
- Minutes or reports from key project events.
- Publications produced by the project
- M&E tools

- Any prior research or context analyses done during project design that are relevant.
- MFA evaluation manual <https://um.fi/development-cooperation-evaluation-manual>

## Call for Tenders

# Mid-Term Evaluation of the Building Resilient IP and Feminist Actors and Voices for an Equitable Energy Transition (BRAVE) Project

The Business and Human Rights Centre (BHRC) invites tenders for an independent Mid-Term Evaluation of the Building Resilient IP and Feminist Actors and Voices for an Equitable Energy Transition (BRAVE) Project, implemented by the Business & Human Rights Centre (BHRC) and Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI).

## Objective

To assess the project's performance at mid-point, focusing on relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, early signs of impact, and sustainability. The evaluation will inform the final implementation phase and ensure accountability to rights-holders, donors, and partners.

## Scope and Methodology

The desk based /remote evaluation will cover activities in Mexico, Nepal, and Tanzania, as well as global advocacy components. The assignment must apply OECD/DAC criteria and a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach, ensuring meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs).

The priority objectives of this evaluation are to:

- **Assess progress and effectiveness:** Determine the extent of progress towards the project's stated outcomes and impact. This includes evaluating how effectively the Project has achieved its output targets and intermediate results.
- **Evaluate relevance and design:** Examine the continued relevance of the Project's design and strategy in the current context. Are the objectives and activities addressing the real needs and priorities of Indigenous communities, women defenders, and other stakeholders in each country?
- **Review efficiency of implementation:** Analyse how efficiently project resources (financial, human, time) have been used to deliver outputs. Efficiency also includes looking at the project's adaptive management how flexibly and responsively the team has dealt with challenges during implementation.

**Evaluation Period:** March–April 2026 (approx. 8 weeks)

**Key Deliverables:** Inception report, draft and final evaluation reports, presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations

**Languages Required:** English (Spanish, Nepali, or Swahili considered an asset)

**Eligibility Requirements:**

Tenderers must demonstrate:

- Preferably 8-10 years or more in leading evaluations of development projects/programs including complex multi-country evaluations.
- Familiarity with OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and utilization-focused approaches is essential
- Proven expertise in human, women and Indigenous Peoples' rights, preferably business and human rights frameworks
- Knowledge of the regions/countries in question.
- Experience conducting evaluations for bilateral or multilateral donors
- Capacity to manage data collection and reporting within tight timelines

Tender documents must include:

- Technical proposal (max. 10 pages)
- Evaluation team composition and CVs
- Financial proposal (in EUR, incl. VAT)
- References and links to previous evaluations

Deadline for Submission: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 1700HRS CET

Submission via: [BRAVE@business-humanrights.org](mailto:BRAVE@business-humanrights.org)

For further information and the full Terms of Reference, please visit the BHRC website:

[Jobs - Business and Human Rights Centre](#)