

### Section 3

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

##### **X-Border Conflict Research Programme – Lot 1 Terms of Reference**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Department for International Development (DFID) has committed to spend 50% of the UK aid budget in Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations (FCAS) as part of the UK Aid Strategy and to expand work on conflict, security and justice in line with HMG's Strategic Defence and Security Review and Counter Terrorism Strategy.
2. In September 2017, DFID approved an investment of up to £28,545,000 (£18,545,000 for a Research Programme Consortium split across two Lots and £10m for an Accountable Grant) over five years (2019-2024) to fund new, operationally-relevant research on cross border conflict across the Middle East, Asia and Horn of Africa. This will examine the trans-national networks and narratives that connect them, including flows of people, weapons and resources, and provide evidence based options for how international actors should innovate and respond.
3. This programme 'X Border Conflict Evidence, Policy and Trends' (XCEPT) is explicitly operational in focus. Success will require the suppliers to actively engage with DFID and HMG country and policy teams to ensure that new evidence is taken up in operations.
4. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the scope of work, detailed requirements, reporting procedures and timeframe for Lot 1: Conflicts Dynamics/Response. The ToR should be read in conjunction with the approved Business Case and any other material posted on the DFID Supplier portal.
5. DFID encourages bids from a consortium or a supplier with or without partners or sub contractors that can demonstrate the relevant expertise and capacity to deliver this contract. A lead supplier must be identified who has overall management and financial responsibility. In this ToR, mention of 'supplier' or 'suppliers' or Research Programme Consortium (RPC) refers to the lead supplier and their consortium/partners/sub-contractors (if any), unless otherwise stipulated.

#### **Objectives**

6. The objective of the programme is to improve the effectiveness of HMG investments in fragile and conflict affected situations (FCAS), by providing real-time data, expertise and public good research to inform DFID and Whitehall policy and operations including through the Whitehall Conflict Security and Stability Fund (CSSF) and DFID programmes. XCEPT will also support the priority interests of our international partners (e.g. at the UN) and provide the long term approach needed to enable southern partners to deliver quality research in challenging contexts.

7. DFID Ministers envisage that the programme will deliver world class research and operational solutions that can be directly applied by DFID and Whitehall. They request that suppliers propose innovative approaches to policy uptake where researchers provide real-time advice to government working closely with policy makers in Whitehall and country offices. Suppliers are requested to outline how they would provide this service and make provisions for policy uptake specialists to work closely with government officials. Suppliers should pay close attention to the policy uptake section of the Business Case.

## **Recipients**

8. Though all outputs will be public goods, the programme will explicitly address the operational needs of DFID and its partner. Research outputs should be accessible (i.e. made available and in suitable style) to stakeholders including DFID country programme and headquarters staff and advisers, national politicians and policy makers in priority countries, bilateral and multi-lateral agencies, national governments, civil society organisations, the research community and media

## **Scope of work**

### **Framing the Conflict research programme**

9. The programme will combine a competitively tendered Research Programme Consortium (RPC) Contract with an Accountable Grant (AG). The AG component has been awarded and will include specialist organisations located in Africa, MENA and the Horn of Africa with established local research networks.

The contract will be advertised as 2 Lots, Lot 1 (X-Border Conflict dynamics/response (£12,772,500), and Lot 2 Violent and Peaceful Behaviour) (£5,772,500). The Lots are outlined below and in detail in the Business Case. This Terms of Reference relates to Lot 1.

10. DFID has made provision for Lots 1 and 2 to be awarded as 2 separate contracts.
11. The lead supplier of each Lot will be responsible for building and managing a network of individuals and/or organisations to deliver the programme and will be responsible for ensuring quality in research process, researcher engagement during design, implementation and research uptake, and for quality assuring all research outputs.
12. The programme will be awarded for five years: six month inception, three years for research and one and a half years for uptake and policy dissemination.
13. Research Uptake: Suppliers are required to provide real time data, policy advice, and evidence papers targeted to a policy audience throughout the programme, not just in the final phase, in line with the research uptake information within the Business Case.
14. Lot 1 is summarised below and outlined in detail in the Business Case.
15. Lot 1 - £12,772,500

PART A - X-Border conflict “Hubs” and X-border “spokes”. Research will examine networks operating between major conflicts including Afghanistan, through Iran to the Middle East, through the Levant, North Africa and the Gulf to East Africa. Research will include technology based methods (e.g. Satellite and aerial imagery, financial data, geo-tracking, communications and/or social media) complemented by quantitative and qualitative field work.

PART B - Innovating Conflict Responses in an era of X-Border conflict. Research will collect and collate empirical evidence on international conflict response systems, including multi-lateral and bilateral efforts focussed on peace support or stability and how they can innovate to meet the challenges of X-border conflict.

