



Final evaluation of the project 'Integrated temporary shelter and family reunification to protect the rights of unaccompanied and separated children', from May 2016 till October 2019 in Tartous, Syria

SOS Children's Villages Belgium

Terms of Reference

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Title :	External evaluator for an EU-funded project in Syria
Purpose:	Final evaluation of an EU-funded project in Tartous (Syria)
Reporting to:	SOS Children's Villages Belgium
Duty station:	Home-based with mission to Syria
Period:	Between 9 August and 30 September
Deadline for applications	29 July (see chapter 6 for the required elements of the offer)

1 Context of the evaluation

1.1 Description of the organisation

SOS Children's Villages Belgium (SOS Belgium) is a non-governmental social development organization that has been active in the field of children's rights and committed to children's needs and concerns since 1963. SOS Children's Villages Belgium is a member of SOS Children's Villages International, an international federation in 134 countries.

The main target group of SOS Children's Villages are children having lost parental care or that are at risk of losing it. SOS focuses on the development of the child so that (s)he becomes an independent member who participates in the society. The best way for a child to develop fully his/her potential is to grow up in a loving family environment. Recognizing the child's role in their own development and the role of their family, community, state and other service providers, we work with all relevant stakeholders to find the most appropriate response adapted to the situation of the child. Based on the specific situation and the best interest of the child, interventions are developed and the corresponding measures are implemented. Together with other stakeholders, we build on existing resources, initiatives and capacities, and strengthen them where necessary. In this way, we respond with relevant interventions using the available resources in the best possible way while having a greater impact on the situation of the children in our target group.

These Terms of Reference are developed to launch a call for external evaluators on behalf of SOS Belgium for the final evaluation of the implementation of a project in Syria.

1.2 Context and description of the project

In 2019, the Syrian crisis enters its ninth year. Currently, almost 14 million people are in need, of which 5,7 million are children. The rights of children are severely violated. Two-thirds of the children have lost a loved one and many of them are left alone or are at risk of being separated from their family. Children have been exposed to severe forms of violence, and are often suffering from mental distress. The level of education has dropped dramatically, child labour is becoming more rule than exception, and access to essential services as health care is very poor.

Since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2011, Tartous remained a relatively safe location with very few security incidents. Nevertheless, it is estimated that currently 553.000 people are in need in Tartous, half of them are in acute need. Tartous is an area indirectly affected by the Syrian conflict. Since the start of the conflict, there was an important influx of IDPs in the governorate of Tartous and its capital, which caused (and continues to cause) an increased pressure on the existing local structures and mechanisms (in terms of infrastructure, economic opportunities, accommodation, health and education structures).

Since May 2016 and until October 2019, an emergency program titled 'Integrated temporary shelter and family reunification to protect the rights of unaccompanied and separated children' has been implemented in Tartous.

The project is part of the Emergency Response Program (ERP) of the Syrian Arab Association of SOS Children's Villages (SOS Syria). Since 2012, in response to the current crisis, SOS Syria developed, in collaboration with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), Syria Trust Development, local authorities, Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and INGOs/IOs/UN agencies, an ERP in the governorates of Damascus and Aleppo. This ERP mainly focused on the supply of food and non-food items and WASH programs in war-affected regions, the implementation of Interim

Alternative Care Centers and the installation of Child Friendly Spaces. With the start of this ERP project in Tartous in May 2016, it was the first time SOS Syria was operational in this governorate.

The projects overall objective is “to contribute to diminishing the impact of the Syrian crisis on child rights (both girls and boys) by enhancing the protection and reintegration of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) in Tartous coastal area”. The specific objective of the project is “to protect the provision, protection and participation rights stated in the Convention of the Rights of Children and its additional protocol for 150 UASC and reintegrate them according to their best interests in strengthened families of origin, long-term family-based settings (e.g. extended relatives) or quality alternative care-facilities”.

