



**Towards an improved understanding of equitable and quality partnerships  
Across a selection of active DEC Appeals**

**Call for proposals**

**The DEC is calling for proposals to undertake a membership support consultancy across all DEC current appeals as described in the Terms of Reference below.**

Interested bidders should submit the following:

- 1) a cover note confirming that the bidder can carry out the support consultancy in the timeframe given in the ToR;
- 2) a brief conceptual framework and proposed approach for how the consultancy will be undertaken, including limitations (max 4 pages);
- 3) a succinct workplan for the assignment;
- 4) a budget (in GBP) setting out the full cost for the consultancy, including:
  - a. the daily fee rate and number of days for each team member
  - b. all other costs for the consultant(s)
- 5) CVs for the proposed team member/s;
- 6) two samples of outputs from previous relevant pieces of work, including a snapshot or factsheet style piece;
- 7) 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 to Edward Beswick, DEC Programme Quality, Accountability, and Learning Manager (PQAL Manager): [EBeswick@dec.org.uk](mailto:EBeswick@dec.org.uk) by 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

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: team composition, strength of proposed approach and workplan.

It is expected that this work will be contracted in December 2023, with a view that the work takes place across December 2023 to April 2024. The DEC reserves the right to negotiate the proposals and budgets with the bidding teams before offering a contract.

**Please note that the DEC can launch appeals in response to disasters or emergencies at very short notice and therefore any timelines referenced in this document may be subject to change.**



## Terms of Reference

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) is a unique and dynamic membership organisation, which comprises 15 of the UK's leading humanitarian agencies: Action Against Hunger UK, ActionAid UK, Age International, British Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE International UK, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide UK, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Oxfam GB, Plan UK, Save the Children UK, Tearfund, and World Vision UK. Since its founding in 1963, the DEC has run over 77 fundraising appeals and raised more than 2 billion to help save lives and protect livelihoods in disaster-affected communities around the world.

### **1. Background**

The majority of DEC funds are raised over the Period of Joint Action – an intensive and collaborative two-week period following a disaster, though fundraising channels remain open for as long as six months. Appeal funds are specifically for overseas humanitarian work and are normally spent over a two to three-year period in either one country or in multiple countries, based on the nature of the crisis for which the appeal was launched.

The DEC is a funder rather than a donor and provides flexible funds towards, and respecting of, member programme approaches in various contexts. Therefore, decision on the projects or programmes DEC funds are used for rests with the Member agency. All member agencies submit programme proposals and reports to the Secretariat. The Secretariat reviews member plans to ensure they are based on needs assessments, developed in consultation with the affected population and that projects fit with the fundraising appeal 'ask' and to ensure that collective risks are mitigated; occasionally, Member agencies will be asked to refocus how DEC funds are spent. DEC's Accountability Framework is underpinned by the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) which puts people affected by crises at the core of the response, including our approach to Member assessment, evaluations and learning initiatives.

Eight of the DEC Member agencies are signatories of Charter 4 Change<sup>1</sup> and all agencies contribute to localisation within their humanitarian responses.

The importance of supporting and strengthening local humanitarian action, and civil society more broadly, has been widely acknowledged in recent years, especially since the Grand Bargain, launched during the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016, which gave way to a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations who committed to get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action.

As a reminder, those are the Grand Bargain's Commitments on Localisation:

*1. Increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://charter4change.org/>



*2. Understand better and work to remove or reduce barriers that prevent organisations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.*

*3. Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.*

*4. Achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transactional costs.*

*5. Develop, with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and apply a 'localisation' marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders.*

*6. Make greater use of funding tools which increase and improve assistance delivered by local and national responders, such as the UN-led country-based pooled funds (CBPF), IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.*

In more recent years, notably facing the COVID 19 pandemic as well as access and security challenges, the central role of local and national stakeholders in humanitarian responses has further increased as local actors were regularly the first and better placed to respond to crises while international actors were unable to operate because of travel and access constraints.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this consultancy is to deliver a position paper representing the DEC Secretariat and DEC members commitments and vision for quality and transformational partnerships with local and national actors, with a view to increase and reinforce their role in crisis responses, with an emphasis on the additional challenges in reaching equitable partnership in emergency contexts, compared to longer term partnership development.

This consultancy will support the DEC Secretariat and its members to better understand the 15 members' partnership approaches, and how these can be reinforced to reach equitable partnerships for a stronger and more localised response.

Through a participatory consultation of the different members and some of their local and national partners, a brief report will present the state of play, opportunities and the constraints or challenges to strengthening partnerships and local humanitarian action.

## **3. Approach**

The consultant is invited to outline an appropriate approach for the assignment in a short conceptual framework; however, the following points should be taken into consideration:

- desk-based review of members' reports, engagements and position papers
- interviews with key informants, DEC members & local partners, the DEC secretariat
- a **series of workshops** involving DEC members and their local partners selected from different active appeal countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey & Syria and possibly any new DEC appeal)
- sharing lessons learned, good practices and successes but also identification of barriers and misunderstandings that have prevented the formation of healthy partnerships in the past.



- strong **involvement of local and national actors throughout the consultancy** to better understand their needs, objectives and vision and ensure that voices and perspectives from the global South are taken into account.

#### **4. The consultant/s**

It is expected that the work will be carried out by one or two consultants:

The consultant/s will provide the following:

1. Relevant experience in researching the topics of partnerships and localisation and demonstrable commitment to learning and improvement in humanitarian action;
2. Extensive experience in providing organisational support involving multiple stakeholders with different approaches and possibly contradictory views
3. Strong facilitation skills and experience in designing participatory workshops
4. Understanding of the DEC appeal countries contexts is a plus

#### **5. Deliverables and schedule**

It is expected that the consultancy will take place across December 2023 to April 2024.

The outputs of this assignment will be:

- A series of workshops (online and in-country).
- A position paper on the nature and evolution of partnerships to be submitted by April 2024, including the vision of DEC Secretariat and members for qualitative and transformational partnerships.
- A brief report presenting the main actionable steps and recommendations to reach and establish these reinforced partnerships, as well as the DEC members' point of view regarding the role the DEC should play on this thematic and/or the support that DEC could provide.
- A directory from the DEC member charities of available tools on transformational partnerships (strategy, curricula, health check, etc.)
- A dissemination event for member agencies and their partners

#### **6. Budget**

The maximum overall budget for this work is £50,000.