16. Applying technology-based tools to assessing the conflicts outlined in this research programme will enable researchers to identify key cross-border patterns and track how conflict, migration and financial flows connect between conflict affected areas. Investing in continuous data analysis could also support more frequent and reliable assessment to inform policy and programming.
17. Contested border regions and urban areas along the ‘spokes’ also appear to overlap with pockets of poverty and marginalisation. Research that explores ‘horizontal inequalities’<sup>1</sup>, past legacies of injustice and the overlaps between political exclusion, unemployment, food insecurity, low literacy levels and gender inequality may be useful in helping to develop more effective responses to X-border conflict. Previous research warns, however that geography may be just one of many factors affecting development prospects.
18. Lot 1, PART A: Priority research questions include but not limited to:
  - To what extent and how are these protracted conflicts connected to one another?
  - What patterns emerge from the flows of people, weapons and resources between them (‘spokes’) and what does this tell us about conflict and poverty?
  - What do we know about the people who transit these routes, the impact on those in border areas, and wider implications for state-society relations?

Lot 1, PART B: Priority research questions include but not limited to:

  - What comparative lessons can we draw about the range of international conflict response efforts applied to improve stability over the last decade?
  - What innovation will enable conflict responses to meet the X—border challenges of current and future conflict and the shifting international order?
  - What do we know about ‘what works’ to improve stability in border areas or along X-border routes, including through regional responses?

## Scope of Work

19. The Supplier/s will design and implement a programme of operationally relevant research for Lot 1.
20. Research design and method will be proposed in the bidding process. This will then be refined in detail during a 6 month inception phase which will start immediately from contract commencement date.

21. The Supplier will design and implement multidisciplinary research through a mix of complementary quantitative and qualitative methods. It will produce an ambitious range of high quality new research outputs, including synthesis products and new primary research. All should have clear operational relevance.

## Requirements

22. Suppliers' are expected to cover at least 5 of the 7 conflict hubs from the list below. This should include field research in at least three of those country contexts. Research must cover the 3 cross-border routes that link the following regions: Middle East, Horn of Africa and Asia. A final list of countries and regions will be identified after further consultation with relevant DFID staff during the inception phase and in implementation if necessary due to the context at that time. A contract amendment will be carried out if required to realign any budget implications. The priority conflict hubs are as follows, we are open to neighbouring countries also being included:

- Syria
- Iraq
- Yemen
- Libya
- South Sudan
- Afghanistan
- Somalia

## Constraints and Dependencies

23. A collaborative approach will be required across the Lots as DFID seeks coherence across the 2 Lots on: governance arrangements, research uptake, value for money, branding, risk reporting, duty of care, ethics, quality assurance and reporting.
24. This work builds on and expands on DFID-funded work already underway on: the 'political marketplace' under the [Conflict Research Programme \(CRP\)](#) led by LSE; on peace and political processes through the [Political Settlements Research Programme \(PSRP\)](#) at Edinburgh University and on public services and legitimacy through the ODI led [Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium \(SLRC\)](#).
25. Contract Management. The supplier should ensure effective arrangements to manage the contract. DFID will have a single contractual relationship with the 'Lead' supplier which will develop sub-contracts, delivery plans and consortium-wide reporting systems with other component leads
26. The supplier(s) will ensure that arrangements for duty of care, due diligence, risk management and research ethics across the contract, and the 2 Lots, are coherent.
27. The supplier(s) should have experience of managing and co-ordinating multiple partners and for delivering high quality, policy relevant research on conflict. This requires people and partner organisations to manage and promote the contract as a whole, alongside

their own research interests, without partiality or preference for their specific discipline or approach.

28. The supplier(s) will be required to participate in quarterly steering committee meetings (with all programme partners and DFID), ideally alternating venues between conflict affected regions and the UK, alongside an annual schedule of monthly uptake events on specific themes. The supplier will require access to suitable meeting space close to Whitehall to facilitate this.
29. Expertise and capability should include, but not be limited to:
- Experience of managing or delivering quality research in challenging contexts.
  - Proven ability to design and implement peer review mechanisms.
  - Willingness to work with other partners across the portfolio.
  - Proven track record of effective policy engagement on conflict issues.
  - Experience of working equitably with southern researchers and operational partners.
  - Sound financial management in line with DFID standards, including on value for money.
  - Implementation of high quality approaches to Duty of Care and research ethics.

### Emerging Grants

30. The supplier will also be responsible for the delivery of an emerging grants fund of between £4 and 6 million that will deliver research on geographic areas or issues of growing importance to understanding X-border conflict dynamics including the Sahel. This will prioritise issues and geography not covered by the other Lots.
31. Conflict is fluid and difficult to predict and there will likely be new conflict themes or risks that arise and become HMG priorities over the course of the programme. The supplier(s) will be expected to manage at least 2 calls for proposals, awarding around **20 grants of £200,000 each over the course of** the programme. The lead supplier should have proven experience in designing and implementing granting programmes, running calls for proposals and assessing bids in line with DFID requirements.
32. The Lead Supplier for Lot 1 will design and manage the small grants competitions. Suppliers should propose an allocation with rationale, and a mechanism for grant competition. The process for operating calls for proposal in research will be agreed in inception in accordance with DFID guidelines. This small grants competition is intended to further extend the range of researchers engaged in conflict research, so those already involved in delivering LOTS 1 and 2 will not be eligible to bid for these grants.

