

Final Evaluation & Program Design Terms of Reference (ToR)

PAX Protection of Civilians Program
2019-2023



SUMMARY

PAX's Protection of Civilians (PoC) team is seeking a qualified team of experts to conduct a final evaluation of its PoC Program. **In addition to reflecting on performance throughout the lifetime of the grant, the evaluation should directly feed into participatory and evidence-based program design efforts for the next phase of the intervention.** The selected consultants will therefore need to be highly effective facilitators with expertise in program design and theory of change development. The evaluation should take place between May-September 2023 and involve extensive engagement with partners and other key stakeholders based in Iraq and South Sudan, as well as 2 or more participatory workshops at PAX's headquarters in the Netherlands (including specifically from 12-16 June). Applications are due by 5 May and the contract would begin shortly thereafter.

OVERVIEW

PAX is the largest peace organization in the Netherlands. We work to protect civilians against acts of war, to end armed violence, and to build inclusive peace. We work in conflict areas worldwide together with local partners and people who—like us—believe that everyone has a right to a dignified life in a peaceful society.

PAX's PoC Program was established in 2016 and expanded in 2019 in partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). **The overall goal of our work is to improve the security of civilian populations living in conflict through making security policies and interventions more responsive, relevant, and inclusive.** We work in close collaboration with local partners and communities to identify the most pressing security needs at the grassroots level and communicate these with relevant stakeholders nationally and internationally through advocacy, expert events, and published analyses. We also work directly with security providers at various levels to enable them to implement more informed, accountable, and civilian-centered protection strategies through practical training, policy guidance, and technical assistance. For more information, please see: www.protectionofcivilians.org.

COMPONENT PROJECTS & PARTNERS

The PoC Program is made up of interconnected and complementary projects, each of which are implemented in close cooperation with expert partners on the ground and internationally:

Human Security Survey (HSS) - Iraq & South Sudan

The [HSS](#) is a research and dialogue methodology developed by PAX to improve understanding of civilians' experiences in conflict. Currently implemented as two separate projects in Iraq and South Sudan, we work closely with trusted partners¹ to interview scores of everyday people about their experiences, perceptions, and priorities related to security and protection. Additional data comes from longitudinal expert panel surveys, which provide further insights from the perspective of local specialists and authorities. We then facilitate dialogues with civilians and authorities to validate

¹ In Iraq, we work in close collaboration with three partners: the Iraqi Al-Amal Association, the Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society, and Wand Al-Khair Human Organization. In South Sudan, we currently partner with two organizations: the Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA) and the Justice and Peace Commission-Catholic Diocese of Torit (JPC-CDoT), in addition to a number of local consultants.

the survey findings and identify practical, community-driven ways to improve security conditions, which we support via local committees. Data are also presented through analytical reports and interactive dashboards. By continuing this cycle of data collection, analysis, and facilitated discussion over multiple years, PAX and its partners can track trends and work to affect sustainable change. HSS results also contribute nuanced examples to training and advocacy components of the broader PoC Program.

Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA) and Protection in Practice (PiP)

In addition to working at the grassroots level, the program also targets key national and international institutions to ensure that sufficient policies and capacities exist to effectively deliver people-centered protection. While the commitment to protecting civilians in conflict is firmly on the agenda of institutions like the EU, UN, and NATO, international military missions still struggle to translate policy into effective practice. This program seeks to bridge the gap between local protection needs and the capacities of given missions, centering civilian perspectives to inform more inclusive, relevant strategies and to hold decisionmakers accountable. This part of the approach includes international advocacy, supporting local organizations through the [Civil Society Engagement Facility](#), convening expert roundtables on the sidelines of policy debates, co-producing the [Civilian Protection Podcast](#), and hosting an annual PoC Conference.

In parallel to the policy context, security providers also require support or advice in how to put these concepts into practice in different operating environments. The program seeks to meet the information needs of security institutions by providing PoC-focused training and exercise modules that are grounded in field realities and the lived experiences of civilians. Additionally, PAX promotes greater transparency and accountability of military missions by providing best practice guidance to security providers in how to track, report, mitigate, and respond to incidents of civilian harm. Note that these two [projects](#) were merged in 2022 for the purposes of more coordinated management and implementation.

