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**Terms of Reference**

**Consultancy for the Continental Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children in Africa**

**The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)**

**Background**

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC or the Charter) was adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Assembly on 11 July 1990 and entered into force on 29 November 1999. It is the first regional binding instrument that identifies the child as a right holder and makes it possible for the child to assert those rights in domestic judicial or administrative proceedings. As a regional human rights instrument, the Charter is expected to place the children’s rights discourse within the African context. The Charter establishes the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC, or the Committee) as the body which is responsible for monitoring the implementation and ensuring the protection of the rights laid out in the Charter. The ACERWC was established in July 2001 pursuant to articles 32-45 of the ACRWC.

In accordance with its mandate to commission inter-disciplinary assessment of situations on African problems in the field of the rights and welfare of the child, the ACERWC is undertaking a continental study on the impact of armed conflict on children in Africa. The Committee undertakes this study as part of its effort to elevate child protection agenda in conflict situation in Africa as well as guarantee the protection and preservation of life and well-being of the African children.

Recognizing the broader context of conflict in Africa where children and other vulnerable groups bear the cost, the ACERWC strongly believe that it is imperative to take stock of continental impact of armed conflict on children to strengthen the Africa Union system-wide efforts and ability to understand, respond to, and support child protection in armed conflict at national and sub-national level.

In this regard, the study will largely focus on the impact of armed conflict on children in Africa and the results will support the AU’s effort in halting the impact of armed conflict on children and move the children’s rights agenda forward. This study will also provide an important opportunity to place the children’s voice in armed conflict in a broader context. Moreover, the study aims to draw urgency towards Member States and non-state armed groups to address the challenges that children are facing in conflict situations and halt grave violations within the parameters of the six gave violations.

In view of this, World Vision International on behalf of the ACERWC would like to contact a consulting firm to undertake the study.

**Objectives of the study**

* Assess the impact of armed conflict on children in the areas of education, health, adequate food and child protection;
* Assess whether African countries have mechanisms in place which respond to the challenges of especially vulnerable children including girls and separated children during conflict situations;
* Assess the role of children as victims and witnesses in identifying gross violations, including killings, maiming and sexual abuse;
* Assess whether child safeguarding policies in conflict situations are in place; and
* Collect, compile and analyze children’s voices on the impact of armed conflict on their rights and welfare.

**Scope of the Consultancy**

Geographically, the study is limited to countries currently in conflict, countries in fragile post-conflict situations and/or countries in a major humanitarian crisis of multi-causal nature that requires a system-wide response. Based on the applied research methodology the study classifies the countries into two groups. The first group consists of countries whose situation will be assessed through desk research and the second one comprises of countries whose situation will be assessed through field visits and in-depth interviews. Taking into account the differences in context and factoring political constraints, administrative and financial capacity, and technical feasibility, group one consists of the following selected countries: Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and South Sudan. The second group consists of Central African Republic, Libya, Nigeria and Somalia. In light of this scope the consulting firm shall provide the following:

* Detailed report to the ACERWC highlighting the role of States and Non-State actors in ensuring the protection and welfare of children in conflict situation within the framework of the ACRWC;
* Information on the violations of the rights of the child in conflict situation in Africa within the context of education, health, adequate food and child protection, and the six grave violations;
* Detailed findings on measures undertaken to protect children from taking part in hostilities by parties in conflict;
* Detailed analysis on the understanding of implementation of existing mechanisms established to protect children in situations of armed conflict;
* Assessment on the role of children as victims and witnesses in identifying gross violations, including killings, maiming and sexual abuse;
* Recommendations to Member States, African Union and its Policy Organs, Regional Economic Communities and their Mechanisms, International and National Organizations for executive council to undertake with member states on the implementation of mechanism for protection of children in armed conflict situation across Africa

**Deliverable**

1. Inception report that provide detailed research framework, methodologies and details of key issues to be studied and a list of any documentation, information and surveys required.
2. Draft Final Report: The Draft Final Report has to synthesize all findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The consultant will help organize and facilitate the presentation of the draft Report for review through close consultation with the ACERWC and partners
3. The Final Report ( a report of 50 pages). The Final Report has to synthesize all findings, conclusions, recommendations (with account of comments and additions if any that will be shared following submission of the Draft Final Report) and annexes

**Expected activities of the Consultancy:**

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| --- | --- |
| 1. | Meet government authorities, non-state entities international organizations, civil society organisations, the Protection cluster and children affected by armed conflict to understand the role state and non-state actors are playing in protection of children in armed conflict |
| 2. | Discussion with relevant government ministries to understand measures undertaken to protect children from taking part in hostilities by parties in conflict. |
| 3. | Meet with police, peacekeepers, and military to discuss measures in place to enhance the protection of children, steps taken for demobilisation of children in detention and armed conflict. |
| 4.  | Meet with affected children to understand violations suffered and challenges encountered in situation of conflict. |
| 5. | Meeting with the Protection cluster on Child Protection and GBV sub-clusters and other similar inter-agency groups. |
| 6. | Interactions with international NGO, CSOs, FBOs, UN Agencies to understand the challenges and structures in place to address protection of children in armed conflict. |

**Timeframe:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| March | Selection of the consultant | ACERWC/Partners |  |
| April | Methodology workshop | “ |  |
| April - May | Field data collection in select countries | “ |  |
| June- July | Data analysis &Partners data review meeting | “ |  |
| August | Review meeting - ACERWC | “ |  |

**Required Professional Qualifications and Experience**

The consulting firm must meet the following qualification:

* The consulting firm must have an extensive research experience in the area of children’s rights and peace and security in the African context;
* The firm should bring a group of multi-disciplinary and multi-lingual (English, French, Arabic) consultants on board with a view of undertaking an in-depth analysis of the situation;
* The firm should submit CV’s for at least three consultants with eight to ten years’ experience in working on the subject matter;
* Knowledge of the AU and its programmes desirable;
* Work experience in the AU,UN, and other international organisations is desirable;
* Good analytical skills, using both qualitative and quantitative methods;
* Excellent and proven report writing skills; and
* Ability to deliver quality product on time.

**Reporting lines**

The consulting firm will work under the direct supervision and guidance of the ACERWC through its Secretariat at the Department of Social Affairs of the African Union Commission (AUC).

**Working Environment:**

The study uses both field visits and desk research as part of the methodology. To undertake the desk research the consultants primarily work from their duty station. Field visits will also be conducted to the selected countries with a view of collecting on the spot information for making an in-depth situation analysis, mainly through engaging with children. Generally, the consultants will be expected to regularly liaise and consult directly with the ACERWC and its Secretariat.

**Documentation**

The copyrights and all other rights of the materials generated under the provisions of this consultancy will exclusively be vested with the ACERWC.

**Applications**

The application document should consist of the following:

* An application letter outlining why the firm thinks it is the best candidate
* Curriculum Vitae for at least three consultants
* A two pages proposal on how the consulting firm is going to carry out the consultancy including a brief financial proposal
* Company/individual profile including a minimum of three recent referees
* Evidence of programmatic and technical expertise
* Application should be submitted no later than 10th April 2015 to: james\_odong@wvi.org and ayalewg@Africa-union.Org
* Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted, and the final decision reached no later than 15th April 2015.