The expected results of the project are: **(i)** 150 unaccompanied or separated children in Tartous are protected in a temporary integrated shelter and 2500 children affected by the conflict living with their families in the community of Tartous find an appropriate support for their psychosocial recovery; **(ii)** 150 unaccompanied or separated children in Tartous are reintegrated in their families of origin, in long-term family-based settings or alternative-care facilities according to their best interest, and **(iii)** children from the target group, families of origins and extended relatives taking care of children, representatives of Tartous’ communities are sensitized and empowered to report children rights violations through capacity-building sessions on child protection, children’s rights, prevention of separation, gender based violence (GBV).

The project includes three main components:

- (i) Via the Interim Alternative Care Centre (IACC), SOS shelters 150 children whose fundamental rights are being violated because they are facing harsh living conditions alone, without any family members to take care of them. They are cared for in the IACC until they are reunified with family members or referred to a qualitative long-term family based setting or alternative care settings. All children are provided with essential services as medical care, education programs, psychological or psychosocial support or life-skills trainings. The IACC will close in September 2019.
- (ii) In the Child Friendly Space (CFS), a day-care center for about 100 children a day, a wide range of activities is organized that create a friendly, healthy and safe environment for at least 2.500 children. The CFS focuses on psychosocial group sessions, life skills activities and sessions on children’s rights. A mobile team provided awareness sessions for children outside the CFS center. Finally, the project provided psychosocial support sessions and small-scale trainings for the mothers of the children admitted to the CFS and awareness raising workshops for community members. The CFS-related activities were closed in April 2019.
- (iii) In November 2018, a Family Strengthening Program (FSP) started in order to support 60 of the most vulnerable families of children of the IACC and the CFS. The FSP provided support in terms of contribution to house rent, school fees and equipment, clothing, health care, legal advice and income generating activities. The objective of the FSP is to ensure the sustainability of the family reunification, to avoid the loss of parental care or to avoid the resort to negative coping mechanisms such as child labour. The FSP will close in October 2019.

At its maximum capacity, the project was implemented by a team of around 37 co-workers based in Tartous, supported by a team of volunteers.

2 Topics of the evaluation

2.1 Object and objectives of the evaluation

The object of the evaluation is the whole project titled ‘**Integrated temporary shelter and family reunification to protect the rights of unaccompanied and separated children**’, as it was approved by the European Commission (contracting authority) and implemented by SOS Belgium and SOS Syria. All components of the project will be evaluated, including the project component that is already closed down (CFS). It includes a global and nuanced assessment made by the evaluator. This final evaluation is mandatory for the donor and will be conducted by an external party to guarantee an objective assessment. It will enrich the final narrative report to be submitted to the donor and it will allow for institutional learning and progress of SOS Syria and SOS Belgium.

This evaluation is organized at the end of the project cycle. As a summative evaluation, the objectives of this evaluation are (i) to assess the outcomes of the project for reasons of accountability towards the contracting authority and for decision-making in future project cycles, (ii) to generate learnings and recommendations to be integrated in subsequent planning processes and (iii) to evaluate impact on individuals and communities.

2.2 Recipients of the evaluation

The conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be returned to SOS Belgium (lead-applicant), SOS Syria (co-applicant and implementing partner), the International Federation of SOS (umbrella organization of the lead and co-applicant) and will be shared with the EU (contracting authority).

The results of the evaluation can also be shared with external stakeholders of the project (synergy partners), other donors to the project and other members of the International Federation of SOS Children's Villages.

2.3 Domains and stakeholders of the evaluation

With this evaluation, it is necessary to draw up an inventory of all the actions, to analyze the collected information and to evaluate its value and quality based on objective criteria. A specific focus is put on the intervention logic. Therefore, the evaluation must demonstrate if the activities have led to the proposed outputs of the Action and if the realized outputs have led to the proposed outcomes of the Action.

It is mandatory to imply internal and external stakeholders in the evaluation process.

