Context:

The **Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)** is the UK’s democracy assistance agency, working in partnership with political parties, parliaments and civil society organisations around the world to create more inclusive, accountable and transparent democratic systems. WFD strengthens the capacity of these key democratic institutions, helping ensure they have the systems, knowledge and skills to perform effectively. WFD also fosters improved democratic processes, bringing together individuals and institutions and encouraging them to work together to solve concrete problems, applying democratic values and principles.

Over the course of 2020-2021, WFD is leading on supporting democratic stability in Bangsamoro, Philippines through the UK Conflict Stability Security Funding (CSSF) managed by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development (FCDO). Recognising the establishment of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) being a key entry point for locally owned institutions and processes to develop and adopt inclusive and accountable practices, the programme is designed with the overall aim of supporting the implementation of BOL. The programme will support the establishment of BOL by strengthening locally owned institutions to become increasingly accountable, inclusive, and pluralistic.

The programme combines:

1. Strengthening the Bangsamoro parliament as an institution and developing the expertise of its members and staff.
2. Supporting the development of existing and fledging Bangsamoro political parties and brokering dialogue between them around the emerging rules of the game within the new system of governance.
3. Supporting Bangsamoro women as political leaders and politically active citizens to coalesce around shared objectives and agenda and to be equipped with the right expertise to identify and influence key policy and legislative change.

**WFD is looking to hire subject matter experts (SMEs) to design and deliver a parliamentary budget oversight master class series for Members of the Bangsamoro Parliament.** SMEs will work closely with the Senior Parliamentary Advisor, and WFD programme team over the course of the assignment.

In a newly established parliamentary system, building understanding of good practice in public financial management and developing knowledge and skills of MPs to understand and scrutinise the budget is a priority. In the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the Philippines, ensuring that public finances are managed in line with standards of good governance, and that public services are delivered effectively and equitably, is an important part of building public trust in the newly-established parliamentary system of governance.

In common with parliamentary systems world-wide, MPs in the Bangsamoro Parliament have a role in approving budgets as well as reviewing government spending to ensure that funds are used properly, efficiently, and effectively. They require the knowledge and skills to play an active and rigorous role in scrutinising and assessing budget proposals and impact of spending; and an understanding of sources of support available to them to conduct budget oversight. In addition, parliament has an important role to build public understanding of financial issues and to engage different stakeholders in oversight of public spending.

**Topics of master classes:**

WFD invites applications from SMEs to design and deliver 90-120 minutes sessions (including discussion and Q/A) on the topics given below. WFD will work closely with the successful applicants to identify areas to cover under each topic. SMEs can express interest in designing and delivering sessions on more than one topic.

1. The Budget Process and the Role of Parliament
2. Role and Functions of Public Accounts Committees: International Best practices
3. Understanding the Budget
4. Relations between Parliament and other Institutions and Organisations
5. Assessing Impact of Public Spending
6. Public and Stakeholder Engagement in the Budget Process
7. Gender Responsive budgeting
8. Gender Budget Analysis and Scrutiny by Committees

Objective:

This series of budget oversight master classes, will be tailored to the context and needs of Bangsamoro MPs, that will provide international-standard expertise to strengthen the understanding and skills of MPs to make effective use of their financial oversight powers, helping to develop further the key role of parliament in the new system of public financial management established in the BARMM. The online sessions will therefore draw on comparative examples and experience from other parliaments globally, including from contexts comparable to the Bangsamoro Parliament, such as:

- Post-conflict countries.
- Parliamentary systems at sub-national level.
- Countries with experience undergoing democratic transition and with experience in building new democratic institutions.
- Countries in the ASEAN region.
- Muslim-majority countries.

The master classes will:

- Develop understanding of international best practice in parliamentary engagement in public financial management and oversight of the budget;
- Outline the MPs' roles at different stages of the budget process, including ex ante and ex post budget review;
- Assess the function of Public Accounts Committees and their relationship with other committees of parliament in budget oversight;
- Identify where MPs can expect to receive information and technical expertise to support them in their budget oversight duties, including from government, audit institutions, civil society, academia and think tanks, and parliamentary staff;
- Outline the importance of public and stakeholder understanding of and engagement in the budget process and parliament’s enabling role.

Design of the master classes:

The master classes will be delivered online via Zoom, but with provisions to support action-oriented and interactive learning. Each master class will be designed to combine synchronous, real time online group sessions with asynchronous, self-study materials – text, video and/or audio materials, recorded presentations – to ensure a complete package of material to meet the needs of MPs. Sessions will be supplemented by varied material including checklists, presentations and clips, short written briefings and guidance notes, diagrams, and practical examples. Each class will include context analysis with participants, identifying who does what and the roles of different actors (Chief Minister and Ministries, MPs, parliamentary staff, stakeholders and the public). This will ensure two-way feedback and help develop targeted content and follow up support.

Mentoring and ongoing guidance will be built into the design of the master classes. Participants will be encouraged to engage with resource persons through an email group set up to disseminate additional information, resources, and to field individual questions and inquiries by MPs. This allows for personalised support and guidance to accompany the series despite not being able to meet in person. It also enables group chat and online advice and mentoring – helping to contribute to developing a community of MPs as focal points who can be assisted in future to pass on information and skills building for other MPs.
Deliverables:

The subject matter experts will be expected to deliver the following over the course of the assignment:

1. Participate in planning and update calls with lead persons at WFD.
2. Build understanding of the local context in Bangsamoro by conducting desk research and by going through any reading materials provided by WFD.
3. Prepare materials for master class(es), draw up a reading list and supplementary resource materials for MPs.
4. Conduct master class(es) with MPs based on the design explained above.
5. Write a brief report reflecting on the experience of designing and delivering master class(es) and interaction with MPs, making recommendations for follow-on activities, and actions points for WFD to consider as relevant.

Timeline:

The master classes are planned to take place over December 2020 – February 2021.

Fees:

Up to GBP 500 per day depending on experience.

Qualifications and Experience:

At least 10 years of work experience in strengthening parliamentary oversight in budget process and public financial management including work with parliamentary oversight committees such as Public Account Committees at national and sub national levels is essential. Experience of training and capacity building to enhance parliaments and MPs’ understanding and skills to make effective use of their financial oversight powers. Experience of working in devolved administrations, post-conflict and in-transition environment is preferred.

How to apply:

Please send an updated CV, cover letter explaining your expertise and previous experience of work in the area of parliamentary budget oversight and scrutiny and a brief proposal outline to saba.gill@wfd.org. The deadline for application submission is Friday, 20 November 2020.

If you have any question regarding this call for applications, please send your queries to the same email address.