

## Terms of Reference (ToR)

### Independent Evaluation of the Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH) joint appeal to “Syrian refugee crisis”

#### 1. Introduction

Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH) – Germany’s Relief Coalition is an alliance of 13 renowned German aid organisations founded in 2001. Together they provide humanitarian aid in the case of large catastrophes and emergency situations.

The ADH Bonn office is commissioning an independent evaluation of ADH’s joint appeal “Syrian refugee crisis” to

- a) assess to what extent limited or even no direct access to target groups at the local level has affected project and program strategies and approaches, and
- b) draw recommendations to better support the planning of future programmes and projects.

This evaluation will be carried out remotely.

#### 2. Background

An unrelenting war has been raging in Syria since March 2011. It is the worst humanitarian crisis since the end of World War II. Large parts of the country have been destroyed or at least heavily damaged, including healthcare centres and hospitals, schools, water and sanitation systems, and marketplaces. Families have suffered under this brutal conflict that has killed hundreds of thousands of people, forced people to leave their homes, torn the nation apart, and set back the standard of living by decades. Violence, hardship, and hunger have dominated people's daily lives since then.<sup>1,2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/syria> [Accessed: 15/12/2020]

<sup>2</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Factsheet%20Syria%20September%202020.pdf> [Accessed: 15/12/2020]

With the Syria crisis in its tenth year about 6.6 million Syrians are refugees, living in neighbouring countries such as in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. Another 6.1 million people are displaced within Syria.<sup>3</sup> At least half of the people affected by the Syrian refugee crisis are children. With around 18 million people dependent on humanitarian aid the Syrian refugee crisis is the largest refugee and displacement crisis of our time.<sup>4</sup>

In 2012 Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH) launched a joint appeal to support the affected population. Since then, ADH has raised over 18 million Euro from which 13 organisations party to ADH requested funds for their humanitarian responses.

ADH and its member organisations have been providing humanitarian assistance to the people in Syria and neighbouring countries for more than eight years now. Humanitarian needs remain staggering in terms of scale, severity and complexity, with significant protection risks continuing in several areas across the country but also in neighbouring regions. Rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access remains challenging. Many organisations are therefore establishing or scaling up remote humanitarian management and programming practices. This is as well in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic with its access constraints, infection risks, and travel restrictions.

For more information refer to: <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/hilfeinsaetze/fluechtlinge-syrien-und-nachbarlaender/> (German only).

### **3. Purpose, key evaluation questions and general aims of the evaluation**

ADH aims to ensure quality in its work and thus builds on a strong culture of lessons learnt. As such, ADH is committed to review its joint appeals through external evaluations. ADH intends to commission an external and entirely remote evaluation of its joint appeal “Syrian refugee crisis”.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/syria/> [Accessed: 15/12/2020]

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/hilfeinsaetze/fluechtlinge-syrien-und-nachbarlaender/faq-syrien-konflikt/> [Accessed: 15/12/2020]

### **3.1. Purpose of the evaluation**

The changing nature of conflicts has resulted in an increased risk to humanitarian actors, reducing access for programming and monitoring, as well as the physical presence on the ground. Since March 2020, the global COVID-19 pandemic is additionally hindering access to the affected population. Remote humanitarian management and programming practices have therefore become even more necessary and present one method to uphold and continue programme activities and services. It is, however, recognised that limited information is available within a number of organisations on successful approaches, lessons learnt, and best practices of remote management.

The objective of the present evaluation is to identify to what extent a limited or even no direct access to target groups and beneficiaries at local level has affected project and programme strategies and approaches.

The aspect of learning is of particular importance for this evaluation to better support the planning of future programmes and projects.

### **3.2. Main questions / relevant aspects to cover**

The evaluation will address two Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs). All KEQs should be queried independently from each other. Following sub-questions are conceivable but not exclusive:

#### **KEQ 1: Effectiveness of project management processes in the light of limited access to the target population**

Describe its effectiveness, probable challenges, and risks:

- For the development, implementation, management, monitoring & evaluation of projects and programs (along the entire project management cycle)
- For the implementation of policies, activities, and measures (e.g. M&E)
- For local partners and for the collaboration of the member organisations with local partners (transparency, trust, control)
- For the target population
- In the selection of most vulnerable / appropriate target groups (having in mind the humanitarian principles e.g., humanity, neutrality, and impartiality)
- In regards of data validity and security

## **KEQ 2: Different use of approaches, methods and strategies to ensure access to and maintain effective collaboration with target groups**

- Which policies, programmes and processes related to limited access to target groups are documented, in place and applied by the organisations and their partners?
- Identify and describe innovative approaches, new technologies and good (effective) practices.
- To what extent are among others remote capacity development, third party monitoring, and accountability to target populations (e.g., participation, complaint and feedback mechanisms) applied and implemented?