### Outputs/Deliverables

33. The key outputs/deliverables of the RPC over five years will be included but not limited to:
- i) Data sets, ideally through continuous data collection
  - ii) Research

- iii) Extended systems for measuring violence at community level
  - iv) Qualitative research on flows of people and resources
  - v) general syntheses on evidence on intervention effectiveness
  - vi) A range of policy products and expertise throughout the research programme.
34. It is anticipated that these will underpin the research design and fieldwork, but also produce outputs to be disseminated as public goods.
35. Research products, communication and uptake: the RPC will produce a range of research products that could include: research strategy, methods papers, evidence reviews, working papers, articles in leading peer reviewed journals, and research summaries and policy briefs that package available evidence, including the RPC's research, for policy makers.
36. We envisage at least 15 peer-reviewed journal articles and 25 other research outputs by the end of project. Details of the research products to be produced will be finalised in the inception period. All research products are expected to be of sufficient quality and interest for ultimate publication in the appropriate international journals.
37. It is noted that actual acceptance for publication in journals will be difficult to guarantee for all outputs within the project period, so the project will need to resource and arrange timely quality assurance (e.g. internal and independent peer review: editorial quality control) to quality assure these outputs and maximise the likelihood that outputs will secure publication. DFID reserves the right to make a final judgement on the quality of these papers, including commissioning further independent peer review of outputs as needed.
38. We expect these outputs to be sustained throughout the life of the project and for the RPC to be responsive to DFID requests for interim products and briefings (DFID may consult with wider HMG and other partners e.g. country governments and multilateral organisations), providing that this does not undermine or detract from delivery of a high quality research strategy.
39. We expect the Supplier/s to innovate research communication, uptake and engagement including through use of social media. We expect such communication to be objective and to represent the XCEPT new research in relation to the wider body of research evidence, rather than to promote or lobby for the uptake of the programme's own research alone.
40. Publications and research outputs should be made available in accordance with [DFID Research Open and Enhanced Access Policy](#).

## Methods and approach

41. XCEPT will be an interdisciplinary research programme, cutting across disciplines including political science, international relations, anthropology, behavioural science, and socio-legal studies. We aim to fund research that is innovative, ambitious as well as operationally useful, and attract new entrants (from other research areas including behavioural science) into conflict research.

42. Selection of research methods will be directed by the research questions (RQs) and settings. Most are likely to require a combination of complementary methods.
43. We expect an ambitious approach to measurement in all research components, probably requiring collection of new quantitative data and rigorous use of secondary data.
44. We also recommend that suppliers acquaint themselves with the latest prominent themes in DFID/HMG's research, policy, and programming and consider how these can be integrated into the XCEPT programme.

## Research quality

45. DFID's approach to defining and assessing research quality has become more explicit in the last 5 years. We recommend that the supplier examine DFID's public documents on assessing research quality; and quality in qualitative approaches<sup>1</sup>. The supplier will be expected to define a strategy for maximising research quality, and DFID will assess the quality of research outputs at annual review. This includes ensuring the quality of intermediate outputs such as working papers that are made public on websites as well as articles in peer reviewed journals.
46. **Open data:** The programme will include substantial fieldwork to generate new data. Datasets generated – both quantitative and qualitative – are expected to be anonymised and be made public according to the terms of the DFID Research open and enhanced access policy<sup>2</sup>. Exceptions will be made if there is a sufficient security, duty of care or ethical case to not publish.
47. Though all outputs will be public goods, the programme will explicitly address the operational needs of DFID and its partners. Research outputs should be accessible (i.e. made available and in suitable style) to stakeholders including DFID country programme and headquarters staff and advisers, national politicians and policy makers in priority countries, bilateral and multi-lateral agencies, national governments, civil society organisations, the research community and media.
48. To maximise ease of dissemination and uptake, all outputs must be written in a 'plain English' style that can be readily understood by development generalists.

