



TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR) for CARD's STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW (2025-2029)

1. Introduction

Center for the Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD) is a board-led, for not profit organization registered in Ethiopia under the revised Civil Societies Law 1113/2019 with registry number 4307. CARD acquired its legal personality on 24 July 2019, aspiring to see Ethiopia where human rights are respected and democratic culture is flourished. CARD has been working with a mission of advancing a conducive civic, media, and digital space to the respect of human rights and the promotion of democratic culture.

To this end, CARD has adopted a strategic plan document (2022-2026) clearly articulating the values, vision, mission and strategic goals/objectives setting the directions of the organization. It is understatement to describe that the current strategic plan document has laid down a strong foundation for CARD by guiding the implementation of its pillar programs. However, the program development has somehow deviated from the strategy designed for it while the leadership attempted to adapt for changes. Therefore, this necessitates the revision and redrawing of the strategies or the program development.

2. Context and Justification for the Strategic Plan Revision

Since the adoption and subsequent implementation of the existing CARD Strategic Plan (2022-2026), several factors and dynamics (both internal and external) have unfolded. Some of these dynamics could have a strong bearing on the future directions of CARD necessitating further refinement, contextualization and updating of its governing document so that it responds to the changing socio-political and

economic contexts. These changes can be broadly summarized below as external and internal.

2.1. External Factors

Currently we are living in an extremely dynamic, interdependent and complex global, regional and national contexts that can both be beneficial and detrimental to CSOs in the global south, of which CARD is no exception. These contexts and factors of course necessitate revisiting CARD's strategic plan document in a manner that shapes the organization's engagements over the coming few years.

To mention some of these evolving contexts: the rivalry between the US and China for global power dominance; the rise of Far Rights movement in many European states; the war between Russia and Ukraine; the Israel-Palestine conflict; the geo-political-geo-economic contestations between major global and regional powers over maritime security in the Red Sea region; regional powers competition for influence in the Horn of Africa, the Sudanese civil war, the insecurity and standoff between states in the Horn of Africa can all be seen to have severe consequences for human rights and democratization processes in general and organizations advocating for these causes in particular. It is no surprise that following these developments, the attention of major powers, previously supporting human rights advocacy and democratization process in these part of the world, has significantly shifted. This change in global and regional political climate not only has affected local politics and the civic space but also resulted in significant decline in terms of the funding support for CSOs and human rights and democratization actors in Ethiopia.

Similarly, the introduction of series of reform measures in Ethiopia in 2018 by the incumbent regime, including the revision of the CSO proclamation No.1113/2019, led to higher expectation for the expansion of civic space, human rights and democratization processes. Nonetheless, the political dynamics that unfolded subsequently, such as the outbreak of conflicts in Oromia, Tigray, and later-on in Amhara regions effectively reversed these short-lived gains. Despite the conflicts having devastating consequences for human rights and democratization processes in the country, efforts to peacefully resolve them, except the Pretoria peace agreement that provided temporary relief for the people, are either insufficient or

ineffective. As we write this ToR, the conflicts in Oromia and Amhara region have become protracted with no major effort of addressing them becoming successful. Similarly, post-Pretoria developments do not seem to be promising for human rights and democracy, not only in Tigray region but the country at large. These factors in turn compel CARD to adapt itself to changing circumstances and carefully navigate our commitment for effective human rights advocacy and engagement on democratization considering the regression in the context and the declining funding support. In this regard, CARD would like to revise its existing strategic plan to respond to the growing need for a wider and more impactful context sensitive interventions in the existing program areas of human rights and democratization while introducing other value adding approaches, such as peace building as another pillar interventions in the coming few years.

2.2. Internal Factors

As CARD has evolved over the course of the years, we are at a stage where we need to evaluate our implementation of programs reflecting on the organization's achievements so far and areas that need improvement giving context to our next strategic direction. The need to review the strategic plan of CARD remains paramount to ensure that it continues to retain its relevance and identity while enhancing its impact in the areas of human rights and democratization. CARD has seen growth in terms of reputation, projects implemented, budget expended and human resources and partnership. However, in terms of the impact of programs on the human rights and democratization process in the country and internal system put in place to effectively implement these deficiencies. In this regard, by making a deeper evaluation of CARD's major intervention areas, human rights and democratization, and the lack thereof of significant impact, it is expected that this review process will contribute to CARD's impactful interventions and capacity-building efforts within CARD in the years to come.

