Budget Advocacy Network

"we believe in participation transparency & accountability"

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR) FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF A MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL) OFFICER

Position: Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Officer
Organisation: Budget Advocacy Network (BAN)
Duty Station: Freetown, Sierra Leone, with travel to project implementation districts
Contract Duration: One (1) year, with the possibility of extension
Funding: Irish Aid- and European Union-funded projects
Reports to: BAN Coordinator
Employment Type: Full-time

1. Background

The Budget Advocacy Network (BAN) is a civil society network in Sierra Leone committed to promoting transparency, accountability, citizen participation and improved public financial management. BAN works with civil society organisations, local councils, government institutions, development partners, media organisations and communities to strengthen budget transparency, domestic revenue mobilisation, public expenditure accountability, gender-responsive budgeting, procurement transparency and the effective use of public resources for improved service delivery.

BAN implements advocacy, research, capacity-building and citizen-engagement initiatives supported by development partners, including Irish Aid and the European Union. To strengthen the effectiveness, accountability and impact of these interventions, BAN seeks to recruit a competent and results-oriented Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Officer.

The successful candidate will support the development and implementation of MEAL systems, monitor project progress against approved results frameworks, collect and analyse evidence, document programme outcomes, promote accountability to communities and stakeholders, and facilitate learning to improve programme delivery and inform policy advocacy.

2. Purpose of the Position

The MEAL Officer will be responsible for coordinating and strengthening BAN's monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning systems across its projects and programme activities. The officer will ensure that project implementation is guided by reliable evidence, measurable results, timely reporting and continuous learning.

The postholder will work closely with programme staff, field teams, civil society partners, local councils and other stakeholders to track outputs, outcomes and progress towards programme objectives. The officer will also support the collection of credible evidence on the influence of BAN's budget advocacy, public financial management reforms, citizen participation initiatives and accountability interventions.

3. Key Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Monitoring and Results Measurement

- Develop, coordinate and maintain project-specific MEAL plans, results frameworks, logical frameworks and performance indicator tracking tools.
- Monitor implementation of project activities against approved work plans, budgets, indicators, milestones and targets.

- Track outputs, outcomes and emerging impacts of BAN's advocacy, research, capacity-building and citizen-engagement activities.
- Conduct regular field monitoring visits to verify implementation progress, assess activity quality and identify challenges requiring management attention.
- Establish and maintain indicator tracking databases and dashboards to support timely monitoring of project performance.
- Work with programme teams to ensure that all activities have clearly defined objectives, indicators, baselines, targets and means of verification.
- Identify implementation delays, performance gaps and emerging risks and recommend practical corrective measures.

3.2. Evaluation, Research and Evidence Generation

- Support the design and implementation of baseline studies, midterm reviews, endline assessments, evaluations and other programme learning exercises.
- Develop appropriate data collection tools, including questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussion guides, observation checklists and monitoring forms.
- Coordinate quantitative and qualitative data collection using suitable methods, including digital data collection tools where appropriate.
- Analyse programme data to assess progress, effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and emerging outcomes.
- Support research and evidence generation on public financial management, budget allocation and execution, domestic revenue mobilisation, procurement transparency, gender-responsive budgeting and citizen accountability.
- Document changes in institutional practices, public policies, budget processes, citizen engagement and accountability mechanisms associated with BAN's interventions.
- Ensure that evaluation findings and recommendations are shared with programme teams and used to improve implementation.

3.3. Accountability to Communities and Stakeholders

- Support the establishment and implementation of accessible feedback and complaints mechanisms for project participants, community members and partner organisations.
- Ensure that communities and stakeholders understand project objectives, planned activities, expected results and available feedback channels.
- Develop and maintain procedures for receiving, recording, referring, tracking and responding to programme-related feedback and complaints.
- Ensure that feedback is handled confidentially, safely, impartially and in accordance with BAN's safeguarding and complaints-handling procedures.
- Monitor whether feedback is addressed within agreed timelines and report unresolved or recurring issues to management.
- Promote inclusive participation of women, young people, persons with disabilities and other groups whose voices may be underrepresented in public budgeting and decision-making.
- Ensure that beneficiary feedback informs programme adaptation, advocacy priorities and service-delivery accountability initiatives.
- Support community scorecards, citizen budget monitoring, social accountability forums and participatory monitoring exercises where relevant.

3.4. Learning, Knowledge Management and Adaptive Programming

- Establish and maintain a programme learning agenda identifying key learning questions, evidence gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- Facilitate periodic reflection meetings, after-action reviews, learning sessions and programme review meetings.
- Document good practices, challenges, lessons learned, success stories, case studies and examples of policy or institutional change.
- Produce concise learning briefs and evidence summaries for management, programme teams, partners and development partners.
- Ensure that lessons from field implementation inform work plans, advocacy strategies, training approaches and future project design.
- Maintain an organised repository of monitoring data, evaluation reports, success stories, photographs and other approved programme evidence.
- Support the dissemination of research findings and programme results through reports, policy briefs, presentations and stakeholder learning events.

3.5. Reporting and Donor Compliance

- Prepare accurate and timely monitoring reports, quarterly progress updates, annual reports and other reporting products required by BAN and its funding partners.
- Contribute to narrative reporting for Irish Aid- and EU-funded projects by providing verified results, indicator progress, outcome evidence, challenges and lessons learned.
- Ensure that reported achievements are supported by credible data and appropriate means of verification.
- Maintain indicator tracking matrices and consolidate project performance data from programme officers, field teams and implementing partners.
- Support project managers in identifying deviations from approved targets and documenting corrective actions.
- Ensure that monitoring and reporting practices comply with applicable donor agreements, approved project logframes and organisational policies.
- Contribute to donor monitoring visits, evaluation exercises and evidence-verification processes.