## Research Ethics

49. Researchers and suppliers should adhere to clear, best practice ethical guidelines (e.g. confidentiality, disclosure, adequate and informed consent, explicitly ensuring 'do no harm'), building on existing resources and ethics protocols.
50. Conflict research is by nature sensitive, particular points for the supplier to consider include:

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291982/HTN-strength-evidence-march2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291982/HTN-strength-evidence-march2014.pdf) and

[http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Quality-in-qualitative-evaluation\\_tcm6-38739.pdf](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Quality-in-qualitative-evaluation_tcm6-38739.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-research-open-and-enhanced-access-policy>

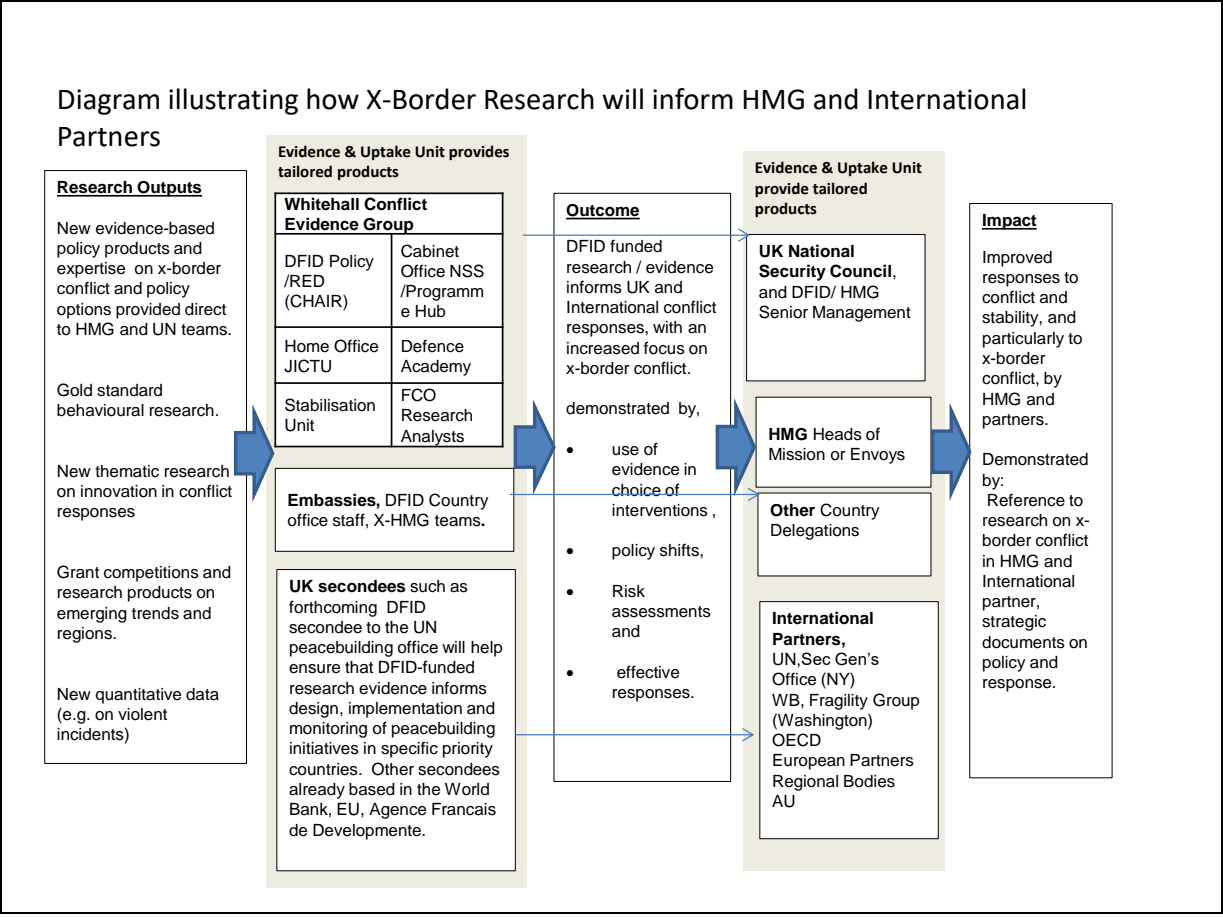
- The safety of respondents and the research team is paramount. It should be reflected in all decision making and monitored closely;
  - Information gathering and documentation must be done in a manner that is methodologically sound, transparent, and builds on current experience and good practice;
  - Protecting confidentiality of individuals is essential to ensuring no harm to respondents and data quality;
  - Anyone providing information must give informed consent before participating in a study;
51. Specifying and ensuring compliance with ethical standards should form a part of research design, preparation of research teams, and delivery. All study team members and members of organisations involved in research delivery, should be carefully selected and receive specialised training and on-going support in research ethics.
52. Allied to ensuring best practice in research ethics, we expect the lead Supplier to ensure that clear ethical standards and safeguarding in research management are established, communicated, complied with, and monitored, including in relation to financial management and people management by all agents involved in research delivery and (particularly) all recipients of UK aid funds.