The KEQs should be addressed with special, but not exclusive, consideration of the OECD/DAC criteria of effectiveness and efficiency. As further references the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) on participation (#4), local structures (#3) and target populations (#8) and the 2018 Sphere Handbook should be taken into account.

The KEQs listed above are to be considered as guiding questions only and the evaluation team is not limited to them. The refining and further elaboration of the questions should be done by the evaluation team, which will propose a matrix of detailed evaluation questions. The final evaluation questions will be discussed and agreed upon through consultation with the ADH Bonn office and the organisations participating in the evaluation.

### **3.3. General aims of the evaluation**

The aims of this evaluation are to:

- better understand the effects of limited or even no direct access to target groups, to project and programme strategies and their approaches
- identify good practices
- identify gaps and obstacles
- provide “lessons learnt” for future projects to improve the work of ADH and its organisations
- propose individual recommendations for organisations participating in the evaluation.

#### 4. Evaluation approach and methodology

Between 9-10 member organisations will participate in this joint evaluation. All of them are either having projects in Syria or in Lebanon.

The evaluation team must adopt a consultative and participative approach to triangulate data.

This will include:

- Briefing by the ADH Bonn office, kick-off workshop (virtual) and inception report
- Secondary information analysis
  - Desk review of relevant programme and project documents and reports such as proposals, assessments, project budgets, monitoring and assessment reports, organisations' own evaluations, accountability policies, standards and guidelines for Sphere and CHS
- Direct information analysis (entirely remote)
  - Interviews with ADH Bonn office and in the participating organisations' headquarters in Germany
  - Interviews, focus group discussions and/or questionnaires with country/regional offices, local partners, beneficiaries, governmental authorities and other stakeholders (balanced mix of quantitative and qualitative methods required; ADH Bonn office will support the selection of adequate interview partners)
- Submission of a draft evaluation report to ADH Bonn office and the evaluated organisations for comments and feedback
- Debriefing workshop with ADH Bonn office and the evaluated organisations (virtual or in person meeting) led by the lead evaluator to
  - present the draft findings of the draft evaluation report
  - discuss substantive issues emerging from the draft report
  - gather feedback on the findings and on recommendations
- Submission of final evaluation report
- Submission of individual recommendations for all participating organisations

The evaluation should combine evaluation tools based on international standards and guidelines like the Code of Conduct of the Red Cross/Red Crescent societies, the adapted ALNAP and OECD/DAC criteria, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability and the Sphere Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response.

## 5. Deliverables and deadlines

### 5.1. Proposal outlining methodology and work plan (max. 4 pages)

The proposal outlines the methodology of the planned evaluation and its work plan. It is part of the documents to participate in the second stage of the tender (refer to Chapter 9). The proposal will be used as the basis for the inception report.

Deadline: 14 March 2021, only after invitation by ADH

### 5.2. Inception report (max. 10 pages)

The inception report sets out the planned approach to meeting the consultancy objectives, methodologies to be used and questions to be answered through reviews and planned interviews. It provides a description on how data will be collected and suggests possible data collection tools such as questionnaires and interview guidelines.

Deadline: 3 days after the kick-off workshop

The inception report needs the approval of ADH Bonn office and the permanent working group on quality assurance prior to the start of the evaluation.

### 5.3. Draft evaluation report (for the structure, refer to point 5.4. Final evaluation report)

Deadline: Will be agreed at the kick-off workshop

### 5.4. Final evaluation report including a summary (max. 35 pages excluding annexes)

The report should include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Executive summary (max. 2-3 pages)
- Evaluation purpose, objectives, and scope
- Methodology (reflection and linking to the TOR and possible constraints leading to deviations from the TOR)
- Findings (related to the objectives of the TOR)
- Conclusions
- General recommendations
- Lessons learnt
- Appendices (including TOR, maps, questionnaires, list of interviewees, and bibliography)

Deadline: Will be agreed at the debriefing workshop

### 5.5. Individual recommendations for all participating organisations (around 1 page per organisation)

Around 9-10 organisations will participate in the evaluation.

