



## Terms of Reference

### for engagement of Consultancy provider for analysing the COVID-19 influence on migration in the MARRI Participants

Project:	Preventing and Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings in the Western Balkans (PaCT)
Purpose of the contract:	Analysis of the COVID-19 influence on migration in the MARRI Participants
Contract duration:	15/10/2020 -31/12/2020
Contracting authority	MARRI RC
Location	MARRI Participants

#### I. Project background

Preventing and Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings in the Western Balkans (PaCT) is a project financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and MARRI as Strategic partner. The project builds and expands capacities at local, Participants' and regional levels to create prerequisites for an improved situation of victims of trafficking in human beings. In order to achieve this, the project strengthens the capacities of key actors in the field of resilience, the identification of (potential) victims of trafficking and the protection of victims, especially in the field of psycho-social counselling and mental health.

The project operates through four lines of action (Prevention, Protection, Partnership and Support Services) in order to increase capacities of human trafficking victims to demand and realize their rights and, at the same time, to support relevant institutions in recognizing and fulfilling their human rights obligations. In addition, the project follows a multi-level approach, within the framework of which experiences and results from measures on the Participants' and regional levels should be used for mutual learning, regional cooperation and exchange of information.

Migration, Asylum, Refugee Regional Initiative (MARRI) - founded in 2004 as part of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe - is an important platform for strengthening regional cooperation. It is in ownership of the Ministries of Interior / Ministry of Security of the six MARRI Participants (Albania, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Kosovo\*) and works in four thematic networks on asylum, border management, readmission

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

and trafficking in human beings. The MARRI Network of Coordinators for fight against Trafficking in Human Beings is composed of the Coordinators for fight against Trafficking in Human Beings of the six Participants and serves as Steering Group of the PaCT project. Its secretariat, the MARRI Regional Center, is located in Skopje, North Macedonia.

## **II. Newly created challenges**

COVID 19 is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, China, and has resulted in an ongoing pandemic. As of 31 August 2020, more than 25.3 million cases have been reported across 188 countries and territories, resulting in more than 848,000 deaths. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID 19 outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) on 30 January 2020 and a pandemic on 11 March 2020.

This disease had a significant impact not only on human health, but also on the overall normal everyday living (communication, socialization, traveling, economy, and other areas) and therefore also on the economy and politics. It also had a significant impact on the MARRI region and on the core topics of MARRI's mandate – asylum, trafficking in human beings and (irregular) migration. In line with increasing preventive measures and protection of overall human health, many administrative procedures in the MARRI region have been modified and upgraded in accordance with the WHO recommendations. This was the case with the migration procedures, too, such as asylum procedures, treatment of the legal and irregular migrants, treatment of victims of trafficking in human beings, etc. This means that in addition to the migration challenges managed so far, there are additional ones – caused by COVID-19, such as implementation of the WHO recommendations and preventive measures.

Additionally, even with all the risks that COVID-19 brings with it, the migration movements in the MARRI region are still present, and in some MARRI Participants slightly increased in the last period.

## **III. Aim and Objectives of the Assignment**

The aim of the assignment is increasing the security of all migration stakeholders and improving services in the COVID-19 pandemic in the MARRI region.

The specific objectives of the assignment are to:

- Analyse and assess the impact that COVID-19 pandemic had on migration in the region;
- Identify gaps and needs of key migration stakeholders in adapting to the new situation, as well as sharing good practices for efficient and effective implementation of WHO recommendations;

- Strengthening regional cooperation on addressing migration challenges in the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

In line of reaching the objectives, it is planned to conduct a research by three experts/consultants who are significantly familiar with the MARRI region, the respective migration topics as well as research and analysis. They will conduct research of the current impact of COVID-19 on migration, present and discuss their findings at a virtual Regional Conference as well as develop policy recommendations in the aftermath.

The consultants will be local/regional experts. Research will be conducted through desk research and interviews with the **relevant stakeholders in all MARRI Participants<sup>1</sup>** (governmental and non-governmental organizations, academia as well as regional and international organizations active in the MARRI region) in three areas:

- Irregular migration;
- Trafficking in human beings; and
- Asylum.

