

Attacks on Education Across Syria

Terms of Reference for a Service Provider/Research firm

May 2021

Background on Save the Children

Save the Children is the leading global independent organisation for children. Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and ensure protection from harm. When crisis strikes and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

Our vision: A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our mission: To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Our values: Accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity. We are committed to ensuring our resources are used as efficiently as possible, in order to focus them on achieving maximum impact for children.

Background Information/Context

The Syria crisis, now in its tenth year, has resulted in millions of people living in conditions of protracted displacement both inside the country and across the region, with close to 12 million people in need of multi-sectorial humanitarian assistance across the country. Attacks on education have continued throughout the last ten years, even throughout the Russian-Turkish ceasefire which was announced in March 2020, undermining children's right to learn. Displacement, economic challenges and more recently the direct and knock on impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have posed further barriers for children in Syria.

Save the Children's (SC) Syria Response Office is seeking to conduct gender responsive research on:

1. The short, medium and potential long-term impact of attacks on education on the children of Syria, in particular analysing the impact of these attacks on 1) the mental health of the children, 2) children's perception of safety in school and en route to school, 3) children's educational attainment.
2. Other key barriers to education such as displacement, the economic situation in the country and Covid-19.

Objective

Save the Children is seeking to contract a Service Provider to work in consultation with the SC team to develop the relevant tools and methodologies for a research on the impact of the attacks on education on children, and other barriers to education. The service provider should conduct the research in Northeast and/or Northwest Syria. The consultants should demonstrate capacity to conduct quality research in both areas. The final list of areas will be agreed during the inception phase.

Using qualitative methods, the research will have a strong emphasis on children, teachers and caregivers. It will employ a gendered lens in its design, implementation and analysis.

Location and official travel involved

The Service Provider will work on the methodology and tools development, as well as the joint analysis sessions. This will be carried out remotely, with regular contact with the SC team over email and video calls. Face-to-face meeting at SC offices in Amman can be organized depending on the selected Service Provider's availability and feasibility in light of COVID-19 measures, but this is not a requirement.

Services the Service Provider will provide

- The role of the Service Provider is to work in close collaboration with the SC team on the research design and implementation – including outlining the methodology, key analytical questions, developing the data collection instruments, carrying out data collection, data analysis and writing the analytical report.
- The Service Provider will present the plan for the project implementation through an inception report and facilitate a joint analysis workshop with the SC team based on the preliminary analysis to confirm and validate initial findings.
- The Service Provider is to ensure that gender and mental health analysis, protection and participatory data collection approaches are firmly built into all phases of the project.
- The Service Provider must also adhere to SC principles and standards, including by signing Save the Children's Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding Policy.
- The Service Provider must also obtain SC's approval before taking any step and/or adding any questions to the survey and methodologies.
- The Service Provider will be solely responsible for their logistics, administrative and financial needs including communication and security management during the process. **SC will take no responsibility for any logistical, administrative and financial elements that are required to fulfil the contract (this includes transport, security management, communication and accommodation) and the proposals/applications should include a detailed financial plan.**

Expected Deliverables

The consultant is expected to lead, accomplish and submit the following deliverables within the agreed timeframe and budget:

1. **An inception report**, which will serve as an agreement between parties on how the project will be conducted. Items to be addressed in the inception report include:
 - Refined research questions and methods for data collection (including sample size and process for participant selection), list of secondary data sources to be used
 - Data collection plan
 - Team composition
 - Detailed work plan and timeline
 - Proposal for a joint analysis workshop
2. **Set of final data collection tools and methodology documents**
3. **Clean datasets from all field data collection, including clear metadata**
4. **Facilitation of a joint analysis session with the SC team**, during which the Service Provider will present preliminary findings and lead a participatory workshop/meeting with SC staff members (and potentially relevant partners) to further analyse the findings from the research.
5. **A draft and final report on key findings and analysis**
The contents of the report should include the following:
 - Methodology, including sampling and limitations
 - Analysis and key findings
 - Conclusions

Timeline

All project deliverables need to be completed by 1 September 2021.

Throughout the project implementation, the Service Provider will provide regular updates on progress to the SC team.

Data ownership and protection

All the data collected during the process will be handed over to and become property of SC. The Service Provider must, therefore, treat findings in a confidential manner and require advance written approval from SC for sharing any information with third parties, in whichever form.

Standards and quality

The following standards should be mainstreamed throughout the assignment:

- Tools for information gathering should be sensitive to conflict, culture, age and gender. All tools used with children should be child-friendly in their content and methods.
- Informed consent of all persons involved in the research is a must. Consent form templates should enable safe and ethical referrals of individuals in need for further support and inform the respondents of the actions to be taken in case of urgent protection risks.
- All forms of data gathering should be conducted in a safe and ethical manner, with the Best Interests of the Child at the centre. Save the Children will be liaising with the Service Provider on a regular basis to ensure and support the implementation of this standard.
- The principles of Inclusiveness, Non-Discrimination, Meaningful Participation as well as Accountability, should be central throughout the process.
- A procedure for how to handle urgent cases and referrals should be in place before starting any data gathering beyond desk research and signed off by Save the Children.
- Adherence by all staff to Save the Children's Code of Conduct, Child Safeguarding policy and practices as well as confidentiality throughout the process.
- All data (hard and soft copies alike) should be safely stored and access to the dataset should be limited based on the role of the staff.

Experience and skillset required

Key qualifications of the Service Provider should be (whenever the applicant is a team of researchers, the information of Lead Researcher should be presented):

The Service Provider and its team must meet the following criteria (70%):

- Lead researcher must have excellent oral and written English skills, with proficiency in Kurdish and Arabic being a strong asset.
- Demonstrated experience in designing and implementing surveys and research tools in complex humanitarian settings.
- Previous experience in working in the Syrian context and strong understanding of the contextual developments in different areas across Syria;
- Experience in mental health research and analysis.
- Experience in gender-based research and analysis.
- Team ability to conduct research across all selected areas of Syria, and/or the ability to travel to and within the required region as allowed by the local and COVID-19 restrictions.
- Experience in participatory research methodologies and data collection with children.
- Field team to involve both female and male members.
- Collaborative approach and willingness to invest in capacity strengthening of the SC team.

Particular requirement: No person performing any task for or on behalf of Save the Children must in any way be involved or associated with abuse or exploitation of children as described in the Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Policy.

Payment information

The payments for the 20% of the total cost payable within 45 days of satisfactory completion of deliverable 1 (inception report)

30% of the total cost payable within 45 days of satisfactory completion of deliverable 2 (analysis workshop)

50% of the total cost payable within 45 days of satisfactory completion of deliverable 3 and 4 (draft and final report)

The Fees are inclusive of all costs, overheads and expenses, including travel, subsistence and accommodation.

How to apply for the services

In order to be considered for this opportunity, interested partners are requested to submit the following:

- Cover letter (maximum one page)
- Technical Proposal (maximum seven pages):
 - i. Relevant experience of the Service Provider
 - ii. Understanding of the assignment/objectives of the project
 - iii. Proposal for the methodology, including sampling and approaches to be used
 - iv. Proposed timeline for completing the project
 - v. Plan for analysis
 - vi. Team composition and roles, provide resume of the personnel involved in the study
- Financial Proposal (maximum one-page): detail of cost estimates for services rendered. This should include: daily consultancy fees, accommodation, travel, communication, printing and other logistics.

The deadline for responses is: 02nd of August 2021, at 17:00 o'clock.