



Meta-synthesis for DEC's *Cyclone Idai* Response

Call for proposals

The DEC is calling for proposals to undertake a meta-synthesis for the DEC response for Cyclone Idai (Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe) as described in the attached Terms of Reference.

Interested bidders should submit the following:

- 1) a cover note confirming that the bidder can carry out the meta-synthesis in the timeframe given in the Terms of Reference (ToR);
- 2) a brief conceptual framework and proposed approach for how the meta-synthesis will be undertaken, including limitations (max 2 pages);
- 3) a matrix demonstrating how the consultant/s meet each of the skill requirements (in point 7);
- 4) a succinct workplan for the assignment;
- 5) a budget (in GBP) setting out the full cost for the meta-synthesis, including:
 - a. the daily fee rate and number of days for each team member
 - b. all other costs for the meta-synthesis
- 6) CVs for the proposed team member/s;
- 7) two samples of outputs from previous relevant pieces of work;
- 8) contact details for two referees for similar type of work for the lead consultant; we will only contact referees with your permission.

DEADLINE: proposals should be submitted by **9am Monday 2nd August 2021** to Katy Bobin, DEC Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning Manager: kbobin@dec.org.uk.

Submissions to this call for proposals will be assessed based on the technical quality and the proposed budget. For technical quality, the following will be considered: published requirements for the team, strength of proposed methodology and workplan.

It is expected that this work will be contracted by mid-August, with a view that the work takes place across August-October 2021. The DEC reserves the right to negotiate the proposals and budgets with the bidding teams before offering a contract.



Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) brings together fourteen of the largest UK humanitarian charities¹ to raise funds in response to major international humanitarian crises. In line with the Core Humanitarian Standard commitment 7 “*humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve*”, DEC is commissioning a learning oriented meta-synthesis of the DEC membership’s response to Cyclone Idai in Southern Africa.

2. Background

In March 2019, Tropical Cyclone Idai swept through three Southern African countries (Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe), killing at least 1200 people² and leaving around three million in need of assistance after causing catastrophic flooding and wind damage.³ It was possibly the worst weather-related disaster to hit the southern hemisphere.

On 21 March 2019, in the aftermath of the disaster, the DEC launched an appeal to address the cyclone’s extensive humanitarian impact in the three countries of Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. When DEC appeal channels closed at the end of September 2019, the collective fundraising campaign had raised £43m. This figure includes £4m DFID AidMatch.

Thirteen DEC members responded with DEC funds - nine in both Mozambique and Malawi, and 7 in Zimbabwe. Later, in 2020 members adapted their programmes to respond to needs arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as Cyclone Chalane which made landfall in Mozambique in December 2020. The DEC-funded Cyclone Idai programmes closed at the end of March 2021, with members submitting final reports at the end of May 2021.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this study, a meta-synthesis⁴ of DEC members’ and others’ work, is to learn lessons from the actions in the affected countries for future similar responses, in Southern Africa and elsewhere. This study therefore is not an evaluation of members’ activities; rather, it seeks to look at the overall work of DEC members within a larger context, and from that, to seek to identify lessons for future action.

The primary aim is to provide an accessible narrative synthesis of the main findings highlighted in DEC members’ MEAL-related reports, with particular emphasis on areas of convergent findings and indicative learning points. This will serve as learning for the DEC, DEC members and the humanitarian sector more widely.

4. Scope

The scope of the desk review will be as follows:

¹ <https://www.dec.org.uk/member-charities>

² <https://www.emdat.be/> (01.07.21)

³ UNOCHA, “Mozambique: Cyclone Idai & Floods Situation Report No. 19 (As of 29 April 2019),” Situation report, April 29, 2019, <https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/mozambique-cyclone-idai-floods-situationreport-no-19-29-april-2019>.

⁴ The report is a meta-synthesis, taken here to mean a research approach ‘that uses the qualitative findings reported in previous studies as building blocks for gaining a deeper understanding of particular phenomena’. Source: Deakin University, see https://www.deakin.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/681022/4-Josh_metaanalysis.pdf



- DEC members' plans and reports submitted to the DEC
- DEC real-time Response Review report
- DEC-funded evaluations x 4 (2 in Mozambique; 1 in Malawi; 1 in Zimbabwe)
- DEC Collective Initiative report on *Proactive Safeguarding*
- Non-DEC funded member evaluations
- Additional relevant non-DEC background materials

5. Guiding questions

DEC wishes to maintain flexibility for the meta-synthesis process to be iterative. Initial guiding questions are:

- What are the key recurrent themes arising from the desk review?
- For each of these themes:
 - what are the main findings and learning points?
 - what common or recurrent findings / learning points emerge?
 - is there any significant divergence in the findings, and if so, what factors might affect or explain this?
 - where common or consistent findings do occur, what indicative conclusions do these suggest?
- How have the findings from the DEC Response Review report been taken onboard throughout phase two?
 - what were the enabling factors in this regard?

DEC is particularly keen for learning around: a). local capacity strengthening and working with partners; b). cash programming; c). adaptation; d). remote management; e). disaster risk reduction; and f). impact on the environment of humanitarian programmes, to be drawn out where applicable.

6. Approach

The consultant is invited to outline an appropriate approach for the assignment, however the following points should be taken into consideration:

- desk-based review of members' reports and additional relevant materials is essential;
- a clear and transparent element of quality review of the evidence is required;
- explicit reference to the Core Humanitarian Standard (as the DEC's quality and accountability standard) is expected throughout the report;
- remote interviews with key informants (from DEC members and other relevant organisations) for clarification and verification might be useful.

A 2018 ALNAP lessons paper⁵ covers a plethora of issues that come up in synthesis, as well as some well thought out ideas around mitigating them. We welcome consideration of the recommendations contained in this paper.

7. The consultant/s

It is expected that the bulk of the work will be carried out by one or two consultants.

The consultant/s will provide the following:

⁵<https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/ALNAP%20Lessons%20Paper%20Method%20Note.pdf>



1. extensive experience in conducting learning focussed studies/ reviews/ evaluations of humanitarian programmes;
2. proven ability to coordinate a multi-country, multi-stakeholder study;
3. sound understanding of the methodological considerations related to meta-syntheses;
4. demonstrable analytical, communication and report-writing skills;
5. sound understanding of the context in Southern Africa;
6. strong facilitation skills and experience in designing participatory workshops;
7. demonstrable commitment to learning and improvement in humanitarian action;
8. experience with DEC or a DEC member agency is a plus.

8. Deliverables and schedule

It is expected that the bulk of the work will take place across August-October 2021.

The outputs of this assignment will be:

- A draft report to be submitted by end September 2021
 - including practical recommendations for programming
 - max 30 pages, plus appendices
- A dissemination event for member agencies, following finalisation of the report by mid October 2021.
- An audio / visual output for dissemination to aid workers in the field, by end October 2021.

9. Budget

The maximum overall budget for this work is **£30K**.