*The results from the research will support MARRI Participants administrations in their capacity development through sharing good practices as well as in programming new needs-based projects and support.*

#### **IV. Tasks and responsibilities of the experts**

The Consultancy provider should conduct research (desk research, online interviews, written communication with relevant stakeholders) in line of assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on migration issues in the region, develop clear recommendations on how the adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic could be improved further, jointly (with MARRI) organize virtual Regional Conference for publicly sharing and discussing the findings and spreading awareness on and best practices for efficient and effective implementation of WHO recommendations in management of COVID-19 challenges. In the aftermath of the conference, key policy recommendations shall be compiled and developed for dissemination.

##### **4.1. Activity package 1: research and analysis**

- Screening of the current situation, particularly from 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (when officially it was declared a COVID-19 pandemic) until September 2020, in the three main migration areas which are the scope of interest i.e. irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and asylum, including the comparison of the collected data with the migration data for the same period of 2019 and possible 2018 (March-September).

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<sup>1</sup>At least one stakeholder from each group of organizations in all MARRI Participants per topic should be interviewed. Example: Albania – 1 governmental organization, 1 non-governmental organization, 1 regional/international organization and 1 academia/professor (total 4) for irregular migration. At least 4 for THB and 4 for asylum, total per MARRI Participant = at least 16. Total for the assignment = 84 interviews.

- Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the key stakeholders active in these areas (administrations, non-governmental organisations, etc) and on the target groups. Thereby, amendments of the administrative procedures (new laws, bylaws, upgrade of administrative procedures, etc.) in accordance to the WHO recommendations for health protection of administrative workers (service providers) and migrants, refugees and (potential) victims of THB (service consumers) should also be considered.
- Best practices from the region should be identified, together with recommendations for improvement of procedures – if needed.

**Deliverables of set of activities:**

- List of stakeholders to be interviewed;
- Developed concept and questionnaire used in the research phase;
- Drafted Report from the research thematically divided in three areas (irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and asylum), where all MARRI Participants will be equally presented, including:
  - Identified good practices for management of COVID-19 challenges;
  - Identified recommendations for improvement of administrative procedures;
- Summary of questionnaires in standardised excel format.

Maximum days for realization of the Activity package 1 are 45.

**4.2. Activity package 2: Presentation and facilitation of discussion at a virtual Regional Conference.**

The virtual Regional Conference will be a forum where the findings from the research will be presented and discussed. At the Conference relevant stakeholders from MARRI Participants' administrations, NGOs and academia will be invited, as well as regional and international organizations that are active in the MARRI region.

The Conference will be organized in three separate – thematic based sessions (Irregular Migration, Trafficking in Human Beings and Asylum) where stakeholders will jointly conclude additional needs and recommendations for further support for proper COVID-19 management.

Activities:

- Jointly (with MARRI) preparation of Conference's Agenda and Invitation Letter;
- Presentation of findings;
- Facilitate discussion at the Conference.

**Deliverables of this set of activities:**

- Agenda and Designed Invitation Letter;
- Minutes from the Conference.

Maximum days for realization of Activity package 2 are 5.

#### **4.3 Activity package 3: Development of policy recommendations**

Development of clear policy recommendations per thematic topic (Irregular Migration, Trafficking in Human Beings and Asylum) that are based on the identified good practices in the region as well as identified gaps, following the presentation and discussion of research findings at the Regional Conference.

*Regional dimension and regional cooperation vis-à-vis migration management in COVID-19 pandemic situation should be included as a separate chapter in the recommendations.*

##### **Deliverables of this set of activities:**

- Final Report with policy recommendations per thematic topic.

Maximum days for realization of Activity package 3 are 5.