EVALUATION PURPOSE

This final evaluation is intended to facilitate deep reflection about the quality of the program's approach and theory of change, as well as to feed into informed and inclusive design for future phases of the program. Therefore, our goal with this evaluation is less about generating a detailed accounting of our program's results to date and more about facilitating participatory learning and strategic decision making about the future among our staff, partners, and other key stakeholders.

Audience and Users

The primary users of the evaluation will be PAX's PoC program staff, as well as members of each of partner organizations in Iraq, South Sudan, and the USA. Secondary users will include additional PAX colleagues and key counterparts from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is important to note that **we will convene all core stakeholders for an Annual Partner Meeting in the Netherlands from 12-16 June, which is intended to be a key moment in the evaluation and program design process.**

In general, we anticipate working very closely with the evaluation team in order to leverage both insider knowledge and new perspectives. We are open to creating a hybrid team setup that includes active participation of program staff, though we are open to different working modalities as proposed by applicants to this ToR.

PROPOSED OBJECTIVES AND LINES OF INQUIRY

Evaluation Objectives

PAX's PoC team is particularly interested in exploring the **relevance, coherence, and sustainability** of our overall approach as we prepare to design the next phase of our program. Earlier formal evaluations,² as well as ongoing

² PAX commissioned a joint evaluation of its two HSS projects in 2018, and also conducted a detailed midterm review (MTR) of the entire PoC Program in 2022. Final evaluation reports and other materials from these processes will be provided during the inception phase, along with any other relevant monitoring data and further documentation.

components of our learning agenda have enabled us to reflect on other themes—such as effectiveness and impact—and integrate these into how we implement our program. These existing, documented findings and learning outcomes will be made available to the evaluation team.

The scope and breadth of the current lines of inquiry as outlined below are admittedly quite large. Generally speaking, we prefer to have detailed findings around a few strategic questions, rather than superficial discussions on all of them; although at least a few areas of focus on each of the three evaluation objectives are desired. We propose that **a core aspect of the Inception Phase of the evaluation be a participatory exercise with PAX and its partners to further refine, delineate, and contextualize the lines of inquiry** to ensure their relevance and utility,³ and to secure buy-in from partners and relevant programmatic stakeholders for the evaluation process.

Relevance

- How well positioned is the program to influence policy development and implementation processes at the EU, UN, and NATO or within key member states? How could this improve? What is the partnership's greatest added value for these institutions (currently and in the future)?
- How do local perspectives and experiences that are consolidated and conveyed through this program currently factor into (inter)national PoC policy development and evaluation in practice, and how could we better leverage our access and networks at the various levels?
- What kind of additional feedback loops or accountability mechanisms should be in place between PAX, its partners, and participating institutions and communities?
- What should the next iteration of the HSS projects look like in Iraq and South Sudan to ensure continued relevance? How have the needs of targeted communities and data users changed since the projects were developed, and how can we add the most value in the future?

Coherence

- External: How does this program fit within the broader PoC system? How well has the program aligned or built linkages with relevant institutions and decision makers, or coordinated with complementary interventions?
- External: With which institutions, missions, or stakeholder groups is the program not yet working that we ought to in order to increase our impact or respond to emergent needs (both in existing target countries, but also in new contexts)?
- Internal/External: To what extent are the intervention's design, delivery, and results coherent with our ambitions and values when it comes to principles of inclusivity and localization? How can the program make its approach to inclusivity more explicit or transformative, particularly with regards to the meaningful participation of women?
- Internal: How would an improved partnership and management model look in order to improve coordination, better leverage partner capacities, and foster greater learning and innovation?

Sustainability

- Which aspects of the approach should be scaled up, maintained, or scaled down as we transition to the next phase of the program? Where is there more “absorptive capacity” within targeted institutions that we are not yet capitalizing on?
- What are examples of mechanisms that were set up to support the achievement of institutional change in the longer term? When has the program been especially successful at cultivating meaningful political will around PoC topics and why?
- How can PAX and its partners better insulate the program or results from political or security contextual factors that may negatively influence the durability of results?