### **Uptake of research**

53. Research evidence is most likely to have direct impact on policy and practice if policy makers and/or practitioners are involved throughout the project. It is crucial that those who will ultimately use research results are involved in research design. This is the approach for virtually all recent RED research programmes but is particularly stressed for the XCEPT RPC, given the Business Case's exceptional focus on engagement with HMG and DFID country teams and advisers (See diagram below illustrating how the research should inform the work of HMG and partners).
54. The X-CEPT Business Case requires the establishment of a new Evidence and Uptake Team (EUT) which will be carried out by the supplier to include specialists with a proven track record of tailoring research to the needs of HMG staff working on the front lines of conflict. HMG staff have asked that this take particular account of high pressure contexts where time for engagement with research is often limited. Such a team could also provide a secretariat for a DFID chaired "Conflict Evidence Group" representing key HMG departments. This group could prioritise commissions from across Whitehall and DFID's network of secondees into the UN, World Bank and European partners. This approach will enable DFID to disseminate conflict research more effectively across HMG, help shape National Security Council strategies, and support more effective ODA spending decisions and programming choices.
55. Uptake requirements include:
- a. Scheduling a series of events on conflict themes in support of Cabinet Office, FCO Research Analyst and DFID priorities.
  - b. Targeted communication plans to ensure research and evidence outputs reach key decision-makers with national and international partners.
  - c. Monitoring and evaluation of uptake.



- d. Providing tailored rapid-response products and expertise to HMG requests.
56. The research uptake strategy should be in line with [DFID's guide on research uptake](#)<sup>3</sup> which has four strands.
57. The supplier/s are expected to build on, contribute to, and strengthen existing international conflict/peace forums and should specify their proposed approach. This could include: peer-reviewed journals, social media and/or presentation of results in key national and international policy and practitioner meetings.



Research Capacity Building

58. The Supplier is encouraged to place emphasis on linking northern and southern organisations and/or researchers.
59. XCEPT does not have a specific output for research capacity building. However, initiatives to strengthen skills and systems of individuals /organisations working in challenging x-border areas will be supported to ensure effective delivery of the research e.g. research ethics, quality assurance, financial and staff management and compliance.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-uptake-guidance>

60. In general, we see these as part of the Supplier's quality assurance in delivering the research programme to the expected standard, not as an explicit programme of research capacity development.
61. Limited orientation and training of policy makers and other targeted audiences for specific research streams may be included in the research uptake strategy to engage stakeholders and facilitate policy uptake.

## **Environmental Considerations**

62. The Supplier should ensure due consideration is given to the environmental impact of all work undertaken to deliver the programme, both in terms of minimising any direct negative impact, and the extent to which research findings contribute to positive environmental management (e.g. more sustainable and efficient environmental management, water supply, energy, transport, infrastructure, disaster risk management etc).
63. Specific attention to minimising operational impacts on the environment and global climate of those undertaking the research must include ensuring individuals travel by economy class, and reducing carbon footprint through for example, using recycled paper and minimising printing and other waste.

## **Do No Harm**

64. DFID requires assurances regarding protection from violence, exploitation and abuse through involvement, directly or indirectly, with DFID suppliers and programmes. This includes sexual exploitation and abuse, but should also be understood as all forms of physical or emotional violence or abuse and financial exploitation.
  - The programme is targeting a highly sensitive area of work. The Supplier must demonstrate a sound understanding of the ethics in working in this area and applying these principles throughout the lifetime of the programme to avoid doing harm to beneficiaries. In particular, the design of interventions including research and programme evaluations should recognise and mitigate the risk of negative consequence for women, children and other vulnerable groups.
  - The supplier will be required to include a statement that they have duty of care to informants, other programme stakeholders and their own staff, and that they will comply with the ethics principles in all programme activities. Their adherence to this duty of care, including reporting and addressing incidences, should be included in both regular and annual reporting to DFID;
  - A commitment to the ethical design and delivery of evaluations including the duty of care to informants, other programme stakeholders and their own staff must be demonstrated.
  - DFID does not envisage the necessity to conduct any environmental impact assessment for the implementation of the Issue based programme. However, it is important to adhere to principles of "Do No Harm" to the environment.

## Risk Management

65. Conflict research entails significant risks as vested interested may obstruct or pose a danger to the research and researchers. The supplier will be expected to set out its understanding of the most important anticipated risks, with an explanation of mitigation strategies for these. A detailed Risk Matrix will be developed during programme inception.

## Budget and timeframe

66. The maximum budget is £12,722,500 over 5 years). Suppliers should demonstrate excellent value for money as part of their bid. A strong bid should outline how the cost is attributed to each country, and the activities undertaken to deliver it.
67. The Supplier will commence work as soon as possible after contract signature. Lot 1 - £12,772,500 will run for 5 years consisting of a **6 month** inception phase followed by a 4.5 year implementation phase with the option (but no guarantee) of an extension of up to 2.5 years and up to £6,386,250.
68. The decision to extend will be subject to approval, continued relevance of the programme and satisfactory performance of the Supplier. The final year is dedicated to synthesis, cross project analysis and additional uptake.