3.6. Data Quality Assurance and Management

- Establish and implement procedures for data quality assurance, including checks for accuracy, completeness, consistency, validity and timeliness.
- Verify reported results against source documents, attendance registers, activity reports, monitoring forms and other evidence.
- Maintain secure and well-organised electronic and physical records of monitoring and evaluation information.
- Apply appropriate data protection, confidentiality, informed consent and responsible data-sharing practices.
- Use suitable software and digital tools for data collection, cleaning, analysis, visualisation and reporting.
- Disaggregate data by sex, age, disability and location, where relevant, feasible and safe.
- Identify data gaps and work with programme staff to strengthen the reliability and usefulness of project information.

3.7. Capacity Building and Coordination

- Build the capacity of BAN programme staff, field officers and implementing partners on results-based management, indicator tracking, data collection, reporting and accountability.
- Provide technical guidance on the development of measurable indicators, baselines, targets and means of verification.
- Work with programme teams to integrate MEAL requirements into activity planning, implementation and budget preparation.

- Coordinate with relevant stakeholders to obtain programme monitoring information and validate reported results.
- Represent BAN in relevant MEAL coordination meetings, learning events and technical engagements when delegated.
- Undertake other duties related to monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning as assigned by the supervisor.

4. Qualifications and Experience

Applicants should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- A bachelor's degree in Monitoring and Evaluation, Development Studies, Statistics, Social Sciences, Economics, Public Administration, Project Management or another relevant discipline.
- At least three (3) years of relevant professional experience in monitoring and evaluation, results-based management, research, accountability or programme learning.
- Demonstrated experience developing MEAL plans, logical frameworks, indicator tracking matrices and data collection tools.
- Experience conducting field monitoring, surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, data analysis and programme evaluations.
- Experience preparing donor reports, preferably for European Union, Irish Aid or other bilateral and multilateral development-funded projects.
- Familiarity with civil society programming, advocacy, governance, public financial management, gender equality or social accountability will be an advantage.
- Experience with digital data collection platforms such as KoboToolbox or ODK and data analysis tools such as Excel, SPSS, Stata, Power BI or equivalent will be an advantage.
- Additional professional training or certification in monitoring and evaluation, research methods or results-based management will be an advantage.

5. Required Skills and Competencies

The successful candidate should demonstrate:

- Strong analytical, critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent quantitative and qualitative research skills.
- Ability to develop measurable indicators and interpret programme performance data.
- Strong report-writing, documentation and presentation skills.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Excel and other relevant data management or visualisation tools.
- Excellent communication, facilitation and interpersonal skills.
- Strong attention to detail and commitment to data quality.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively while meeting deadlines.
- Willingness to travel to project locations and engage with communities and stakeholders.
- High standards of integrity, confidentiality, impartiality and accountability.
- Commitment to gender equality, inclusion, safeguarding and ethical research practices.

6. Key Deliverables and Performance Indicators

The performance of the MEAL Officer will be assessed against the following deliverables:

1. **MEAL plans and frameworks:** Project MEAL plans, indicator tracking matrices and monitoring tools developed, updated and used by programme teams.
2. **Monitoring reports:** Regular monitoring reports submitted within agreed deadlines, documenting progress, challenges and recommended corrective actions.
3. **Indicator tracking:** Project indicators updated regularly, with progress against approved baselines and targets clearly documented.
4. **Data quality:** Routine data quality checks conducted, with identified gaps and discrepancies addressed or escalated.
5. **Evaluation and research:** Baseline, evaluation and learning exercises completed according to approved methodologies and work plans.
6. **Accountability mechanisms:** Functional feedback and complaints tracking systems maintained, with issues referred and followed up in accordance with established procedures.
7. **Learning products:** Periodic learning briefs, case studies, success stories and evidence summaries produced and shared with relevant teams.
8. **Donor reporting:** Verified results and supporting evidence provided in time for quarterly, annual and other donor reporting deadlines.
9. **Capacity development:** MEAL orientation or capacity-building sessions delivered to programme staff and partners as required.
10. **Evidence-informed programming:** Documented examples of monitoring findings and stakeholder feedback informing programme adaptations or management decisions.

Specific annual targets and reporting deadlines will be agreed with the supervisor through an approved performance plan.

7. Reporting and Working Relationships

The MEAL Officer will report to the BAN Coordinator and work closely with programme staff, field teams, the Finance Officer, implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders.

The officer will provide regular updates on programme performance, emerging risks, evidence gaps and learning opportunities. The position will also support collaboration across projects to strengthen consistency in monitoring, reporting and evidence management.

8. Duration and Conditions of Employment

The successful candidate will be appointed for an initial period of **one (1) year**, with the possibility of extension subject to satisfactory performance, organisational priorities, continuation of project activities and availability of funding.

The appointment will be governed by BAN's human resources policies, safeguarding procedures, code of conduct and other applicable organisational requirements. The successful candidate must demonstrate a commitment to ethical research, responsible data management, inclusion and accountability.

9. Application Procedure

Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following:

1. An application letter explaining their suitability for the position.
2. An updated curriculum vitae (CV), including contact details for at least three professional referees.

3. Copies of relevant academic and professional certificates.

Applications should be submitted electronically to **info@ban-sl.org** using the subject line **"Application for MEAL Officer – BAN."**

Application Deadline: 2nd November 2026

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. BAN reserves the right to verify information provided by applicants and conduct reference checks before making an appointment.

The Budget Advocacy Network is committed to fair, transparent and merit-based recruitment. Applicants are expected to demonstrate a strong commitment to evidence-based advocacy, accountability, inclusion and the responsible use of public and development resources.