The internal stakeholders of this project are listed here below. These parties signed a partnership agreement for the implementation and management of this project in Tartous

- (i) SOS Belgium: lead-applicant and contract holder of this project. For more information on SOS Belgium, see chapter 1.1.
- (ii) SOS Syria: SOS Syria runs children and youth development programs (children's villages, youth facilities and integration projects, social centers) and works with all relevant duty bearers to strengthen their capacity to protect child rights and to find most suitable answers to the situation of children at risk. The main target groups of SOS Syria are children, their families, communities and their representatives, local authorities, and governmental structures such as the Ministry for Social Affairs (MoSA). Since 2005, SOS Syria develops Family Strengthening Programs for vulnerable families, intended to prevent family separation and to provide more stable families for children. In 2012, SOS Syria started with an Emergency Response Program (ERP) (see chapter 1.2). This project is part of the ERP of SOS Syria.
- (iii) International Federation of SOS Children's Villages (SOS IO): via its regional office of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), SOS IO provides advice and support through various functions such as program, finance and HR for the development, the implementation and the monitoring of the project. IO MENA also facilitates the exchange of experiences of sort-like programs of other SOS associations conducted in surrounding countries.

For the implementation of the project, SOS Syria collaborated with the following external stakeholders:

Name of the external stakeholder	Role of the external stakeholder in the implementation of the project
Syrian trust for development	Provide support related to legal services such as obtaining identification papers for children and attending legal awareness sessions
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Provide first aid trainings for SOS Syria project staff
International Medical Corpse (IMC)	Establishment of referral pathways for medical care for the target group

Local authorities, community representatives, policy station, DoLSA, UNHCR, IMC, other NGO's (like Batoul, Okhaa, SSSD), Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), ICRC	Referral of children to the Interim Alternative Care Centre of the project in Tartous.
Tartous Relief subcommittee, led by DoLSA	Responsible for the coordination and follow-up of the situation and the humanitarian efforts.
UNICEF	Collaboration to provide non-formal education to the target group of the project.

3 Content, methodology and profile

3.1 Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions have to be based on (i) the evaluation criteria of the Development Aid Committee (DAC) and (ii) project-specific elements that have to be taken into account.

Evaluation criteria	Project specific elements to take into account
Relevance	1.1. Was it relevant to implement the project in a regime-held area like the Tartous governorate? 1.2. Were the external stakeholders the best-placed actors to support the implementation of the project? 1.3. Did the project amendments made in November 2018 (start of a Family Strengthening Program, inclusion of street children and children in the process of losing parental care in the target group) increase the relevance of the Action?
Efficiency	2.1 Did the budget distribution along the different project components (IACC, CFS and FSP) correspond to the objectives and the results of the overall project? 2.2 To what extent did the overall institutional structure of SOS Syria (technical coordination in Tartous and administrative support in Damascus) contribute to the efficient management of the project? 2.3 To what extent were the activities of the project in Tartous articulated with the overall strategies and activities of SOS Syria?
Effectiveness	3.1 Is the quality of the services provided in the IACC and the CFS and on the quality of the process of reunifying children of the IACC with their families satisfactory? 3.2 To what extent did the monitoring and reporting tools and the individual files of the children allow (i) to have a result-based approach of the project and (ii) decision-making on the strategic direction of the project? 3.3 To what extent have the recommendations of the ROM-mission of March 2018 been taken into account?
Impact	4.1 What are the perceptible changes in (i) the individual lives of the children that were admitted to the IACC and were reunified with their family or for who another solution was found, (ii) the individual lives of the children that were admitted to the CFS and (iii) the lives of the families that were admitted to FSP?
Sustainability	5.1 To what extent other societal actors (Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, and governmental actors) are able to continue to provide support to the target group of the Action?