## V. Deliverables and Time Frame

When?	What?	Deliverable(s)
9 October 2020	Signing of contract	Consultancy contract signed
12 – 16 October 2020	Orientation meeting with the selected consultants	Common ground for successful implementation of the assignment, exchanged and agreed between MARRI and consultants
26 October 2020	List of stakeholders to be interviewed;	Approved List of stakeholders
26 October 2020	Developing research concept and methodology	Approved Research concept and methodology
26 October 2020	Developing Questionnaire	Approved Questionnaire
19 October – 30 November 2020	Research and analyses implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct research in all MARRI Participants;</li> <li>- Analyses of the results;</li> <li>- Delivering a Report;</li> </ul>
30 November – 04 December 2020	Reviewing and approval of the Report	Approved Research and Analysis Report
05 – 18 December 2020	Organizing online Regional Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approved Agenda and Invitation Letter</li> <li>- Participation and presentation of the findings;</li> <li>- Presentation of the methodology;</li> <li>- Presentation of stated needs;</li> <li>- Conference's Minutes</li> </ul>
19-31 December 2020	Final Report and policy recommendations	Approved Final Report

Note: This is a tentative timeline which may be subject to adjustments in case of changing dynamics.

Interested consultants shall provide and submit detailed **Operational Plan** for each set of activities with respective actions corresponding to the time frame provided in the Table above.

All above listed activities and delivery of the expected outputs are envisaged to take place between 09 October 2020 and 31 December 2020.

All deliverables will be subject of approval by the Contracting authority.

## VI. Concept of the research, analyses and findings presentation

The consultants for each of the areas shall deliver research in the period of 6 weeks, including analyses (4.1), reporting and policy recommendations, respecting conceptual and methodological aspects that are crucial to assure quality of the research and analyses.

The research/analyses will be thematically divided in three areas (irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and asylum). Also, they should be thematically presented in the report, too, for each of the MARRI Participants.

The online Regional Conference will be also thematically divided with three sessions (one for each area), where it is expected that the consultants/experts present the findings for each of the areas for which they are responsible as well as facilitate the discussions.

The research provider is expected to provide a detailed Operational Plan per each of the activities in the proposal, including the activities of resource person(s) (if any).

## VII. Team of experts

### 7.1. Structure of the Team of Consultants

The Consultancy provider should offer a team of **3 Experts** – Subject Matter Experts (SME) who will be responsible for development, preparation and carrying out research and analyses as well as presentation and reporting of findings in the designated topics – approaches:

- Irregular migration;
- Trafficking in human beings; and
- Asylum.

### 7.2. Team Leader

The consultancy provider should appoint one of the proposed experts of the team in a capacity of Team Leader. The Team Leader will perform as focal point between the MARRI and the team of experts. Direct communication of MARRI with the experts will be established, too.

### 7.3. Expert days

Considering the above-mentioned sets of activities (IV. Responsibilities and tasks of the experts), the maximum number of days projected for the entire assignment is **up to 55**.

## VIII. Experts' Profile

The SME experts are expected to be highly experienced, with hands-on knowledge about migration flows in the MARRI region, migration management, processes and procedures. In addition, experts should have sufficient knowledge of migration systems in each of the MARRI Participants, the current status and needs for capacity development, challenges, trends and opportunities, particularly in the area of irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and asylum.

### Professional experience

The experts should have at least 10 years of working experience in the MARRI region from which at least 5 years in one of the areas of interest of the assignment.

Each of the experts should demonstrate that s/he have been involved in at least 5 research and analytical projects related to migration.

The experts should demonstrate professional experience in activities implemented in South-East Europe, preferable in the MARRI region. Experience in working with public institutions and local authority stakeholders.

The professional experience in the areas of expertise shall be proved with corresponding references.

### Education

The experts should have a University Degree in an area relevant to the improvement of public administration and social services (e.g. social sciences, political science, public administration, pedagogy, human resource management or another relevant field).

Successfully completed trainings in the area of migration will be considered as an asset.

### Language skills

Fluent proficiency in English. Knowledge of at least one of the MARRI local languages (Albanian, Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian, Macedonian) would be an asset.

### IT skills

MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).

### Other

Promptness, high flexibility, ability to work under tight deadlines, readiness to travel.



