

**Call for Consultancy
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

External Evaluation of ACT Appeal SYR231

Location: Syria and Türkiye
Type of contract: Consultancy
Languages required: English and Arabic
Experience required: 10 years in external evaluation of humanitarian/emergency programs
Consultancy start target date: 01/10/2024
Duration of Contract: 4 months, estimation of 25 working days.
Application deadline: **20/08/2024** (23h59 CET)

About ACT Alliance

ACT Alliance is one of the world's largest coalition of churches and church-related organizations engaged in humanitarian, development and advocacy work. It consists of 150 members working together in over 120 countries, with headquarters in 73 countries, whose aim is to create a positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalized people regardless of their religion, politics, gender, sexual orientation, race or nationality in keeping with the highest international codes and standards. 64% of our members are headquartered in the Global South, 30% in the Global North, and 6% are Global members. For more details about the general work of ACT, please refer to <http://www.actalliance.org/>.

Terms of reference

Currently, ACT Alliance is seeking an external evaluator or a team of external evaluators, supported by secretariat staff to lead the final external evaluation of the Syria Appeal launched as a response to the Earthquake in Türkiye and Syria. The period of the work is expected to take 4 months (estimated 25 working days) for completion. The Terms of Reference document sets out the evaluation criteria and expected outputs. The appeal is being implemented within Syria and Türkiye and the consultancy is expected to be an "on the ground" external evaluation.

1. Background

On 6 February 2023, two earthquakes with magnitude 7.8 and 7.5 heavily affected provinces in Southern and Southeastern Türkiye and Northern Syria. The earthquakes which hit communities in Syria and Türkiye at the peak of winter, left hundreds of thousands of people, including small children and older people, without access to shelter, food, water, heat and medical care in freezing cold temperatures.

The SYR 231 appeal started on January 1st, 2023, and later included revision #1 to add to the response the earthquakes. The updated version of the appeal was launched in March 2022 after integrating elements related to post-earthquake needs assessments. The standing appeal document can be accessed here: <https://actalliance.org/appeals-rapid-response-funds/syria-and-turkiye-syria-protracted-crisis-developing-the-resilience-of-affected-people-and-emergency-response-for-affected-communities-of-syria-turkiye-earthquake-syr231-revision-4/>

The Requesting Members (RM's) of the appeal are: Christian Aid (CA), Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), Swiss Church Aid (HEKS/EPER), Department of Ecumenical Relations and Development of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East (GOPA-DERD), The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Hungarian Church Aid (HIA). The appeal covers areas of Syria under Government control (MECC, LWF, GOPA-DERD, HEKS/EPER) as well as Türkiye (HIA). The SYR 231 appeal has a budget of USD 17,175,390\$. ACT Alliance members are operating to respond to both the earthquake needs in Türkiye

and Syria as well as the protracted crises of Syria. The appeal timeline is from January 1st, 2023, till December 31st 2024.

The ACT Secretariat is commissioning an external evaluation in line with our policy and the requirements of back donors. The “ACT Evaluation Policy and Guidelines¹” provides broad directions and implementation arrangements for evaluations and should be used as reference throughout the evaluation process.

The field work for this evaluation should be carried out in Syria and Türkiye. However, limited access to project areas and security considerations may present constraints. Detailed planning for data collection and analysis should be formulated and approved by the ACT secretariat.

2. Objectives

The evaluation purpose and objectives

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess SYR231 appeal overall program performance and delivery, against OECD criteria and adherence to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) throughout the response. The evaluation should have a strong learning objective, reflecting what has worked and what has not worked and identify lessons and ways to enhance the project relevance, effectiveness, and impact. The evaluation will help ACT improve its future programming and identify the impact of the SYR231 appeal performance, based on lessons learned and best practices generated through its implementation.

Key objectives of the evaluation are to:

1. Assess the programme’s relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability against the OECD evaluation criteria and CHS Commitments that have specific interest for accountability to affected populations.
2. Assess to what extent the expected results, as outlined in the SYR231 appeal results framework were achieved, considering the gender performance and the localization dimensions of the project.
3. Assess the effectiveness of the SYR231 appeal model and the added value of the ACT secretariat and ACT Syrian forum.
4. Identify lessons learned and best practices for ACT Alliance’s future humanitarian interventions.

Indicative key evaluation questions that are expected to be addressed are listed in (annex 1); the consultant is expected to provide a detailed methodology and work plan, at proposal and inception stages.

3. Methodology

The evaluation uses the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (Relevance, Appropriateness, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability) to establish the overall performance and results of ACT response to the Syria humanitarian crises.

The evaluation should assess how individual ACT members and their partners have implemented activities as well as their collective results within the SYR231 appeal. The evaluation must be conducted in a participatory manner and include a mixed methods approach that includes project location visits and targeted group consultation, in coordination with the requesting members. The sampling of locations and interviewees shall be determined jointly by the consultant and ACT requesting members with input from ACT Secretariat.

