DRC

Terms of Reference (TOR)

for

Baseline Consultancy for GBV consortium project in Sudan

1. Who is the Danish Refugee Council?

Founded in 1956, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a leading international NGO and one of the few with a specific expertise in forced displacement. Active in 40 countries with 9,000 employees and supported by 7,500 volunteers, DRC protects, advocates, and builds sustainable futures for refugees and other displacement affected people and communities. DRC works during displacement at all stages: In the acute crisis, in displacement, when settling and integrating in a new place, or upon return. DRC provides protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance; supports displaced persons in becoming self-reliant and included into hosting societies; and works with civil society and responsible authorities to promote protection of rights and peaceful coexistence.

DRC is currently operating in Sudan since 1994, working in collaboration with a number of partners on protection, GBV, shelter, WASH, CCCM, food security/economic recovery, peacebuilding and humanitarian mine action and clearance. More speficigally, DRC is leading a consortium with Trocaire, Norwegian Church Aid, and nine Sudanese Women-led-organisations to respond to gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict sexual related violence (SCRV) in Sudan.

2. Purpose of the consultancy

The Danish Refugee Council based in Sudan seeks proposals from Consultant(s)/consultancy firm will work in collaboration with the consortium management unit, the wider consortium agencies and FCDO and is responsible for leading and carrying out the baseline assessment for this project. This includes developing the methodology and execution of the baseline assessment and providing recommendations to fully establish the set-up of the project. All work should be aligned with project priorities and protection/do no harm principles. The ideal candidate(s) would preferably have experience working on previous baselines/evaluation, ideally have worked on projects related to the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence and in collecting data safely and ethically on GBV related topics with women, girls and other at risks group.

3. Background

Sudan is in the midst of one of the world's worst protection crises. An estimated 12.4 to 12.7 million people—predominantly women and girls—are at risk of gender-based violence (GBV) in Sudan, a figure that has quadrupled since the conflict erupted in April 2023. According to UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), women and girls account for 98% of documented conflict-related sexual violence survivors, facing systematic abuses including rape, gang rape, abduction, sexual slavery, intimate partner violence, and forced child marriage. Assessments reported by UN News further reveal that 76% of women aged 25 to 49 feel unsafe in public spaces and displacement camps. While hundreds of formal cases are verified annually, humanitarian agencies emphasize that severe underreporting—driven by social stigma, fear of retaliation, and the collapse of healthcare and legal systems—means documented incidents represent only a small fraction of the actual crisis. Additionally, access to survivor-centred sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) services remain extremely limited. Many survivors have never received basic medical and psychological care, and they struggle to access justice and socioeconomic rehabilitation. Prior to the conflict, Sudan had made modest progress on women's rights, including repealing the restrictive Public Order Act and criminalizing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. The current conflict has reversed these fragile gains. Sexual violence is being used as a tactic of war, causing severe physical and psychological harm and social exclusion. Socially, the conflict has shattered community structures and support systems, amplifying vulnerabilities. Survivors now remain increasingly stigmatised and isolated, facing multiple forms of discrimination and increased vulnerability escalating the risk of exploitation and violence. All this makes urgent protection and accountability measures critical. In a context where populations are not effectively supported by law enforcement, there is a lack of access to and functionality of formal justice mechanisms, leading to large scale protection threats. The lack of a political solution in Sudan alongside the lack of solutions to the millions of Sudanese affected by displacement affect national and local level stability, both in regard to ongoing conflict and competition over resources, as well as rising rates of criminality and food insecurity in response to increasing poverty and vulnerability. Cultures of impunity and stigmatisation are perpetuating and reinforcing violence against women and girls -with sexual violence normalised and seen as inevitable.

Launched in 2026, HOPE-S (Healing, Outreach, Protection, Empowerment) is a five-year, £19.95 million programme funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to tackle GBV and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) across conflict-affected regions of Sudan. Following a call for proposals, the Danish Refugee Council in Sudan has successfully been awarded the annual grant agreement (AGA) leading a consortium with Trocaire, Norwegian Church Aid, and nine Sudanese Women-led-organisations. The programme has three outcomes:

- **Risk Mitigation:** strengthen WLO/community structures for community-led prevention
- **Response:** improve access to essential GBV/SGBV response services for survivors
- **Social norms:** Harmful social norms/behaviours that perpetuate GBV/CRSV transformed, and protective community norms are strengthened

The programme design explicitly references **localization** - support the leadership of Sudanese WLOs, working in high-risk locations and in turn has inclusive participative delivery informed by a Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) analysis & safeguarding.

