



Request for Proposals: Strategy Evaluation of Ford Foundation Program on Natural Resources and Climate Change

The Ford Foundation is seeking proposals for an external program strategy evaluation of its work on natural resources and climate change.

Background

The Ford Foundation asserts that the natural resources and climate change (NRCC) sector can contribute to the reduction of North-South and within-country inequalities by working globally to ensure that natural resource governance serves the public interest and reflects the aspirations of rural, low-income, traditional, Afro-Descendant, and Indigenous communities. The current strategy of the Ford [NRCC program](#) focuses on the reduction of inequalities related to the control, use, and transformation of forest resources and mineral and hydrocarbon resources. With work grounded in six regional offices – Mexico and Central America, Andean Region, Brazil, Western Africa, Southern Africa and Indonesia – and at the global level (e.g., engaging international fora) we seek to strengthen communities' self-determination through expanding and protecting their rights over land and natural resources, to free, prior, and informed consent, and to share in the benefits that flow from natural resources in their territories. The efforts supported by NRCC aim to support public and private institutions that enhance communities' rights, and bolster public and policy narratives that make the value of their rights commonsense.

Purpose of evaluation

Before elaborating on the 'why' and 'what' of this request for proposals, we want to briefly describe some core principles that underpin how we think about evaluation at Ford. Ford is committed to evaluations that are suited to answer questions about the complex social change our programs focus on. This means seeking evidence in the form of qualitative **and** quantitative data - it means not relying on rigid methodologies or treating numbers as more value-neutral and objective. It means ensuring we are not being extractive or overly burdensome on grantees. And it means clearly communicating the purpose of our evaluations, as well as sharing information in a transparent way that is useful not only for Ford, but for our grantees and the broader social justice field.

With these principles at the center, Ford is seeking an evaluation and thought partner to help us do the following:

- Explicate the NRCC program's underlying theory of change and assumptions;
- In sum, and at the global and regional levels, assess how the strategy sought to respond to the challenges/problems articulated in the theory of change, what progress was made toward outcomes, and what was Ford's contribution;

- Generate lessons in order to strengthen and refine the theory of change and underlying assumptions to inform the next 5-year cycle of strategic grantmaking;
- Share field-facing lessons externally and as appropriate.

Below, we've listed the broad lines of inquiry that all Ford strategy evaluations examine.

Level	Lines of inquiry
Theory of change, strategy design, and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What did Ford do, based on its underlying theory (or theories) of change? ● How did Ford support our grantees in an effort to make progress toward outcomes? Where, on what, and how did the team grant make?
Results/what happened?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ultimately, what was achieved, at each level of work (national, regional, global)? What wasn't achieved, and why? ● What went as expected? What surprised us? ● What was Ford's role in contributing to outcomes? ● How do we situate what was achieved and what was Ford's role, relative to national, regional, and global sociopolitical trends?
Lessons to inform strategy refresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What did we learn about how change happens, and how do we understand progress toward outcomes relative to external trends? ● What are the lessons learned, regarding strategy design and implementation, to inform future strategic grantmaking? ● What should Ford consider as we head into the next strategy cycle?

For each of these broad lines of inquiry, we will identify program-specific learning questions. Some possibilities include:

- By Ford focus region, at the global level, and the intersections therein, on which strategy outcomes (see Appendix I below) and in which areas of our work (territories, land rights; corporate accountability and state capture; benefit sharing, extractive industries, and just energy transition) did we see most significant progress (and where not), and why?
 - What combination of approaches (organizational strengthening, narrative change/communications, coalition/network building, advocacy, litigation, research, etc.) were particularly salient in advancing progress?
 - To what extent did NRCC center the voices, perspectives, and participation of Indigenous and Afro-Descendant Peoples, and local communities in contributing to change?
 - What can we learn about the ways in which NRCC attends to power dynamics related to gender, disability, and other identities in its programming?
- What can we learn about *how* the NRCC program worked internally in order to advance strategy outcomes?

We anticipate a participatory design process through which Ford and the selected evaluators will refine and finalize these questions. Given the breadth of the program, we recognize that we will need to work together with our evaluation partners on prioritizing key questions.

Intended Users

The primary users of the evaluation are Ford Foundation staff who will use lessons to inform the next 5-year strategy cycle moving forward. Secondary users include the social justice and climate change sectors more broadly as well as Ford grantees. Relative to Ford grantees, we want to ensure that we balance participatory approaches - seeking grantee input and feedback all along the evaluation process - with a principle of being as unburdensome as possible. Moreover, wherever we can, we want to ensure that information and lessons resulting from this evaluation are informed by, and useful for our grantees. Finally, we have a commitment to sharing lessons learned with the social justice sector and other funders of climate justice and equality efforts.

Deliverables

The specific timeline and deliverables will be mutually developed in dialogue with the Ford Foundation. However, we envision an approximately 6-8 month process, with the following phases/activities to kick off in October 2022 and anticipated completion by June/July 2023.

- Discovery phase with evaluation partner and Ford that results in finalized evaluation questions, methodology, and implementation plan;
- Data collection;
- Analysis;
- Draft findings;
- Final analysis and report;
- Dissemination events (internal and external)

Evaluation Partner Profile

While no partner profile and proposal will meet all criteria below, the following qualifications are key areas of consideration in the review and selection of the incumbent. We welcome partnerships or collaborations between firms and/or individual consultants, especially those from and based in the Global South.