## Break points

69. There will be a formal break point in the contract at the end of the inception phase. Progression to the implementation phase will be subject to satisfactory performance of the Supplier, DFID approval of inception phase outputs, and DFID agreement to work plans and any revised costs. There will be a second formal break point in the contract mid-way through the implementation phase. The exact timing of this second break point will be agreed between DFID and the Supplier during the inception phase. In addition to DFID Standard Terms and Conditions in which DFID reserves the right to terminate this contract at any time, at both break points, DFID reserves the right to revise or terminate any specific research components (e.g., research on a specific theme or in a specific country) if the work is not progressing as projected and when remedial efforts have failed to improve research implementation to DFID's satisfaction.

## Scale Up/Down

70. DFID, in consultation with key stakeholders, reserves the right to scale up/back the project if necessary. The RPC could also raise additional funds from other sources, including using DFID's commitment to attract additional funds. The supplier should briefly describe their strategy for this.

## Research Programme Inception Phase

71. The programme will have an inception phase of six months, during which proposals will be refined, research strategy and framework defined, final focal countries selected (following negotiation with DFID country programmes and other stakeholders) and budgets finalised (in line with proposal and indicative budget set out in the tender).
72. During the inception phase, DFID will expect at least monthly meetings with the Research Manager and RPC Leader (Consortium Executive Director – CED - see below) to ensure that progress against work plan is on track.
73. The key Inception phase outputs of this component are:
  - Mid-point of inception phase: the Supplier will submit a concise mid-inception report to be reviewed at a formal meeting between key DFID staff and the Supplier to discuss progress against plan and the overall direction of the programme.
  - End of inception phase: the Supplier will submit a detailed inception report. DFID's approval of this inception report will be required for the RPC to continue (see 'Budget and timeframe'). Specification for the inception report will be refined with the Supplier at contract commencement, but is expected to include the following content:
    - Detailed research framework including clearly further refining the XCEPT Business Case's Theory of Change demonstrating how the research will lead to intended outcome and impact; research approach; hypotheses and research questions; research methods, and approach to research ethics.
    - Final selection of focal countries and sectors/sub-sectors for RPC research, identification of interventions, with justification, and confirmation of engagement by relevant stakeholders, including DFID country offices.
    - Updated synthesis of existing evidence (by sector, sub-sector and/or country setting as required);
    - Formative research products, including analysis of sectors/sub-sectors/country settings as appropriate for subsequent delivery of the research strategy and work plan.
    - Uptake Strategy, including dissemination and engagement with policy makers (including DFID country teams and advisors, government, other donors, civil society, academia, and media).
    - Approach to Open Access publishing and data sets.
    - Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, including final RPC log-frame.
    - Updated work plan and budget, including breakdown by component, research strand, and country.
    - Risk management strategy and plan.
    - Final approach to leadership, management, and governance of RPC, including ToRs and any necessary update on delivery partners.

## Implementation requirements

1. We expect an inception phase to be complete in the first 6 months; research competitions to be designed and let as early as possible in the programme (to ensure that all grants come to an end by the end of year 4 of the programme); research field work and analysis to be conducted in years 2 and 3; and year 4-5 to be dedicated to research outputs,

facilitating uptake, and operational application. In year 4 we expect to begin to measure results at outcome level, and measure convincing progress towards impact.

## **Performance Requirements**

### **Payments**

2. The contract payment mechanism for the five years is detailed below:
3. All fees and expenses will be based on actuals. All payments will be made in arrears. These will be paid quarterly against a detailed financial report submitted with the invoice.
4. A maximum of 10% of fees (total programme team costs) (based on actual number of input days), profit, overheads and any other costs will be withheld on submission of invoices where performance is not of an acceptable standard. The remaining percentage of fees, profits, overheads and other costs will be paid on satisfactory performance of the outputs agreed.
5. The process for agreeing performance and the standards DFID expects will be agreed in inception. Indicatively performance will be measured against areas including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Completion of activities against the work plan
  - Ability to react/deliver to stakeholders reporting requests
  - Ability to deal with delays/re-plan and still deliver
6. The supplier should submit their proposal detailing the payment linked to the outputs identified in this ToR. These will be further developed and agreed in inception.

### **Inception Phase outputs:**

7. Suppliers should submit their proposals on the basis that the following outputs will be required in inception:
  - Monthly progress reports including agreeing inception workplan – will agree format of reports as progress, however should give concise overview of activities and plans
  - Workplan – indicative outline should be provided in bids and updated frequently throughout inception
  - Timetable – subject to change at short notice due to security concerns
  - Literature review completed
  - Mid inception report - progress, outcomes of discussions, forward planning, country selection (to be approved by DFID/FCO/MOD)
  - Final inception report – DFID to approve in discussion with FCO/MOD if meets overall needs
  - Final ToRS for high level posts, management and governance arrangements will be part of the Inception Report.