4. Objective of the consultancy

The baseline study aimed to be participatory and will serve to define indicators to capture both quantitative and qualitative data throughout the 5-years project to update the Project's M&E framework with initial data, to build further on the evidence and indicators used in other projects supporting survivor-led networks, allowing an analysis of the impact and effects cumulatively and to lead an intersectional needs analysis.

The assignment has the following key objectives:

- Provide quality baseline data (quantitative and qualitative) to respond to the already designed indicators in the Project's logical framework/M&E framework; including ethical considerations for data collection
- Define methods and tools to evaluate some of the indicators in the Project's logical framework/M&E framework drawing on relevant interagency GBV guidance, minimum standards, and survivor-centred ethical principles.
- Provide inputs into the M&E framework – including baseline targets;
- Provide an analysis of key forms of marginalisation, exclusion and barriers faced by groups at risk of GBV/CRSV, and inform DRC and consortium partners programming, engagement and strategic priorities.
- Provide recommendations to Project stakeholders in order to strengthen the Project's impact and effectiveness.
- Identify the locally relevant harmful norm through a participatory social norms exploration

Preparation

- Review project proposal documents, resources and standards, including desk review of context
- Develop a baseline methodology, for both beneficiaries and humanitarian stakeholders, The scope of the baseline assessment covers locations across 5 states (Central Darfur, North Darfur, South and North Kordofan and Khartoum)
- Develop data collection tools
- Share draft tools, sampling frame and analysis plan with CMU
- Develop an interview and data collection schedule, with support from Consortium MEAL Co as necessary. This should include proposed ethical guidance throughout the process
- Train, support and supervise data collectors on data collection tools and techniques (in Arabic)
- Identify key stakeholders and conduct field interviews
- Analyse data into an initial set of findings disaggregated by age, gender, and inclusion.

Data collection, analysis and report

- Train consortium staff/partners on data collection tools and techniques, as required.
- Supervise data collection timeline and quality, consolidating findings on an ongoing basis.
- Analyse data collection into an initial set of findings (disaggregated by age, gender, and disability inclusion), supporting additional data collection as identified.
- Validation meeting (with presentation) and final report

Other key information: An independent midline and endline study is planned by FCDO who will be contracting an independent evaluation company. Additionally, FCDO is also contracting a third-party monitoring entity. The mid-line and endline study will utilise as much as possible the same methodology than the baseline in order to ensure the comparability of the findings. The objectives of this assignment (full report, data collection tools and presentation of findings) is expected to be completed in English and Arabic.

5. Scope of work and Methodology

Proposed Scope (to be confirmed during onboarding) : The assessment will focus on understanding safety and security concerns, available support systems, and social dynamics influencing the safety of women and girls in crisis-affected areas. The study will use secondary data, community mapping a survey and primary qualitative data to gather information on safety perceptions, responses to violence, and community-driven initiatives for

GBV prevention and support. The consultant will be responsible for developing a full assessment protocol based on this TOR, including refining the methodology and finalizing the data collection tools tailored to each target group, conducting data analysis and writing report. The consultant will also ensure that the data collection methods and tools are adapted to the cultural and social context of the selected locations. In addition, the consultant will ensure that all enumerators receive training prior to data collection on the code of conduct, safeguarding, and basic protection principles. The consultant will be responsible for ensuring that strict safe and ethical approaches procedures are adhered to at all stages of the assessment. The geographical scope includes Central Darfur (Zalengi, Nertiti, Um Dukhn Golo locality), North Darfur (Tawila locality), South Kordofan (Dellemi, Thobo, Dilling, Kadugli, Abyssia and Abu Jabayha localities), North Kordofan (El Obeid and Rehad localities Khartoum (East Nile, Ombduram- Umbadda, Omdurman- Khariri, Bahri and Khartoum localities). It will target key populations, including women, adolescent girls, men, community structures, service providers, and both government and non-government actors. All participant data will be anonymized, and confidentiality will be maintained at all stages. The assessment will follow strict ethical standards to minimize harm to both participants and researchers.

Methodology : The baseline assessment will utilize a mixed methods approach, combining secondary data from desk-based document review and primary quantitative and qualitative data collection.