On the other hand, despite excellent articulation of the vision, mission, strategic objectives and programs in the existing strategic plan, there is a demonstrable need to ensure alignment between these. For instance, there is a mismatch between problem statement, strategic objectives and number of programs. During the three years implementation of the existing strategic plan, some programs were expanded while others were merged. Hence, as part of enhancing the alignment between these

elements and other related issues, there is a strong need for adopting a more comprehensive, synergetic and clear strategic framework. A detailed approach to addressing this disconnect is more important than before to ensure that future programs are more closely tied to strategic goals.

Similarly, as part of ensuring its institutional sustainability and strengthening, CARD needs to revisit the existing Strategic Plan that runs until 2026 and replace it with a new Strategic Plan (2025- 2029), to respond to changing national contexts with implications on the local CSOs. This will help CARD to prepare a strategy for institutional growth and sustainability by responding to the demands of the years ahead. As such, through development and effective implementation of the forthcoming strategic plan, CARD expects to benefit in a number of ways including;

- i. Ensuring that all its programs are anchored on its values, vision, mission and the mandate for its existence.
- ii. Positions CARD to look into the future and to assume a proactive engagement in its mandated areas.
- iii. Enhancing stakeholder interest/motivation as communicating and implementing the strategic plan will stimulate positive response from various stakeholders.
- iv. Providing CARD with a framework for evaluating alternative strategies for achieving its mandate.
- v. Providing clarity in its direction resulting in increased organizational effectiveness and efficiency and ultimately impacting human rights and democratization

3. Objectives of the Consultancy

The main objective of this ToR is to guide the development of a new strategic framework document for CARD with a revision of the existing one, taking into account the current internal and external operating environment in order to enhance CARD's effectiveness and sustainability in the areas that the organization is mandated to operate. CARD intends to undertake this strategic planning revision exercise through the guidance of a consultant. At the end of this consultancy, we expect that CARD will adopt a revised strategic framework document, building on the achievements

brought forward as part of the implementation of 2022–2026 SP and cognizant of its ever-changing operating environment.

4. Scope of Assignment

To achieve the above stated objective, the consultant will review and guide CARD in:

- i. Clearly elaborating and clarifying our Vision, Mission, Strategic areas and Objectives, including priority focus areas for the strategic period
- ii. Undertake a situation analysis, including a SWOT, PESTLE, Stakeholders and other relevant analysis
- iii. Through a combination of stakeholder engagement, external consultations and internal assessments as well as the application of appropriate tools of analysis, refine focus areas; long term priorities, strategic interventions and key result areas.
- iv. Review the institutional capacity, organizational set-up, financial and administrative systems against The Center’s mandated objectives and the identified priorities, strategic interventions, and key result areas, KPIs and make necessary refinements, if any;
- v. Exploring our sustainability plan; including proposals for effective financial and human resource strategies
- vi. Mapping our stakeholders and identifying relevant strategies to engage them to advance our stated objectives
- vii. Conducting risk analysis and management approaches
- viii. Undertaking a more in-depth analysis of current leadership gaps or challenges to inform recommendations for a robust organizational & leadership structure
- ix. Propose monitoring, evaluation, learning, and reporting framework to enable effective implementation of the strategic plan
- x. Budgetary Cost of the strategic plan.
- xi. Finalize Strategic Plan and submit the refined Strategic Plan

5. Methods and Activities

This assignment will involve close engagement with the internal CARD Strategic Planning Team (comprising of the Director, Head of Programs, Head of Finance and Admin, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager and selected staffs) and entail a participatory process, including, but not limited to:

- A review of internal documents and benchmark with similar institutions/ organizations
- Consultations with CARD Board of Directors, Director, Head of Programs and Head of Finance & Admin, founders, staff and selected partners/stakeholders, selected target groups to review the current plan and set priorities for the next plan
- Facilitation of a strategic planning workshop for key people including Board of Directors, SMT, founders, staff, and selected stakeholders and partners to further build on the Strategic plan
- Drawing up of a draft Strategic Plan for the next phase and incorporating input from workshop participants

6. Timeline for the Consultancy

The scope and focus of the assignment are to provide technical, strategic and facilitation support to enable the review and refinement of the strategic plan for CARD. The duration of the consultancy is expected to be one Month with the following steps and level of effort (LOE) suggested:

Approach	Deliverable	Expected Level of Effort
Preparation and Initial Consultation with Program staff and its networks	Brief inception report outlining key deliverables and timelines; contextual analysis.	8 days
<p>Review, Assess and Analyze:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of relevant organizational documents (vision, mission statement, draft strategic plan, organization structure, bylaws, etc.); Participatory process of critical reflection, analysis and consultation (SWOT analysis); 	Focus Group Sessions with selected stakeholders	20 days