## IX. Proposal

The Consultancy provider (Company, CSO or Consortium) is asked to submit a proposal, by **05 October 2020, 16:00 (CET)**. The proposal has to be submitted in English language by e-mail, at [info@Marri-rc.org.mk](mailto:info@Marri-rc.org.mk) and shall contain the following sections:

### 1. Technical component

#### 1.1. Consultancy provider Profile

- 1.1.1. Cover page, showing provider's name, address and contact information;
- 1.1.2. Presentation of the provider and its suitability for assignment;
- 1.1.3. Detailed interpretation of the assignment and its objectives, including critical analysis of potential challenges during implementation;
- 1.1.4. A document for registered activity as evidence that the provider is registered as a legal entity (Company, CSO) for performing the activity related to the subject of the Services or evidence that belongs to appropriate professional association in accordance with the regulations of the country where the company is registered;
- 1.1.5. Documents confirming the financial capability of the company,

Note: please group all your documents from point 1.1.1 and 1.1.5 into one (1) single text-searchable PDF document.

#### 1.2. Exposure of applicants' expertise

- 1.2.1. List and CVs of proposed experts for each of the module topics:
  - Irregular migration;
  - Trafficking in human beings;
  - Asylum;
- 1.2.2. Reference for relevant assignments, presented in the CV
- 1.2.3. Proposed Operational plan (time line, milestones, meetings etc.) with proposed expert days for each activity and each involved expert(s) (if applicable),

Note: please group all your documents from this part (1.2.) into one (1) single text-searchable PDF document.

### 2. Financial component

- 2.1. Financial offer shall contain the total amount and proposed experts' daily rate, VAT shown separately.

## **X. Evaluation Criteria and Scoring**

The selection of the Consultancy provider will be made in accordance with the quality-cost based selection method (70 % technical component and 30% financial component).

## **XI. Reference**

The reference for this assignment is MARRI Regional Centre, email address: [info@Marri-rc.org.mk](mailto:info@Marri-rc.org.mk)

## **XII. Contract Negotiation**

MARRI reserves the right to negotiate specific terms of the contract with the short-listed proponents prior to the final award of the contract.

MARRI also reserves the right to negotiate specific terms of the contract with the Contractor as the contract progresses.

## **XIII. Acceptance and Rejection of Proposals**

MARRI may not necessarily accept the lowest priced proposal or any proposal. At its sole discretion, MARRI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to accept any proposal which it considers advantageous, whether or not it is the lowest priced proposal.

MARRI is not under any obligation to award a contract, and reserves the right to terminate the request for proposal process at any time, and to withdraw from discussions with all or any of the consultancy providers who have responded.

MARRI reserves the right to accept the proposed offer in total or in part, to reject any or all offers, to waive any minor informalities, irregularities, or technicalities, and to accept the offer deemed most favourable.

## **XIV. Ownership**

All materials, documents and information prepared, developed or adjusted by the Consultancy provider and used for the purposes of preparation, realization and facilitation of the research and analyses, as well as reporting, remain the property of MARRI.

The Consultancy provider agree that no part of the materials, documents and information may be reproduced or distributed in any form, or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, for any other purposes and objectives than those related to this ToR, without the prior permission of MARRI.

## **XV. Reporting**

The Research and Analytical Report should be submitted by 30 October 2020. The Assignment Report, together with overall debriefing and feedback from the online Regional Conference (including conclusions and way beyond) shall be submitted by 31 December 2020.

## **XVI. Terms and Payment**

The Consultancy provider (and resource person(s), if any), will be hired under Service Contract, signed by MARRI and will be paid in instalments upon submission and approval of the deliverables listed above.

## **XVII. Performance indicators**

The indicators reflecting the expert's performance are: Timely presentation of results and outputs, quality of analytical reports in line of prescribed methodology and format, participants' evaluation results and quality of the reports to be provided to the reference person of this assignment (namely MARRI). The expert's performance will be evaluated by MARRI at the feedback session with the Consultancy provider, following the realization of the research.

## **XVIII. Evaluation of work**

The performance of the tasks will be assessed by the MARRI in coordination with GIZ staff.

## **XIX. Amendments, Modification or Variation**

Some changes are possible during implementation of the assignment as a result of COVID 19 and measures undertaken by MARRI Participants administrations. The selected company/experts will be in regular contact with MARRI and will change activities, if necessary, based on the assessment of the situation.

Some tasks might be a subject of discussion and review, which can lead to slight adaptations, based on the experiences, lessons learnt and the actual needs, as a result of the progress and its achievements. The work schedule might also be adapted according to the progress, so a flexible approach is expected from the contractor.

The Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after mutual discussions, consultations and agreement between MARRI and the contractor.