- **Survey (quantitative):** one survey with modules on perceived safety and wellbeing, access to services, and social norms, with the Washington Group Short Set on functioning.
- **Qualitative Methods: Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Interviews with relevant stakeholders, including service providers, WLOs and local partners, religious and traditional leaders, community leaders, and local authorities (if appropriate)
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Discussions with different community groups (women, girls, men, boys, and marginalized groups) to capture diverse experiences and concerns. Please refer to geographic scope
- **A review of secondary data** to assess drivers of GBV and types of GBV in the proposed implementation areas, barriers to accessing GBV services, and existing practices of WLOs and local national NGOs regarding safe and ethical data management, referral pathways and SOP. This will include data from local actors, government sources, and other agencies
- Validation meeting: the consultant will facilitate a validation meeting to share/ verify initial findings and recommendations with a remit to how they can be integrated into the context in Sudan.
- **Presentation:** of findings to consortium unit and to FCDO. CMU will logistically organise but expect the consultant to present the findings.
- **Final report (**no more than 20 pages). The final report should also include (raw analysis, data tools, analysis and secondary sources use), including a short 2-3 pages max summary as well as recommendations & proposed targets
- **Tentative Indicators to be baselined** (see below). This will be confirmed, and the logframe shared during onboarding, after confirmation with FCDO, DRC and Tier 2 & Tier 3 partners).

Indicator	**Method**
Impact 1: % of women, girls and other at-risk groups in targeted areas reporting improved perceptions of safety and psychosocial wellbeing.	Individuals
Impact 2: Average self-reported impact of WLOs and/or women and adolescent girls in decision-making structures	Women's Reported Impact Questionnaire

Impact 3: % of women and girls, including those at risk of GBV/CRSV, who report being able to access service they need, including health, psychosocial and protection services.	Individuals
Outcome 1: % of supported WLOs/women representatives reporting increased ability to influence decisions in identified formal and informal structures.	KII
Outcome 2: % of supported service delivery points meeting agreed minimum quality standards for survivor-centred GBV	KII
Outcome 3: % of women, men, girls and boys in target population who report that they disagree or strongly disagree with locally relevant harmful norms related to GBV/CRSV.	SNET

6. Deliverables

The Consultant will submit the following deliverables as mentioned below:

Throughout the phases, the Consultants/consultancy firm will be supported by the Chief of Party and the Consortium MEAL Coordinator (the latter acting as the primary focal point) who will facilitate access to the wider consortium for field data collection activities, and ensure they are conducted in a sensitive, safe and harmonized manner.

DRC's responsibilities

DRC is responsible for providing a briefing and will facilitate meetings with consortium stakeholders and share background information/documents (with support from the wider consortium). The wider consortium will support in providing secondary documentation information, list of locations, agreed list of KIIs and WLOs identification and will be responsible for data collection. The consortium members will either hire the data collectors or make their staff available during this time-period. Each of the 12 consortium agencies will identify and make available a focal point - who will also engage in briefing, validation meetings and act as a primary focal point in coordinating the data collectors, sharing information on locations, KIIs, WLOs etc Output documents will be reviewed for quality and final payments will be made upon submission of all agreed deliverables.

Consultancy firm/consultants' responsibility

The consultant will be responsible for all aspects of the deliverables and other responsibilities stipulated in the ToR. It is expected that the Consultant will be able to conduct work remotely. The consultant(s) is/are responsible for providing the following deliverables:

- **Inception Report:** Share detailed methodology, assessment tools, and a work plan outlining activities, timelines, and milestone
- **Data collection tools:** Develop and share questionnaires, interview guides etc as applicable
- **Training** – train data collectors, keep track of information and brief/debrief focal points
- **Clean raw data & data analysis –** clean and analyse data collected during the assignment
- **Update M&E framework** (site and thematic specific) baseline, midline targets on planned results and indicators
- **Validation meeting** – Conduct a validation meeting with key consortium members & FCDO to validate the findings

- **Draft Assessment Report:** A preliminary report summarizing key findings and gaps.
- **Final Assessment Report:** A comprehensive report with findings, analyses, and actionable recommendations.
- **Presentation:** A PowerPoint summary of key findings and recommendations - at least two ppts (1) with consortium (2) with FCDO (&/or other external stakeholders - to be confirmed)