**Implementation Phase outputs:**

8. Will be developed in inception. DFID will monitor performance against achievement of the quality, usable research produced by the supplier.
9. Additionally, we require the suppliers to respond quickly to requests for reports either on country or thematic areas (but this can also include any subject that could be on the political agenda at the time). Therefore, we can't specify when these could be requested or how many etc. but we would expect performance to be linked to responsiveness and adaptability. These delivery dates would be agreed on an individual basis.
10. To meet the requirements of the first Annual Report (due in April to coincide with the date of project approval) that includes a reference to any work under this contract the logframe will reflect an output against this component and will include comments on the supplier's performance/achievements and scored accordingly.

**Reporting and Management**

11. Please refer to the XCEPT Business Case's management case and additional information.
12. Forming and managing the RPC: may include academic, civil society and commercial organisations.
13. The RPC will be led by a Consortium Executive Director (CED). The CED will provide managerial and intellectual leadership to the RPC, be first point of contact for DFID, and be accountable for all RPC delivery. The CED will lead development of the research strategy and ensure coordination and coherence between all components.
14. DFID's preference is that this is at least a half time post and that the CED is employed by the RPC's lead supplier. The prospective candidate for CED should be named in the bid and must guarantee her/his availability if successful.
15. DFID expects the RPC to establish mechanisms for governance and stakeholder engagement in line with the Business Case. These will provide a fora to debate technical and implementation issues, and to ensure effective collaboration with programme partners.

**XCEPT Programme level governance**

16. The Supplier will maintain regular dialogue with DFID's programme management team to ensure compliance with all terms and conditions set out in the agreement and guided by DFID's Procurement and Commercial Department (PCD); best practice financial management, including timely and accurate financial forecasting and invoicing and cost control; and effective contract management, including early notification on any proposed changes to the contract, before formal agreement is sought from DFID.

17. The specific management structure of the programme will be proposed and refined by the supplier during the inception phase.
18. A clear governance structure for ensuring effective partnership across the research programme, production of high quality primary research, and quality assurance is required.

### **Contracting and Reporting Requirements**

19. DFID management for this programme will be led by the Governance, Conflict and Social Development Team in RED. There will be regular project management meetings (quarterly) with the Supplier to report progress and for DFID to monitor, progress against the agreed objectives/logframe.
20. DFID conducts Annual Reviews of all programmes to assess progress against the objectives contained in the logframe, ensure that the programme is on track, and consider if any adjustments should be made. The Supplier will be expected to produce Annual Reports using DFID's standard format. This will form the basis of the Annual Review.
21. The Supplier will be required to deliver effective financial management and will need to demonstrate Value for Money (VfM) at all stages of the programme. This will include demonstrating that administrative costs can be minimised and that programme activities are designed to maximise cost effectiveness. The research programme will be expected to report on vfm measures integrated into the programme and this will be assessed during DFID annual reviews.
22. Reporting requirements will be agreed between DFID and the Supplier in Inception with any additional requirements being agreed if necessary as the programme develops.
23. While recognising the inherent difficulties in research delivery, DFID will actively encourage contingency planning to maintain timely progress. Dependent on project progress and direction DFID reserves the right to redistribute funds between components– for example moving funds between sub-themes; and between directly delivered components and research competitions.

### **UK Aid Branding**

24. Partners that receive funding from DFID must use the UK aid logo on their development and humanitarian programmes to be transparent and acknowledge that they are funded by UK taxpayers. Partners should also acknowledge funding from the UK government in broader communications but no publicity is to be given to this Contract without the prior written consent of DFID.

## Digital Spending

25. All digital<sup>4</sup> content produced by the Supplier is subject to UK government digital principles as set out by the Government Digital Service (GDS). All digital developments should:
- Put the needs of users first
  - Learn from and improve these services over time
  - Be freely available for other DFID programmes to use
  - For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/designprinciples>
26. The Supplier should consider the use of digital elements to maximise value for money while ensuring the programme remains inclusive and fully accessible. Any proposed digital elements will require approval in line with DFID's Smart Rules.
27. The Supplier should not propose unnecessary bespoke systems or tools to implement and instead make use of existing and freely available systems and tools in all aspects of the programme where possible.

## Transparency

28. DFID has transformed its approach to transparency, reshaping our working practices. DFID requires Suppliers receiving and managing funds to release open data on how this money is spent, in a common, standard, reusable format and to require this level of information from immediate sub-contractors, sub-agencies and partners.
29. It is a contractual requirement for all Suppliers to comply with this, and to ensure they have the appropriate tools to enable routine financial reporting, publishing of accurate data and providing evidence of this to DFID. Further information is available from: [www.aidtransparency.net](http://www.aidtransparency.net)

## DFID co-ordination

30. The XCept delivery management team will report to the programme SRO and Programme Manager. The SRO will be responsible for oversight of all programmatic aspects of XCept on behalf of DFID. Contract administration and payments will be managed by the Programme Manager on behalf of DFID.

