NRGI External Evaluation 2025
Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI) is an independent, non-profit organization that supports informed, inclusive decision-making about natural resources and the energy transition. We partner with reformers in government and civil society to design and implement just policies based on evidence and the priorities of citizens in resource-rich developing countries. Learn more at www.resourcegovernance.org.

Evaluation Purpose

NRGI is commissioning a consultant to undertake an evaluation this year, with the primary purpose of generating actionable learning and insights to inform NRGI's 2025-2030 strategy moving forward. Specifically, this evaluation will seek to:

1. Identify and analyze outcomes achieved across NRGI's programs
2. Assess how NRGI has contributed to these outcomes, including through the production of ~5 outcome deep-dives or case studies
3. Provide insights to support testing of NRGI's organizational theory of change (ToC) and inform future evaluation and learning approaches for assessing NRGI's strategy
4. Inform a meaningful baseline for NRGI's 2025-2030 strategy, by exploring how harvested outcomes align with NRGI's results framework

The primary audience of the evaluation findings are: NRGI staff, including management and leadership teams, program teams, MEL, and the NRGI boards. The evaluation findings will be used to inform programmatic and strategic decisions in 2026 and beyond; to share outcomes and lessons internally and externally; to test NRGI's theory of change; and to inform evaluation approaches moving forward. NRGI also intends to share the evaluation findings with partners and donors.

Evaluation Scope

The scope of the evaluation will cover:

- Geographical focus: Across NRGI's countries of work as well as regional and global efforts (anticipated desk review of NRGI organizational and strategy documents, broad outcome harvest across NRGI, final report with insights/recommendations toward NRGI's strategy

2025-2030 and ToC), with deeper analysis (~5 cases) in Uganda and Ghana and 1-3 additional countries
- Strategic focus: Across NRGI's strategic goals/objectives (anticipated final report to include insights and recommendations toward NRGI's strategy and ToC; harvested outcomes mapped against NRGI's results framework to inform a baseline), with deeper analysis on goals/objectives/themes based on the outcomes/countries selected
- Timeframe: Proposed focus on NRGI work and outcomes 2023-2025, to provide insights before and at the early stages of NRGI's new strategy, with the potential to extend timeframe back to 2020/2021 (to be discussed and decided with consultant, based on evaluation questions and methods)

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will be guided by a set of key evaluation questions and sub-questions, which will be finalized in collaboration with the consultant. Proposed questions include:

1. Outcomes and NRGI's contribution: What outcomes (positive or negative, intended or unintended) have been produced so far? How did NRGI contribute to these outcomes, and through which mechanisms?
    a. What has/hasn't worked, for whom and in what circumstances?
    b. Through which pathway(s) has change been most effectively influenced and what tools did NRGI use to influence such change?
    c. What factors most influenced whether and how NRGI contributed to meaningful and sustainable change?
2. NRGI's theory of change: To what extent do our assumptions (particularly about how change happens) hold and align with what is emerging in practice? Are there any disconnects, or adaptations needed in our theory of change?
    a. What are we learning about shifting power – within countries, across institutions, and in the global energy transition? To what extent has NRGI's work so far supported more inclusive decision-making or amplified underrepresented voices, and has this contributed to improved and sustainable outcomes?
    b. What are we learning about shaping policy, and actual practice? How is evidence being translated or taken up by policymakers? What are the paths to influencing policy and are we leveraging them?
    c. What are we learning about investing in people to power change? To what extent has NRGI contributed to increasing knowledge and awareness of partners and stakeholders, and has that contributed to improved and sustainable outcomes? What are we learning about the long-term impacts of our capacity development and movement building efforts?
3. NRGI ways of working: To what extent have NRGI's ways of working contributed to delivery and outcomes?
    a. Working in impact-centric ways: To what extent did we demonstrate agility and learning in our program design and delivery? To what extent were our approaches

responsive to local priorities and realities? To what extent was our work reflective of specific and actionable objectives that guided our actions?

   b. Country and global presence: To what extent has NRGI's combination of country presence and expertise, and cross-team/cross-country ways of working contributed to delivery and outcomes?
   c. Evolving resource governance context: How well has NRGI adapted to evolving political, economic, and institutional contexts? To what extent has NRGI connected and evolved traditional needs, opportunities and ambitions around natural resource governance to be responsive in the context of the global energy transition? To what extent are we pushing the intellectual supply of the field and responding to the demand?

4. MEL/evaluation approaches: To what extent is contribution analysis, or other theory-based approaches, relevant, feasible and useful as evaluation approaches for NRGI moving forward? What other methods or approaches may be most useful for evaluation, learning, and capturing impact?
   a. How can we best measure intermediate changes in our ToC (behavior change, narrative shifts, etc.)?
   b. How can we best capture evidence toward our long-term goal of unlocking the transformative potential of resource governance to build more inclusive, resilient and prosperous societies?

