

Consultancy: Research support for a study on partnerships between international NGOs and local civil society organisations

Terms of Reference

1. Background

UK-based peacebuilding organisations Conciliation Resources, International Alert and Saferworld are working together on a three-year programme, funded by the UK Department for International Development's (DfID) Global Security Rapid Assessment (GSRA) mechanism, to provide evidence-informed policy and programming lessons and recommendations to DfID, the UK Government and other peace, security and development actors. The programme started on 1 May 2017 and will run until March 2020.

Under this project, Conciliation Resources will develop research and evidence on how best to support transformative and inclusive peace processes. A sub-theme (2017-8) will investigate how partnerships between international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and local civil society organisations (CSOs) and networks can be most effective. The research will later look at how donor institutions can best support and partner with civil society in peacebuilding and peace processes.

Conciliation Resources is seeking a consultant with experience and knowledge of development, humanitarian and human rights work carried out by NGOs in conflict-affected contexts to provide support for the initial research phase. The consultant will: i) produce a background paper reviewing existing research and knowledge of what makes for effective and equitable partnerships between INGOs and CSOs in conflict-affected contexts; ii) develop a shaping brief with guiding questions and suggested methodology for the participatory research phase of the project, which will look at Conciliation Resources partnership model and practice; and iii) play an active role in a workshop with partners and staff in January 2018 in London.

2. Conciliation Resources' approach to partnership

Conciliation Resources' approach to partnership will be the focus in the first phase of research (August 2017 – March 2018). Partnership has been at the heart of Conciliation Resources' approach to peacebuilding since our establishment in 1994. We understand partnership to mean investment in long-term relationships of trust with individuals and local, national and regional organisations, formal and informal. These relationships are fundamental to what we are able to achieve together. We currently operate without field offices, with only a few staff (individuals) based in some regions where we work. This has been a deliberate choice so as to enable partners to take a leading role in the context, assume responsibility and enhance local ownership. Our model also allows a degree of flexibility in programming, since by having neither a permanent presence nor any obligation

to sustain an office infrastructure, we are able to calibrate the level of our presence and operational engagement with partners in response to changing dynamics on the ground, and to our own and our partners' strategic priorities.

Through the study we will address a number of questions including: what is the 'added value' of an organisation like Conciliation Resources in partnerships? How is it possible to maintain flexibility working with partner organisations in challenging contexts while also remaining rigorous, inclusive and accountable? How do INGOs understand and manage the power dynamics in their partnerships?

3. Scope of the research on partnerships

The research aims **to draw practical lessons on how, and under what conditions, partnerships between INGOs and local CSOs support inclusive and transformative peace processes, based on critical analysis of the partnership models of various INGOs, including that of Conciliation Resources, and donor institutions.**

There will be two phases of research. The consultant will provide support during Phase 1.

Phase 1 (August 2017 – March 2018) will look at *how partnerships between international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) such as Conciliation Resources and local civil society organisations (CSOs) and networks can best support inclusive and transformative peace processes and peacebuilding.* We will examine and produce analysis of the relative strengths of Conciliation Resources' partnership model and practice, and, building on that, investigate the added value of INGOs in supporting local ownership and initiative in peacebuilding, and the challenges of this model in terms of resources, flexibility and diversity. Activities for Phase 1 include:

- September 2017: Production of background paper and methodology for research
- September-December 2017: Research activities on Conciliation Resources' partnership model and practice
- January 2018: Analysis workshop with staff, partner organisations and key donors
- March 2018: Practice Paper produced and shared with key stakeholders; feedback on Year 1 findings to inform design of Year 2 activities

Phase 2 (March 2018 – October 2018), will examine *how external donor governments and institutions such as DfID support the role of local CSOs and networks in inclusive and transformative peace processes.* We will build on the lessons and questions that arose during Phase 1.

4. Deliverables

We are seeking an external consultant to provide up to 10 days' research and analytical support during Phase 1 of the project. The external consultant will deliver the following outputs:

- **A background paper** (approx 10 pages) that summarises and analyses existing research and learning on partnership models and practice, including in the development, humanitarian and/or human rights fields. The paper will extract

principles and lessons on what makes for effective and equitable partnerships between INGOs and civil society organisations, individuals and networks in conflict settings.

- **A shaping brief** (approx 3-4 pages) with guiding questions and a proposed methodology for Conciliation Resources' research activities (September – December 2017).
- **Participation, facilitation and advice:** The consultant will actively participate in a one-day workshop in January 2018 in London with staff, partners and key donors.

The consultant will report to Conciliation Resources' Director of Policy and Learning and work closely with the Programmes Officer. The consultant may be based remotely from London but will be required to visit Conciliation Resources' offices in London on occasion (see below).

5. Provisional timeframe

Timeframe	Activity
Late August/early September 2017	Inception meeting with lead staff to discuss objectives and parameters of the consultancy (half day meeting)
End September 2017	Draft background paper and shaping brief completed and shared with lead staff (half day meeting)
January 2018	Workshop with Conciliation Resources' staff and partners in London
January/ February 2018	Wrap up meeting to reflect on emerging research conclusions (half day meeting)

6. Person specification

- Knowledge of and ideally previous research experience into different INGO-civil society partnership models
- Excellent analytical and writing skills (in English) and experience of producing concise high-quality analytical briefs
- Experience and knowledge of the development, humanitarian, peacebuilding and/or human rights sectors
- Experience of working in partnership with civil society organisations or networks (desirable)

7. Instructions for submission

To apply for this consultancy, please submit a (i) a short letter (2-page maximum) outlining your suitability for and approach to delivering the consultancy requirements; (ii) proposed fee (approximately 10 days has been assigned for the consultancy, including participation in the

meetings outlined in the timeframe) and anticipated expenses (e.g. travel to London); and (iii) your CV (2-page maximum). All proposals should be emailed to recruitment@c-r.org. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 17.00 BST (London) on Monday 14 August 2017.