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultations with organization’s leadership and program staff members, partners, etc. 		
<p><u>Refine Strategic Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyze feedback from the different source documents and reviews ▪ Refine the strategic framework guided by the scope of work. ▪ Present the refined strategic plan to program staff 	Revised Strategic Plan	10 days
Review and finalize the draft strategic plan based on feedback from staff and key stakeholders	Final Strategic Plan	5 days
Total estimated level of effort	Up to a maximum of 45 business days	

7. Expected Deliverables

- Before commencement of work the consultant/firm is required to submit technical and financial proposal.
- An inception report detailing the methodology/ approaches and timelines associated with this consultancy assignment
- A needs assessment report highlighting the current status and gaps in CARD strategic direction, covering both internal and external factors relevant to the organizational operating environment.
- A strategic planning workshop for the Board of Directors, staff, and selected stakeholders and partners
- A revised strategic plan
- A consultancy report that includes the major activities of the consultancy, the highlights of the strategic planning workshop and an evaluation of the workshop.

8. Profile of Consulting Firm/Team of Consultants

In order to be selected for this assignment, the consulting firm/ the team of consultants and or consultant must possess the following among other Academic and Professional qualifications:

- a) A minimum of a post graduate qualification in the field of Human Rights, Law, Governance, Political Science or Administration, Organizational Development and/ or Management or a related field
- b) Track record of and Experience in preparing strategic plans for civil society organizations (preferably for human rights organizations)
- c) Good knowledge and Expertise in the areas of human rights, democratization, and policy/legislative advocacy
- d) Knowledge of the political, legal, structural contexts and institutions in Ethiopia.
- e) Experience in organization and change management
- f) Excellent communication and facilitation skills
- g) Highly motivated and committed to CARD values of professionalism, accountability, courage in action, integrity and teamwork

9. Selection Criteria/ Required Qualifications of the Consultant

The consulting firm, team of consultants and or individual consultant will submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to CARD, including the following documents:

- A. Technical and financial proposal
 - Technical proposal: A concept note including the approach, methodology and work plan, flowchart and timeline of activities (maximum 4 pages).
 - CV of proposed team
 - Financial proposal: Detailed budget breakdown including taxes.
- B. Detail of the organization/firm
 - Organization profile with relevant experiences
 - A copy of company/firm registration
 - A copy of Tax clearance certificate
 - VAT/PAN registration

- Audit report (latest year)
- Any other relevant documents

C. A suitability statement; including commitment to availability for the entire assignment

10. Supervision

This consultancy assignment will be supervised by CARD's Director, with the support of the Head of Programs and the Program Team

11. Confidentiality of Information

All documents and data collected in the process of the consultancy will be treated as confidential and used solely to facilitate the consultancy assignment. Information to which the consultant shall receive access to shall at all times be treated as the property of CARD and shall not be disclosed except where express permission has been granted or until sufficient time (as determined by CARD) has elapsed after the adoption of the strategic plan document.

12. Consultancy Duration

The strategic planning exercise is expected to be fully completed no later than 20th December 2024. The consultant will submit a detailed plan of work as part of the EOI.

13. Budget and Payment Procedure

The consulting firm or group of consultants/ shall submit total budget with detail breakdown including applicable taxes at the time of proposal submission. The budget covers consultancy fee and all other applicable expenses. Final budget will be agreed between CARD and the consultant/firm prior to signing the agreement through negotiation. The consultant/firm shall bear all tariffs, duties, and applicable taxes or charges levied at any stage during the execution of the work.

This consultancy will be paid at a competitive rate and the total consultancy fee will be paid into three installments:

- 30% upon submission and approval of the inception report
- 40% upon submission and approval of the draft report
- 30% upon acceptance of the final report.

14. Acceptance of Proposal

- All rights to accept or reject a proposal, without giving any reasons, shall be reserved with CARD and if deemed necessary, the consultant shall be asked for modifications.

Copyright

- The consultant /firm shall collect and document required information during the entire course of the Strategic Planning period and include information/data that are not included in the report under annexes.
- The consultant/firm shall also take relevant pictures. Copyright of all of the data and documents will remain with CARD.

Termination of the Contract

- CARD will terminate the contract, if the consultant/firm commits a breach in the performance or observance of its obligation under this ToR. The consulting firm /group of consultants shall be notified in written form within a week prior to the termination of the agreement.

How to Apply

Interested consulting firm/team of consultants can submit their technical and financial proposals via email to info@cardeth.org by 29 Oct 2024 at COB.

For any further information please, contact: Eyerusalem Wolde (email: eyerusalem@cardeth.org phone: +251 911357623