Deadline: Will be agreed at the debriefing workshop

#### Language

All documents should be written in English.

The evaluation team will directly report to ADH Bonn office.

They will be bound by ADH rules of confidentiality and data protection. All material collected during the evaluation process will be handed over to ADH prior to termination of the contract. The evaluation report and all background documentation will become property of ADH and will be published according to ADH rules and regulations.

The evaluation team will not be allowed to present any of the analytical results as its own work or to make use of the evaluation results for private publication purposes.

### 6. Expected timeframe

Activities	Deadlines
Call for CVs, references and work samples of at least one report that was completed for a recent evaluation of a humanitarian programme	23 February 2021
Closing date for applications (only short-listed candidates)	14 March 2021
Recruitment of evaluation team	22 March 2021
Kick-off workshop (virtual)	13 or 15 April 2021 (9.00 – 12:00)
Inception report	3 days after the kick-off workshop
Evaluation phase including draft evaluation report	Mid of April – End of May 2021
Debriefing workshop (virtual or in person meeting in Germany)	Will be agreed at the kick-off workshop
Finalisation and submission of evaluation report	Will be agreed at the debriefing workshop

The evaluation team lead is requested to immediately inform ADH Bonn office if serious problems or delays are encountered. Any significant changes to the evaluation timetable must be approved by the ADH Bonn office.

## **7. Budget**

Offers should include a proposed budget for the complete evaluation, covering all consultancy fees, and any other costs incurred by the evaluation team.

The budget should present consultancy fees according to the number of expected working days over the entire period.

It is anticipated that the evaluation will last 29 – 31 days.

The evaluation team is responsible for its own travel arrangements and insurance.

ADH Bonn office and/or the organisations will support to establish contact with relevant persons (addresses etc.).

## **8. Qualification of evaluation team**

The team should consist of minimum two evaluators and be appropriately gender balanced.

As a team the evaluators should have the following skills and experiences:

- Very good understanding of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability, the Sphere Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response, and the adapted ALNAP and OECD/DAC criteria, as well as an appreciation of key challenges and constraints to their application in the relevant context.
- Experience in remote evaluations of humanitarian programmes in crisis contexts.
- Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations, and prepare well-written reports in a timely manner.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.



- Considerable knowledge of German.
- Knowledge of Arabic (for at least one of the evaluators).
- Knowledge and prior experience of working in the context of the Syrian crisis is a plus.
- Knowledge of multi-methodological approaches (qualitative and quantitative methods) in humanitarian evaluation (as evidenced by recent publications).
- Knowledge about remote management in humanitarian contexts.
- Experience in collecting data from vulnerable groups including adherence to data protection policies and standards.
- Demonstrated capacity to work both independently and as a team.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated cross-cultural skills.
- Knowledge and experience working with ADH is a plus.

## 9. Tender

Tenders will be accepted by consultants as well as from commercial companies, NGOs, or academics.

### ADH has a 2-stage recruitment process:

- **First stage:** Call for up to date CVs, at least two references for all evaluators involved and work samples of at least one report that was completed for a recent evaluation of a humanitarian programme.
- **Second stage:** Short-listed evaluation teams will be invited by ADH to submit a complete offer.
  - **This offer must include the following:**
    - Covering letter explaining interest and suitability for this position
    - Proposal outlining methodology and work plan (max. 4 pages)
    - Comments and suggestions on this TOR
    - Proposed evaluation budget



The final decision on tenders will be taken by ADH, following short-listing and possible interviews. Only short-listed candidates will be invited to submit a complete offer and will be contacted for the next step in the application process.

**Deadline for CVs, references and work samples:**

Forward CVs, references and work samples **electronically** to Markus Moke (moke@aktion-deutschland-hilft.de) and Sibylle Gerstl (sgerstl@aol.com) by **23 February 2021**.

**Deadline for complete offers (after invitation by ADH only):**

Forward offers **electronically** to Markus Moke (moke@aktion-deutschland-hilft.de) and Sibylle Gerstl (sgerstl@aol.com) by **14 March 2021**.

Postal address:

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