The Consultant(s)/consultancy firm can work flexibly over the period of a **maximum of 40 days**, starting ideally in mid-**December 2026- mid February 2027.** While the exact dates and number of working hours will be flexible and adapted to operational requirements (including Christmas/end of year break), it is expected to be finalized in the application process, a suggested indicative breakdown of the work schedule is as follows:

- Onboarding and Desk review 5 days

- Baseline methodology, tool development and training 7-10 days
- Data collection, cleaning and analysis 7-14- days
- Report drafting 6 days
- Presentation and validation meeting (consortium and FCDO) 2 days
- Report revision and finalization (post DRC review) 3 days

In advance of each phase of work, the Consultant will be expected to confirm with the DRC Chief of Party/MEAL Coordinator that the number of days outlined above remains appropriate; maximum figures can be reduced or increased as required, at the discretion of DRC. Accordingly, deadlines for all deliverables will be finalized based on consultation with DRC CMU with the final report package delivered by **15th February 2027.** Tentative early findings to be provided by 17th January 2027 (aligned with donor reporting)

Phase	Expected deliverables	Indicative description tasks	Maximum expected timeframe
Phase 1 Review	**Onboarding & Desk Review**	Detailed workplan developed Onboarding – meeting key focal points Sourcing & review/collate documentation	**5 working days**
Phase 2 Tool Development & Training	**Baseline methodology, tool development and training**	Development of baseline methodology Tool development Training materials for data collection and deliver training	**7-10 working days**
Phase 3 Data collection and Analysis	**Data collection, cleaning and analysis**	Review and safely store data collected Clean Data Carry out data analysis and come up with initial findings and proposed targets	**7- 14 working days**
Phase 4 Initial report and validation	**Initial Report and validation meeting**	Draft report. Presentation and validation meeting with consortium and FCDO (as required)	**6-8 working days**
Phase 3 Final Report	**Final report**	Prepare first draft report Feedback from DRC to submit the final report	**3 working days**

The Consultant will provide the documentation **by mail and have access to DRC Consortium EXTRANET sharepoint**

7. Duration, timeline, and payment

The Consultant(s) will be expected to work full-time over the course of **maximum 40 days** (period of **mid-December 2026 –mid February 2027)**. While the exact number of days, dates and number of working hours will be flexible and adapted to operational requirements and holiday period - this will be finalized in the application process. Accordingly, deadlines for all deliverables; which will be synchronized with possible two payment tranches

1) 30% upon submission of inception report and validated Data collection tools, alongwith invoice
2) 70% upon submission of validated final report (with validated ppt, raw data, updated M&E framework) alongwith invoice

The consultant shall be prepared to complete the assignment no later than ***15th February 2027.***

8. Proposed Composition of Team

Evaluation team – consisting of Lead Evaluator (with GBV and evaluation skills) – in both Arabic and english

9. Eligibility, qualification, and experience required

Consultant(s) profile and technical competencies

Examination Criteria

Bidder qualification criteria

Bidders must meet the Essential Criteria below for this tender. Failure to comply with the criteria will result in the disqualification of the bid. Submitted offers will be reviewed on "Pass" or "Fail" basis to determine compliance with the below formal criteria/ requirement:

Essential	
#	**Requirements**
1	The consultant must possess authorization to work in Sudan and/or have the necessary permissions for travel and data collection within Sudan and/or have access to an authorized third party with permission to collect data and operate in Sudan.
2	The designated Project Manager / Lead Consultant must possess a master's degree in international development or related field.
3	The consultant(s) or consultancy firm must have a minimum of 5 years of research and/or academic work with experience in conducting research using mixed-method approaches
4	The proposed team must be able to read, speak and write both English and Arabic fluently. The bidder must clearly identify the personnel who will provide these language capacities.

Technical Assessment Criteria

To be technically acceptable, the bid shall meet or exceed the stipulated requirements and specifications in the RFP. A Bid is deemed to meet the criteria if it confirms that it meets the conditions, procedures and specifications in the RFP without substantially departing from or attaching restrictions with them. If a Bid does not technically comply with the RFP, it will be rejected.

For all bids deemed technically compliant as per the specification stipulated in Annex – Terms of Reference (ToR), DRC will give a weighted combined technical and financial score. The weighted score will determine the contract award.