- Deep experience with strategy-level monitoring, evaluation, and learning of complex social change, with a focus on social justice evaluation
- Experience conducting evaluations for philanthropy (private, bilateral, multilateral)
- Commitment to and demonstration of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the evaluation team, with particular focus on representation and leadership from the Global South

- Strong experience with power analysis; equity-focused, culturally responsive, and/or feminist evaluation; and engaging multiple stakeholders and grantees as participants, contributors, and co-learners
- Strong qualitative and quantitative research and analytical skills, with particular focus on rigorous qualitative methods that allow for complexity
- Interdisciplinary subject-area expertise in climate justice and human rights (e.g. territories, land and rights; extractive industries, corporate accountability and state capture; just energy transition; social movements; Indigenous, Afro-Descendant peoples' rights)
 - Particularly in the geographies where Ford NRCC works, and/or at various levels (global, regional, national), as noted above. Familiarity with political context in the geographies where Ford works.
- Spanish, Bahasa, and/or Portuguese language skills, desirable
- Strong written and visual communications as well as storytelling skills
- Willing to be iterative and adaptable to scope, pace, benchmarks in response to the unexpected

Submission details

Given that the NRCC program includes work in several Ford regional offices, at various levels (global, regional, national, local) as we have outlined above, we are open to various configurations for this evaluation, and recognize the need to think creatively about partnerships. We intend for this to be one evaluation, and as such, we will need to prioritize evaluation scope and questions, based on the available budget, details below. Please specify in your response in what topical or geographic areas you have particular experience, and where you might need support.

Also, in line with our focus on equity and evaluation, we aim to reduce the burden on evaluators who are interested in applying for this work. Therefore, we ask those interested to please submit a proposal of no more than 10 pages (not including CV summaries of 1 page per person) by end of day, **August 5, 2022**.

The proposal should be seen as a starting point for a longer conversation with our team. Following the submission of proposals, we will invite a smaller pool of applicants to discuss their interest in 1-2 video/phone calls.

The proposal should outline the following:

- A statement describing why you are interested in and well-placed to support this work, including particular areas of expertise (per the scope, outlined above), as well as areas where you may need support;
- A brief explanation of your principles, policies, and/or practices related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and how you apply these to your evaluation work;
- Reflections on how you would design and implement this evaluation;
 - Please describe how you might address the breadth of the program which spans work in Mexico and Central America, Andean Region, Brazil, Western Africa, Southern Africa and Indonesia, and national, regional, and global levels.

- Please identify, in addition to the program-specific questions outlined above, a few additional key questions that you think need to be addressed in the evaluation.
- Please provide some thoughts on evaluation and data collection methods and approaches that will ensure inclusion of voices and perspectives from each of Ford's focus geographies and levels of work.
- A brief work plan of the steps you propose, which we recognize are subject to change;
- Composition of team, with brief description of roles and responsibilities;
- An estimated budget (fees and expenses) and desired payment schedule. Please note we estimate up to USD \$400,000 for this work.
- Please make explicit any assumptions you are making in your proposal;
- CVs for the proposed team - this can be outside the 10-page recommended limit.

We ask that all interested applicants submit proposals to Subarna Mathes at s.mathes@fordfoundation.org, and Rebeca Sandoval at r.sandoval@fordfoundation.org by **August 5, 2022**.

Please note, we will hold a webinar to address questions related to this RFP on July 6, 2022 from 8:00 AM-9:00 AM, ET. Please complete this [form](#) if you wish to attend the session. The session will be recorded - we are happy to share the recording if you cannot attend at the scheduled time.

Appendix I - Ford Foundation NRCC Strategy Outcomes

Listed below are the Natural Resources and Climate Change (NRCC) strategy outcomes. These outcomes will be the bedrock of the evaluation.

Ten Year Goal

Government and company policies and practices related to natural resource rights, regulation, fiscal policies, and investments concerning forests and climate change, mining, and energy in the Global South better reflect the expressed needs and aspirations of low income rural and urban families, particularly Indigenous Peoples and other communities with collective land rights, and women and youth within them.

Four Year Outcomes

i. Land rights. Rural communities in forested and extractive regions of the Global South (including women and youth within them) have more secure property rights over their traditional land and tropical forests because of government and private companies recognizing those rights and taking steps to protect them, as well as communities' own efforts to reaffirm and exercise their rights.

ii. Investment projects. Rural communities in the Global South increasingly and freely exercise their right to have a say over mining, energy, agribusiness, and forestry projects that affect their culture, tradition, and land, reflected by specific steps by governments and companies, court rulings.

iii. Benefits. Progress on a select number of emblematic national and global cases where changes in government and company policies and practices make the distribution of the benefits and compensation from mining and energy projects more equitable.

iv. Governance. Progress on a select number of emblematic national and global cases where changes in government and company policies and practices reduce illicit financial flows, corruption, tax evasion, and environmental crimes related to natural resources.

v. Effective agency. Selected grassroots organizations, NGOs, and social movements working on topics related to NRCC outcomes more effectively influence governments, private companies, international agencies, and policy narratives thanks to better advocacy and communications strategies, stronger alliances, greater attention to intersectional issues, and greater synergies between global, regional, national, and territorial work.

vi. Narratives. Narratives in the global and national media and among opinion leaders about forests and climate change, mining, and energy significantly incorporate policy frames and proposals that are put forth by organizations that represent rural communities and other low-income groups in the Global South and which are related to rural climate change mitigation and inequality linked to extractive activities.

vii. Resource mobilization. Collaboration between the international Natural Resources and Climate Change (NRCC-I) program and existing donor collaboratives and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies and new regional and global donor partnerships catalyzes significant new funding in support of NRCC-I outcomes, with emphasis on funding for grassroots organizations and communities.