The sub-questions may be finalized based on the outcomes/cases eventually selected for the deep-dive analyses. Equity and gender dimensions should be explored across all evaluation questions. It is not expected that the evaluation addresses all of the proposed questions.

Approach

The specific approach and methods will be decided in collaboration with the consultant, and depending on the finalized key evaluation questions. It is anticipated that the evaluation will involve two main phases:

- Phase 1: Broad outcome harvesting across NRGI (desk review, key informant interviews with internal and external stakeholders, etc.)
- Phase 2: Deep dives into ~5 outcomes (using contribution analysis, process tracing, or other relevant approaches) to more deeply assess NRGI’s contribution and the factors contributing to each outcome.

In line with the purpose and objectives described above, the evaluation will also explore how the harvested outcomes and findings can be mapped to NRGI’s organizational results framework, to inform a baseline for the 2025-2030 strategy. The evaluator is expected to advise on feasible approaches for establishing this baseline and identify limitations or opportunities for future measurement.

Deliverables

Anticipated deliverables include:

1. An evaluation plan, which includes the finalized evaluation questions, the selected methods and approaches to be used (including data collection plans), consultation plan (including feedback points on the draft deliverables before finalization), and timeline of activities;
1. Outcome harvest summary, with outcomes mapped against NRGI's results framework to inform a baseline;
2. Evidence-based outcome contribution stories/case studies, to be used internally and externally;
3. Draft and final report (synthesis of findings and recommendations, including succinct, data-driven summary of NRGI impact and recommendations for NRGI's theory of change) and presentation;
4. A memo with recommendations on NRGI's evaluation approach moving forward.

Timeline

The evaluation will take place August-December 2025.

Budget

The budget available for this evaluation is $30,000-$50,000.

The consultant will invoice NRGI at key milestones, to be agreed as part of the contracting process.

Qualifications/Consultant Profile

- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience in monitoring, evaluation and learning methodologies, including evaluation of policy and advocacy interventions and experience in complexity-aware MEL and theory-based evaluation approaches and methods (such as outcome harvesting, most significant change, process tracing, contribution analysis, qualitative comparative analysis, causal mapping, etc.).
- Demonstrated knowledge of extractive industries, fossil fuel governance, and political economy preferred.
- Experience working in NRGI countries and regions of focus.
- Demonstrated research and writing skills, experience conducting case studies, and ability to synthesize complex information into clear, actionable insights.
- English required. Proficiency in Arabic, French, and/or Spanish preferred.
- Attention to detail, flexibility and responsiveness.

How to apply

Interested candidates are requested to provide a proposal which includes:

- Your CV
- An expression of interest, describing the anticipated approach and methods you would undertake in response to this ToR
- Examples of previous evaluation reports or similar work undertaken

Applications should be submitted to procurement@resourcegovernance.org with earganbright@resourcegovernance.org in cc.

Please submit your application by 14 July, 2025.

Any questions on the consultancy should be directed to Elly Arganbright, Learning & Impact Lead, at earganbright@resourcegovernance.org.

Disclaimer: "This is not an employment opportunity and employment-related benefits do not apply to this consultancy".

Annex 1: NRGI's Strategy 2025-2030

Oil, gas and mineral resources have shaped the political, economic, social and environmental trajectories of societies for generations. For people living in low- and middle-income producing countries the extractive sector has been a source of potential–for public revenues, technological innovation and economic opportunity. But too often the sector has generated false promise – fueling conflict, corruption, poverty, inequality, and environmental harm, rather than sustainable development and public benefit.

The current context introduces new challenges. The ongoing energy transition is characterized by deep uncertainties–around the pace of changes in demand for fossil fuels and transition minerals, the scale of increase in access to clean and reliable energy and the power of citizens to shape transition agendas that serve their development needs. But it also has brought tremendous attention to the role of the extractive sector for people and the planet.

And with it, the opportunity for concerted progress to address longstanding inequities for countries with oil, gas and mineral resources. At this critical juncture, NRGI's laser sharp focus on resource governance will help seize this opportunity to advance sustainable development and just transitions.

Leveraging two decades of experience, we serve as a trusted convener in an era of increasing polarization and persistent uncertainty. Our knowledge and experience, including deep country expertise and global influence, help shape effective policies and build bridges between decision makers, impacted communities, and the private sector and between the development and climate communities. Our commitment to equity helps people – including the most vulnerable – put their needs and ideas at the center of public narratives and decision-making.

By 2030, we aim to unlock the transformative potential of resource governance to build more inclusive, resilient and prosperous societies.

Annex 2: Initial Resources

- NRGI Website: https://resourcegovernance.org/
- 2024 End-of-Year Review: https://resourcegovernance.org/publications/2024-year-review
- 2023 End-of-Year Review: https://resourcegovernance.org/publications/2023-year-in-review
- NRGI Countries of Operation: https://resourcegovernance.org/where-we-work