The technical criteria for this RFP and their weighting in the technical assessment are:

Technical criteria #	Technical criteria	Weighting in technical assessment[Total 50%]
1	**Qualification and Language proficiency of personnel dedicated to the consultancy**	**10%**
1.1	Relevant academic and professional qualifications of the Team Leader/Lead Consultant and key team members in social sciences, gender studies, development, humanitarian action, research or a related field.	1-10 points
1.2	At least five years' relevant experience conducting baseline studies and/or evaluations using mixed-methods approaches, including participatory and inclusive data collection and, where appropriate, innovative or non-traditional methods.	1-10 points
1.3	Suitability, roles and complementary expertise of the proposed team, including capacity to lead the assignment, supervise fieldwork, analyse data and produce reports.	1-10 points
2	**Proposed Methodology and Assessment**	**%20**
2.1	Quality and appropriateness of the proposed mixed-methods baseline design, including clear research questions, methods and justification for the selected approach.	1-10 points
2.2	Sampling approach of data collection proposed by consultant.	1-10 points
2.3	Demonstrated understanding of the requirements and considerations involved in collecting data on GBV and violence against women and girls, including engagement with survivors.	1-10 points
2.4	Data analysis method and approach	1-10 points
3	**Previous experience in similar context**	**15%**
3.1	Demonstrated experience in conducting large-scale external assessment within fragile/emergency contexts.	1-10 points
3.2	Detailed knowledge and practical experience in designing and implementing research cycles in the humanitarian sector, specifically for impact measurement.	1-10 points

3.3	Professional experience in Sudan and understanding of the operating context. Sudan experience is preferred.	1-10 points
3.4	Solid understanding of Sudan's cultural/economic context	1-10 points
4.1	Familiarity with durable solutions programming	1-10 points
4.2	Strong understanding of the difference between emergency support and development work	1-10 points
4	**References**	**5%**
4.1	Positive references from other institutions preferably from NGOs/INGOs related to similar scope of service	1-10 points

Please note that bids shall respond to all criteria, or their bid may be disqualified.
Bidders who pass the technical evaluation will be invited for an online panel interview. The interview will be evaluated per the following criteria:

Technical criteria #	Panel Interview criteria	Weighting in technical evaluation [Total 50%]
1	Previous experience in similar data collection, analysis and research projects	5%
2	Clarity of proposed process	20%
3	Demonstration of understanding of challenges and best practices across various contexts	20%
4	Spoken fluency in English	5%

Please note that bids shall respond to all criteria, or their bid may be disqualified.

It is expected that the Consultant will be able to conduct the assignment remotely. As the consultant is expected to train, engage and support the data collectors in Sudan - at a minimum the consultant(s) are expected to work in same time-zone as Sudan.

Desirable:

- Professional experience in Sudan is preferred.

10. Technical supervision

The selected consultant will work under the supervision of: SALAMA project Chief of Party (Muhammet.Kalei@drc.ngo) with day to day engagement with the Consortium MEAL Coordinator (Christian.Eboh@drc.ngo)

11. Location and support

The assignment can be contacted remotely with working hours preferably in the same time-zone as Sudan. The Consultant will provide her/his own computer and mobile telephone

12. Travel

N/A

13. Submission process

Application process: Interested applicants/consultancy who meet the required qualifications and experience are invited to submit their expression of interest which includes the following documents as per the RFP letter invitation including:

- CV(s) with details of qualifications and experiences indicating documentation of relevant assignments undertaken and full correct details of three professional referees
- The envisioned work-plan (maximum 5 pages) that summarizes
    - An understanding of the objective of the baseline
    - A proposed methodology and envisaged workplan which contains a well-informed approach to the participation of survivors in the study and approaches to ethics, "Do no harm" and gender sensitivity;
    - A proposed timeline for completing the assignment;
    - Financial proposal providing cost estimates of daily consultancy fees - only financial offers (inclusive of VAT and all relevant taxes will be accepted).
    - Supplier profile and registration form
    - Registered Certificate of firm

Deadline to submit the expression of interest is **Wed 9th December 2026.** The final deliverables of the assignment are expected by 15th February 2027 (exact date to be determined with the consultant(s))/consultancy firm.

14. Evaluation of bids

DRC will evaluate the proposals and award the assignment based on technical and financial feasibility. DRC reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal received without giving reasons and is not bound to accept the lowest or the highest bidder. Only those shortlisted will be contacted. Any subcontracting of the consultancy will not be accepted.