³ Further, some questions will be more appropriately focused on the specific project level, and others on the overall program level. During the inception phase we will also determine at which level we wish to obtain conclusions and recommendations.

- How could the next stage of the program better support and track contributions to longer-term results, particularly those linked to community engagement and training efforts?

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Timeline & Components

A proposed 35-45 working days⁴ will be available for:

- **Evaluation preparation** (including preparatory meetings with program staff, finalizing the ToR, reviewing basic program documents, facilitating an in-person kick-off meeting, preparing data collection instruments, and compiling an inception report and evaluation plan);
- **Remote data collection** (including performing a thorough desk review of project documents from past activities and events, conducting interviews with program staff and key policymakers from targeted institutions; providing support to local partners to conduct follow-up key informant interviews or focus group discussions at the field level);⁵
- **Facilitated reflection and design discussions** (including facilitating significant components of an Annual Partner Meeting in the Netherlands during 12-16 June, and at least one subsequent program design workshop with core staff to consolidate lessons learned especially for proposed new, adapted, or expanded components of the program); and
- **Analysis and synthesis** (including data analysis, compiling a draft report or other comparable output detailing an updated Theory of Change, and incorporating feedback from PAX and local partners into a final report).

PAX and its partners can provide logistical and technical support as needed throughout the evaluation process. This will include compiling project documents, providing advice regarding transportation and lodging, identifying reputable translators and drivers, and providing contacts and/or introductions to key stakeholders in the field and internationally (if needed and desired).

Given our interest in utilizing the evaluation process to generate both learning and from the past as well as program design ideas for the future, we also **propose that members of the program team play a direct and active role in the evaluation process**, including the inception phase, (remote and in-person) data collection, and—while sensitive to the risk of potential bias—the analysis and synthesis phases. Though we are again open to a variety of options for how to craft this hybrid approach that can best deliver the efficient consolidation of existing knowledge as well as lend new and creative insights.

Deliverables

The anticipated key efforts and final outputs for this evaluation will include:

- A **kick-off meeting** at PAX's headquarters to meet the team, refine the ToR, and plan for the Annual Partner Meeting (ideally in person for 2 days in late May);
- An **inception report and evaluation plan** detailing the refined evaluation objectives and planned approach to responding to them, as well as outlining the final agenda for the Annual Partner Meeting (due to PAX for approval by early June and prior to any primary data collection);

⁴ Note that this tallies proposed working days if the evaluation were completed by a single consultant, though we certainly anticipate that multiple team members would be a part of each component of data collection and analysis, and that therefore the total net working days would be higher.

⁵ We are open to there being a fieldwork component of the evaluation, should time and budget allow. However, given that all of our core partners will already come together in June for our Annual Partner Meeting, and since our midterm evaluation in 2022 included significant data collection in both Iraq and South Sudan, we may be able to make more strategic use of the evaluation team's time with a mix of remote follow-up interviews and participatory engagements in the Netherlands. Our local partners would also be capable of consolidating additional evidence through KIIs or FGDs with key stakeholders under guidance of the evaluation team.

- A **series of facilitated reflection sessions during an Annual Partner Meeting** in the Netherlands to identify key learning and contribute to participatory program design processes (during 12-16 June);
- A set of **focus group discussion and interview guidelines** for our partners to utilize to solicit additional country- or project-specific input from key local stakeholders (in English and Arabic by late June);
- An **interactive workshop to present findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and to apply these to informed program design** utilizing the evaluation outcomes (ideally also in person in the Netherlands, timing TBD); and
- A **final report** (or alternative equivalent output) of no more than 20-25 pages including a proposed new Theory of Change for the program that incorporates key lessons learned from the evaluation and relevant feedback from PAX and its partners; also including a shorter summary that can be distributed to a wide range of stakeholders (prior to concluding the contract before the end of September).⁶

The project team anticipates benefiting most from a well-facilitated, in-person workshop to discuss the evaluation findings and the implications for the design of a new programmatic Theory of Change. However, some form of sharable deliverable will be a valuable means of disseminating the results among key audiences. If the evaluator is interested in proposing additional or alternative deliverables aside from a traditional written report that will help to better reflect the outcomes of the process, we are very open to suggestions in the application responding to this ToR, or during the inception phase.