## Delivery Chain Mapping

31. Suppliers must be able to demonstrate a full and comprehensive approach and methodology for undertaking due diligence and taking on the risk management of all

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<sup>4</sup> Digital is defined as any service provided through the internet to citizens, businesses, civil society or non-government organisations. This includes, but is not limited to, information services, websites and transactional services. This includes services provided by others but funded by DFID.



downstream delivery partners. DFID may request specific audits of the project and all project partners to be undertaken.

32. In advance of any release of funds, suppliers will be required to produce a delivery chain risk map which should, where possible, identify all partners (funding and non-funding e.g. legal/contributions in kind) involved in the delivery of a programme. Risk maps should be reviewed and updated periodically, in line with agreed programme monitoring processes and procedures. As a minimum, it should include details of:

- The name of all downstream delivery partners and their functions.
- Funding flows (e.g. amount, type) to each delivery partner
- High level risks involved in programme delivery, mitigating measures and associated controls.

### **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

33. Please refer to the details of the GDPR relationship status and personal data (where applicable) for this project as detailed in App A and the standard clause 33 in section 2 of the contract.

### **Procurement of Goods and Equipment**

34. Where procurement is undertaken as part of programme activities, this must be done using robust systems which ensure best value for money for the programme and as has been indicated through the supplier's response to Selection Questionnaire 8.6. The Supplier must ensure that programme assets are accurately tracked, reach their intended beneficiary, and are used for their intended purpose.

### **Duty of Care (DoC)**

35. DoC is expected to be high risk because of the sensitive nature of research in the countries outlined and the sensitive nature of research in this field.

36. Suppliers are required to carry out a risk assessment (of foreseeable risks) and are required to provide evidence that they have the capability to take on and effectively manage their DoC Responsibilities throughout the life of the agreement. During the Inception Phase, DFID will conduct risk assessments for the focal countries selected.

37. The Supplier is responsible for the safety and well-being of their Personnel (as defined in DFID's agreement with the Supplier, Section 2 of the Contract) and Third Parties affected by their activities under this contract, including appropriate security arrangements. They will also be responsible for the provision of suitable security arrangements for their domestic and business property.

38. DFID will share available information with the Supplier on risk assessments, security status and developments in-country where appropriate.

39. The Supplier is responsible for ensuring appropriate safety and security briefings for all of their Personnel working under this contract and ensuring that their Personnel register and receive briefing as outlined above. Travel advice is also available on the FCO

website and the Supplier must ensure they (and their Personnel) are up to date with the latest positions.

40. This Procurement may require the Supplier to operate in a seismically active zone and is considered at high risk of earthquakes. Minor tremors are not uncommon. Earthquakes are impossible to predict and can result in major devastation and loss of life. There are several websites that can be used for reference including <http://geology.about.com/library/bl/maps/blworldindex.htm>. The Supplier should be comfortable working in such an environment and should be capable of deploying to any areas required within the region in order to deliver the Contract (subject to travel clearance being granted).
41. This Procurement will require the Supplier to operate in conflict-affected areas or those that are highly insecure. The Supplier should be comfortable working in such an environment and should be capable of deploying to any areas required in order to deliver the Contract (subject to travel clearance being granted).
42. The Supplier is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements, processes and procedures are in place for their Personnel, taking into account the environment they will be working in and the level of risk involved in delivery of the Contract (such as working in dangerous, fragile and hostile environments, etc.). The Supplier must ensure their Personnel receive the required level of training and complete a UK government approved hostile environment training course (e.g. SAFE) or safety in the field training prior to deployment.
43. Suppliers have submitted their SQ Response and Tender on the basis of being fully responsible for Duty of Care in line with DFID's policies and the details provided above and the initial risk assessment matrix prepared by DFID (see below). Suppliers should be aware that an assessment of Duty of Care will be undertaken at the ITT stage. Tenderers must confirm in their SQ Response that:
  - They fully accept responsibility for Security and Duty of Care
  - They understand the potential risks and have the knowledge and experience to develop an effective risk plan
  - They have the capability to manage their Duty of Care responsibilities throughout the life of the contract
44. If you are unwilling or unable to accept responsibility for Security and Duty of Care as detailed above, your SQ will be viewed as non-compliant and excluded from further evaluation.
45. Acceptance of responsibility must be supported with evidence of Duty of Care capability and DFID reserves the right to clarify any aspect of this evidence.

## Background

46. For more background to this programme please refer to the Business Case including references, and the materials hosted on the DFID procurement portal.

<sup>1</sup> Stewart, F. (2002) Horizontal Inequalities: A Neglected Dimension of Development  
<http://www3.qeh.ox.ac.uk/pdf/qehwp/qehwps81.pdf>