

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Project Title:	In service of a Healthy Democracy - Educating citizens
Duration:	Produce 5 short videos of 3-5 minutes over the period of Feb 28 - to April 28, 2023)
Type of contract:	Consulting contract

1. Background

“Achieving democracy is not the goal. The real fruits of our efforts should be that democracy brings greater unity, harmony, and prosperity to the nation” (HM, 17th Dec 2013). Sitting at the cusp of the 4th Parliamentary elections, 2023 is an opportune moment to prepare the citizenry for a healthy, civil and cleaner manifestation of democracy at the grassroots.

A content analysis of the four years of the Bhutan Democracy Forum and consultations with Parliamentarians and political parties reveal several hurdles to Bhutan’s fledgling democracy.

The game of politics inheres the risk of being abrasive, and fueled by misinformation and rumours on social media, factions in the communities along political party lines run deep. To appeal to the masses, parliamentarians make pledges beyond their legislative, oversight and representative functions and the electorate holds them to fulfil personal favours. This trend, right from the onset of democracy, has put sustainable socio-economic development at risk and subjugated the functions of the elected leaders to run the personal errands of the voters.

Governance is far from the concerns of rural folks dealing with bread-and-butter issues. They perceive voting as the distribution of job opportunities. National Council, the house of reviews is accorded less importance, and citizens do not understand the importance of a stronger opposition whose presence adds to better representation of views on legislative deliberations.

Aspiring candidates experience subtle pressure that perpetuates the exchange of gifts for votes, and some people view elections as the time to make money. The educated echelons stand as spectators of democracy and do not engage for fear of being misconstrued as being political. Therein lay the risk of engendering apathy on one side and populist politicking on the other.

Bhutan can boast of a relatively successful democracy going by regular elections. But our society is experiencing a fracture from values that served us well thus far. There is growing discontent, apathy and malaise. We are at a critical juncture to secure democracy for an engaged citizenry and healthier democracy.

BCMD will develop 5 educational video resources addressing the pressing needs in civic education to make democracy civil, clean and healthy. The education resources will educate citizens to develop more nuanced and ethical criteria to evaluate aspiring candidates and political parties, make informed decisions, and develop a deeper understanding of the role of elected leaders and citizens in shaping democracy and sustainable development.

To this end, BCMD will engage a consultant to carry out the work outlined in section 2 (Page 2)

2. Scope of work

The scope of work will be the following:

- Organise and conduct focus group discussions with diverse stakeholders (political parties, local government officials, youth, civil society members, private sector and rural residents including vulnerable people) to collect stories based on which civic educational resources will be conceptualised and produced.
- Produce draft scripts/framing for the education resources.
- Work with a technical team (filmmaker) to produce five short educational videos of 3- 5 minutes.

3. Details of the duration of work

The consultant will produce five short videos over the life of the project, which will run from Feb 28, 2023 - April 28, 2023.

4. Required qualifications, experience & disposition

A minimum of an undergraduate degree with demonstrated prior work experience in conceptualising, scripting and production of short videos/documentaries/films on socio-political issues.

- Ability to organise and facilitate focus group discussions and ideation workshops
- Knowledge/skill of audiovisual production are highly desirable.
- Flexibility and openness to critical reviews and suggestions.