We recognize that the above timeline is rather tight. Note that our current core grant concludes at the end of 2023, and we anticipate spending much of June–August writing proposals to request funding from one or more new or existing donors. The timing and structure of one key tendering process from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not yet publicly available, so the above timeline may shift accordingly.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Desired Expertise & Qualifications

Given the scope of work and variety of expertise required, we strongly recommend that (international) teams of consultants apply for this opportunity, rather than individuals. The team collectively should contain the skills and experience detailed below.

The selected evaluators must have demonstrated expertise in both **participatory evaluation and program design/Theory of Change development processes**. Further, **familiarity with conflict-sensitive programming—ideally related to the protection or security sectors**—is critical. Previous regional experience in Iraq and/or South Sudan is strongly desired, and Arabic language skills are looked upon very favorably, although not required. Additional desired qualifications particularly for Lead Evaluators are listed below:

- Bachelor's degree in social sciences, international relations, conflict resolution, security studies, or related field; advanced degree preferred;
- Minimum 7-10 years of experience in designing, overseeing, and implementing project evaluations, or a combination of education, training, and experience;
- Demonstrated experience in conflict-sensitive program design, theory of change development, and successful proposal writing;
- Practical professional experience in conflict or post-conflict settings;⁷
- Familiarity with international programming in the protection and security sectors, ideally including UN or NATO missions;

⁶ Written deliverables, (or at least summary versions), should be translated into Arabic to ensure accessibility to key stakeholders. Any costs associated with translation, editing, etc. should be included in the evaluation team's budget.

⁷ Note that if the evaluation team proposes to include in-country fieldwork, we would require up-to-date personal security/HEAT training certificates for those involved.

- Excellent intercultural communication skills, gender and cultural sensitivity, and the ability to work constructively and build trust with people from a variety of different backgrounds;
- Very strong facilitation, presentation, and communication skills; as well as the ability to communicate effectively in English (and, if possible, in Arabic), both verbally and in writing; and
- Technical knowledge of qualitative and quantitative data collection methodologies.

Application Materials

Interested applicants should provide current CVs and a max 5-page statement of interest and abridged proposal by **24:00 CET on Friday, 5 May**. These materials should clearly outline the team's:

1. **Key skills and experience** that are relevant to this consultancy;
2. Any **core standards or principles** that will inform the evaluation and design process;
3. A description of the team's **proposed approach** and likely data collection and analysis methods, as well as suggested changes to the proposed process or deliverables outlined in the ToR;
4. Potential **data limitations** and appropriate ways to mitigate them;
5. A **summary budget** and cost justification; and
6. Names and contact details for **two recent references** for the team as a whole or the Lead Evaluator(s).

Please note that we will schedule interviews with our top candidates during the week of 8 May. Preference will be given to applicants who are available to undertake the work immediately thereafter.

BUDGET

The total projected budget for this evaluation is approximately **€40.000-55.000** (including VAT). This figure includes all costs relevant to the evaluation, including daily rates, travel, per diems, meals and incidental expenses, communications, insurance, translation, contingencies, etc. However, most costs associated with convening the annual partner meeting in the Netherlands in June will be covered by a separate budget.⁸

Note that cost will be among the assessment criteria when reviewing applications to this ToR, and final payments will not be made until all project deliverables have been received and verified as meeting PAX's expectations.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Relevant questions as well as application materials should be submitted by 5 May to the point of contact below:

Evaluation Manager

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⁸ PAX will cover all costs associated with the Annual Partner Meeting, including bringing partners to the Netherlands, the event venue, catering, accommodations, interpretation, etc. The only costs that the evaluation consultants should include in their own budgets are transportation costs to Utrecht, per diems, and daily rates; all other costs for the evaluation team associated with the items listed above will be covered directly by PAX.