

**Bid Notice**

03rd December 2020

**Hiring of Research consultant for data Collection Mercy Corps Kabul & Field Offices as per SoW)**

**About Mercy Corps:**

Mercy Corps works in places of transition, where conflict, disaster, political upheaval, or economic collapse present opportunities to build a more secure, productive, and just communities. Providing emergency relief in times of crisis, we move quickly to help communities recover and build resilience to future shocks, and promote sustainable change by supporting community-led and market-driven initiatives. Recognizing both the great potential and the complex challenges faced by Afghanistan, since 1986 Mercy Corps has been implementing a range of humanitarian assistance and development programs tailored to the specific needs of the country and of those communities where we work.

Mercy Corps has been working in Afghanistan continuously since 1986 with a large portfolio of programs addressing the promotion of sustainable licit livelihoods, agriculture development, youth vocational training, Renewable Energy and natural resource management; it has helped more than 2.5 million Afghans through these wide-range of community–based agriculture and economic development programs. Mercy Corps is working in Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan, Herat, Takhar, Badakhshan, Parwan, Baghlan,,Samangan, Balkh and Nangarhar.

**Purpose / Project Description:**

While forecasts regarding the risk of COVID-19 on conflict are plentiful, there is little detailed or comparative analysis of how the pandemic and government responses are influencing the dynamics and trajectories of conflict across contexts. Research from past pandemics like HIV/AIDS and Ebola makes clear that exposure to infectious disease increases the risk of armed conflict. Conflict, in turn, tends to exacerbate disease transmission and hinder public health responses. Pandemics have a similar effect as other external shocks such as natural disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and droughts), extreme temperature rise, declines in export prices and economic crises—all of which are associated with the outbreak or intensification of conflict within a year of onset, especially in low-income and ethno-linguistically fragmented countries. To understand the impact of COVID-19, Mercy Corps is taking a systems-level approach to evaluate the ways in which the pandemic is affecting a broad range of conflict-related factors in several countries, one of which is Colombia. This is critical for anticipating changes in conflict dynamics and for identifying recommendations that may help key actors promote peace.

**Consultant Objectives:**

The Research Consultant will work closely with key focal points from Mercy Corps’ Crisis Analytics (CA) and Research & Learning (R&L) teams to undertake field-based (where possible) and remote (where needed) data collection in Kabul, Takhar, Kandahar and Herat. The consultant will recruit and manage their own team of enumerators/researchers as they consider necessary.

Therefore Mercy Corps Afghanistan is planning to hire the research Consultant for Kabul, Takhar, Kandahar and Herat Afghanistan as per attached TOR.

**Terms of Reference (TOR)**

**Background:**

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action — helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

Mercy Corps has been working in Afghanistan continuously since 1986 with a large portfolio of programs addressing the promotion of sustainable licit livelihoods, agriculture development, youth vocational and natural resource management; it has helped more than 2.5 million Afghans through these wide-range of community–based agriculture and economic development programs. It is to mention that currently Mercy Corps is working in Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand, Takhar, Badakhshan, Parwan and Baghlan.

**Purpose / Project Description:**

While forecasts regarding the risk of COVID-19 on conflict are plentiful, there is little detailed or comparative analysis of how the pandemic and government responses are influencing the dynamics and trajectories of conflict across contexts. Research from past pandemics like HIV/AIDS and Ebola makes clear that exposure to infectious disease increases the risk of armed conflict. Conflict, in turn, tends to exacerbate disease transmission and hinder public health responses. Pandemics have a similar effect as other external shocks such as natural disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and droughts), extreme temperature rise, declines in export prices and economic crises—all of which are associated with the outbreak or intensification of conflict within a year of onset, especially in low-income and ethno-linguistically fragmented countries. To understand the impact of COVID-19, Mercy Corps is taking a systems-level approach to evaluate the ways in which the pandemic is affecting a broad range of conflict-related factors in several countries, one of which is Colombia. This is critical for anticipating changes in conflict dynamics and for identifying recommendations that may help key actors promote peace.

**Consultant Objectives:**

The Research Consultant will work closely with key focal points from Mercy Corps’ Crisis Analytics (CA) and Research & Learning (R&L) teams to undertake field-based (where possible) and remote (where needed) data collection in Kabul, Takhar, Kandahar and Herat. The consultant will recruit and manage their own team of enumerators/researchers as they consider necessary.

**Consultant Activities & Deliverables:**

The Consultant (and enumerators) will:

* Coordinate with Mercy Corps CA and R&L teams to agree the plan for data collection, the tools to be used in the field, and the criteria for selecting participants.
* Liaise with relevant stakeholders at community/municipality level to secure safe access to research participants.
* Participate in conflict systems mapping workshops with the wider research team.
* Recruit research participants (respondents) in the target communities, following criteria agreed with CA/R&L.
* Conduct Key Informant Interviews in the communities or with relevant contextual experts (e.g. analysts, policy-makers).
* Facilitate participatory systems mapping workshops, using tools agreed with the research team in the target communities.
* Conduct remote interviews with a broad and diverse range of community members where.
* Contribute to identify preliminary findings.
* Ensure all data collection processes comply with relevant local public health guidance regarding social distancing, gatherings and use of masks or other personal protective equipment.

**Products/deliverables:**

* Data collection plan and timeline.
* Organizational chart/report describing roles and responsibilities of local enumerators/researchers recruited (as needed).
* Participation (with enumerators) in training on methodology and tools, provided by the Mercy Corps research team, as agreed with the research team.
* Report describing profile of interviewees (per data collection plan and recruitment criteria) and transcripts of those interviews, with translation into English as needed.
* Participatory mapping workshop reports (per data collection plan and recruitment criteria), including collated conflict systems maps and transcribed notes.
* Report with preliminary findings based on participation in analysis workshops

**Timeframe / Schedule:**

This consultancy is expected to take place between December and January, with an estimated maximum 30 days of work.

Bids should be received by the 10th December at 23:59 Kabul time.

**The Consultant will report to:**

Ryan Sheely, Director of Research - Governance and Conflict

**The Consultant will work closely with:**

Systems Analysis of COVID and Conflict Research Coordinator; Mercy Corps’ CA and R&L teams, Mercy Corps Afghanistan team.

**Q&A session:**

Potential bidders are invited to a remote meeting to answer any questions about the terms of reference here published. The meeting will take place **Monday 7th December at 6:30 pm Kabul time**. Potential bidders can join the session through this link:

<https://meet.google.com/dpz-ebyr-ors?hs=122&authuser=3>

**Documents to submit:**

Interested candidates, please submit a CV and a brief summary of skills and experience to undertake this consultancy, detailing knowledge of the target areas, experience with qualitative methods and technical competence in conflict/peacebuilding. An itemised financial proposal should also be submitted.

Note that **technical proposals for methodological approach should not be submitted**. Mercy Corps’ research team is leading the research design and tool development and will seek input and agree a data collection plan with the selected consultants at the outset of the contract.

Bidders should submit their documentation to Daniel Herrera Kelly (dherrerakelly@mercycorps.org).