¹<https://actalliance.org/standards-and-policies/>

Interactions with stakeholders other than ACT members (including authorities and targeted group) should remain in the legal and normative framework of the different areas of interventions, especially in relation to the use of questionnaires and for site visit approvals. Alternative methodologies should be identified where it is not possible to safely secure the necessary authorizations.

Based on the understanding of this ToR, the evaluation team should prepare an inception report detailing the approach, design, methods and data collection strategies that best suit the program and local conditions. Information should be triangulated and validated. ACT guidelines for evaluations should be used for the design of the evaluation report.

The evaluation team will also have the task to specifically identify lessons learnt and good practices for documentation and facilitate two “lessons learnt workshops”, one in Syria and one in Amman. The focus of the workshops should be based on the findings from the key informant interview, focus group discussion and project site visits. The event is addressed to funding members, requesting agencies, implementing partners and the ACT Secretariat. The evaluation team will use feedback from the workshops to prepare a “lessons and good practices” 5-pages annex to the evaluation report.

4. Main steps for the assignment and timeframe

Launching the tender process	05 August 2024
Contract signed	Mid - September
Submission of draft inception Report	01 October 2024
Feedback on draft inception report	10 October 2024
Final Inception Report	15 October 2024
Data collection completion	15 November 2024
Data analysis and report writing	02 December 2024
Drafting evaluation report and “lessons and good practice” document submission to ACT	09 December 2024
Comments on Evaluation Report	20 December 2024
Facilitating lessons learned workshop in Syria	Within January 2025
Finalizing evaluation report and document on “lessons and good practice”	Within January 2025
Presentation of key findings	Within January 2025

5. Evaluation and learning exercise outputs

Both the evaluation report and “lessons, failures and good practices” document are simultaneous outcomes of this assignment. The consultant will present/facilitate the discussion of these 2 main documents in a debriefing meeting and learning workshop respectively. Specifically, the evaluation and learning process shall deliver the following products written in English:

1. Inception report (including MOVs, tools, full list of evaluation questions Gantt chart, Methodology etc.)
2. Draft Evaluation report and executive summary submitted to the ACT Alliance for feedback and comments within two weeks after conclusion of data collection, expecting two rounds of review.
3. A final Evaluation Report. Final report should not be more than 30 pages without the annexes
4. Lessons and Good practices annex document
5. A presentation session with relevant ACT Alliance staff to present findings and get feedback, conducted remotely.

The findings of the final evaluation to be shared with ACT Alliance are expected to include at least:

- An overview assessment against all DAC OECD, human rights lens/approach and CHS criteria.
- Agreed lessons learnt and best practices that can be incorporated into the relevant sectors' programming.
- Agreed recommendations that will inform and improve ACT Alliance future programmatic strategy, with agreed action points and deadlines
- A brief assessment of each implementing member's performance against the evaluation criteria as well as consideration of the role of the ACT Secretariat

6. The documentation of "lessons and good practices"

The evaluator prepares a focused annex document to the evaluation report of maximum 5 pages, presenting key lessons and good practices, as identified throughout the evaluation process. The identification of "lessons and good practices" explores on key learning points throughout project cycle management – from design to evaluation, in relation, but not limited to, the following key areas, to be considered in following ACT appeals:

Wider humanitarian environment

- Participation in and contribution to external coordination with other actors and stakeholders
- Unique implications of large-scale humanitarian disaster/response on ACT's approach
- Leveraging ACT response within the unique political and the wider humanitarian space in Syria and Türkiye
- Complex emergency condition: strategic review, ACT response flexibility and implications for capacity and resources

ACT policies and humanitarian practices

- Level of coordination among ACT Implementing Members, ACT Syria Forum, ACT Secretariat and ACT Supporting members
- Opportunities and challenges for strengthening commitment and compliance to key humanitarian principles and code of conduct
- ACT visibility in a multi-actor ACT response: strengths, weaknesses and opportunities

Replication and adaptation

- Ability to learn and replicate past lessons in emergency response
- Significance of adaptation to changing humanitarian conditions
- Fundraising for escalating humanitarian situations with limited access for implementation, monitoring and constraint in information sharing

7. Profile of evaluation team leader

The evaluator/team of evaluators of this multi-sector ACT response should have a good balance of sectoral, local and evaluation experience. Requirements for the evaluator lead include the following:

- At least 10 years of experience in evaluating humanitarian programmes against DAC OECD evaluation criteria and Core Humanitarian Standards, experience of designing evaluation methodology/tools, data analysis etc.
- Ability to lead a diverse team in Syria, Türkiye. It is the responsibility of the consultants to organize visas if needed.
- Strong facilitation and diplomatic skills
- The team leader should have a minimum of a master's degree in a relevant field
- Broad understanding of the issues concerning the humanitarian response with a sound knowledge of Humanitarian Principles, Sphere Standards, and Core Humanitarian Standard on quality and accountability.
- Strong ability to stimulate and guide participatory processes
- Excellent report writing skills
- Be political, religious and culturally sensitive
- Proficiency in English and Arabic, with ability to produce Means of Verification in both languages.
- Familiarity with Syria, Türkiye and their context
- Have proven knowledge of gender issues in emergencies
- Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply
- (Demonstrably) independent, with no conflict of interest with the design, management or implementation of the programme or partner organizations of any of the ACT Alliance organizations in Syria or the countries in the regions from which a Syria program is being implemented by ACT Alliance member organizations

8. Application

Qualified candidates are invited to send their application documents to Recruitment@actalliance.org indicating "SYR231 final evaluation application" in the subject of the email. Please include the following documents as separate attachments:

- a. CVs of the evaluator or the team of evaluators, highlighting the relevant work experience, merged in one single PDF document, and the contact details of two references.
- b. One sample report of a final evaluation that you have conducted for an INGO, working in the humanitarian or development field, using DAC OECD evaluation criteria and CHS, in PDF format
- c. Technical proposal, with an indicative plan of the final evaluation approach and activities based on the present ToR, of no longer than 8 pages in PDF format, including
 - The research methods that will be used corresponding to each evaluation question/objective
 - Sufficient detail of how the applicant(s) will approach in person work in Türkiye and governmental areas of Syria.
 - Estimation of days of work for each stage/product of the consultancy.
 - A section explaining data protection measures, safety, gender and ethical considerations
- d. Financial offer: daily rate including all taxes for the evaluator / evaluation team members, as well as overall budget for the consultancy in USD – Including administrative overheads, travel, taxes and charges.
- e. List of at least 2 professional reference persons with contact details.
- f. Commercial registration details.

All applications **must be submitted to Recruitment@actalliance.org by 20/8/2024, 23h59 CET in PDF format.**

Questions and inquiries may be submitted to Recruitment@actalliance.org, by August 13/8/2024, 23h59 CET at the latest and will be answered by email to all applicant on 15/8/2024.

Please note that it is planned that a member of ACT Secretariat may accompany the evaluation team.

All personal data, collected through this application is used for the purpose of procurement and, in the case of successful applications, for the satisfactory administration of their service provision, and for no other purpose. It is ACT Alliance’s policy to protect, and keep secure, all personal data collected.

Kindly note that if you do not hear from us within four weeks of the vacancy deadline, you should please consider that your application has not been retained.

Award criteria

#	Criteria	Indicators	Weighting
1	Proven record of delivery of final evaluation services, in the considered areas.	One sample of final evaluation report, involving the same person(s) as the ones in the application Two external references from previous evaluation work, to be validated by ACT alliance	15%
2	Technical skills, knowledge, and experience of the applicant (s)	CVs of person (s) that will be directly involved in the evaluation	25%
3	Quality of the proposed methodology as presented in the technical proposal	Proposed research evaluation document Feasibility of the suggested plan	30%
4	Financial offer	Required resources and cost effectiveness – value for money	30%

ANNEX 1 – Indicative Key evaluation questions

Relevance:

1. How relevant and timely has the ACT Alliance response through the SYR231 appeal been to the identified population needs and expectations?
2. How have the affected populations been engaged during the design and implementation of the program? How have partners adjusted their feedback and accountability practices throughout the program?
3. Was the appeal programme adjusted to the changing humanitarian conditions?

Coherence:

1. To what extent did the SYR231 supported projects complement the work among different organizations and coordinate with each other?
2. Was programme's implementation among the fund recipients done in a coherent and joint manner?
3. Are gaps and duplication in coverage (with other actors) identified and attempts made to resolve these together?
4. To what extent have the partners actively collaborated with other stakeholders (government and other actors) in the working area. Provide some examples of good practices.

Effectiveness:

1. To what extent did the program achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the SYR231 appeal's strategic vision?
2. What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended SYR231 appeal outputs and outcomes?
3. To what extent did the project activities considerably streamline a gender perspective, taking into consideration power dynamics?

Efficiency:

1. To what extent has the program implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the expected outcomes?
2. How did partners coordinate their response with inside and outside the programme stakeholders?
3. What would be opportunities within the program to reach more people with the available budget or to reduce costs while reaching at least the same number of people?

Impact:

1. What are the intended and unintended results of the appeal for women, girls, boys and men? What are the positive and negative results of the implemented projects on each of them?
2. What has been the added value of the SYR231 appeal funding and coordination scheme in terms of maximizing impact?

Sustainability:

1. What are the measures in place for programs' results to be sustained?
2. Which programmatic activities are more likely to have long-term sustainable impact in the future?
3. Have the capacities in humanitarian response of local partners and their staff benefited from the Earthquake Response projects, and how was that knowledge positive for their humanitarian work?