	<p>5.2 Do the community members involved in the Action have the knowledge and capacities to detect child-right violations and to refer children to appropriate local actors?</p> <p>5.3 To what extent the situation of (i) the children that are reunified with their (extended) family, and (ii) the children that could not be reunified and for who another solution was provided is sustainable?</p>
Cross-cutting issues	<p>6.1 To what extent have gender-specific issues been taken into account in the project?</p> <p>6.2 To what extent have activities related to the protection of children's rights been taken into account?</p> <p>6.3 Did the action include children with disabilities?</p>

3.2 Methodological orientations

The evaluator will propose the methodological framework of this evaluation and will precise a detailed action plan to conduct the evaluation.

However, the following methodological orientations have to be taken into account:

- The evaluation process has to be participatory and must include the voices of the target group, final beneficiaries and internal/external stakeholders of the project. A representative sample must participate in the evaluation, including: (i) children (and their families) of the IACC that have been reunified with their family, (ii) children of the IACC for who another solution has been found, (iii) children that participated in the CFS, (iv) community members and families that participated in the awareness sessions, (v) representatives of UNICEF, DoLSA, Syrian Trust for Development and SARC, (vi) representatives of SOS Belgium implied in the coordination of the project, (vii) representatives of SOS Syria (mix of project staff in Tartous and support staff in Damascus), (viii) representatives of SOS IO (based in Casablanca).
- The methodology has to be particularly adapted to integrate the vision of the target group, being (young) children with often challenging and sensitive personal histories and backgrounds.
- As institutional learning is one of the objectives of the evaluation, it is important that the methodology ensures active involvement of and learning moments for key staff.

The evaluator will get access to the following sources of information on the project: program as approved by the contracting authority (EU) and its amendments; the interim narrative and financial reports as submitted to the contracting authority; the 4-monthly succinct papers on the progress, challenges and actions as submitted to the contracting authority; the evaluation report of the Result Oriented Mission (ROM) ordered by the contracting authority; the reports of the monitoring missions of SOS Belgium; a preliminary auto-evaluation of the CFS activities done at the end of this project component; the monthly monitoring reports of SOS Syria on the main indicators of the project; the databases of the project; the activity files of the project; the case-management files of the project. SOS Syria will facilitate consultation sessions with projects' beneficiaries and stakeholders in the field.

The evaluator is asked to organize a summary feedback meeting on the field for the project team and an extensive feedback meeting with the steering committee of the evaluation (with the possibility of virtual exchange).

3.3 Profile of the evaluator

Required competences and experiences of the (team of) evaluator(s):

- Have a strong and demonstrated experience in terms of evaluation of multi-annual development programs implemented by NGOs and funded by the European Union.
- Have a good understanding of children's rights and be familiar with concepts as temporary shelters for children, process of family reunification, child friendly spaces and family strengthening programs (or sort-like projects).
- Have a strong expertise in participatory processes of information gathering and in the analytical triangulation of different sources of information.

- Have strong facilitation, animation and communication skills, in particular with children and with families, to collect relevant information in a suitable way.
- Knowledge of Arabic for animating discussions with target group, final beneficiaries and stakeholders of the project.
- Have strong skills on report writing and on sharing the outputs of the evaluation process with the project stakeholders; translating complex concepts or ideas in concrete, realistic and feasible recommendations.

Desired competences and experiences:

- Have an experience in the evaluation of programs targeting children and families in conflict-torn countries, in particular Syria.

4 Timing, Steering and expected deliverables of the evaluation

4.1 Timing and location of the evaluation

- 8 July 2019: publication of the terms of reference of the evaluation and call for candidates for the evaluation
- 29 July 2019 (9:00 AM Brussels time) : deadline for the submission of applications
- 2 August 2019: selection of the evaluator by SOS Belgium management after analysis of the offers of the evaluation candidatures
- Between 5 and 9 August: signature of the contract with the evaluator and kick-off meeting with evaluator (preferably in Brussels)
- Between 9 August and 30 September 2019: desk research, field research, production of preliminary evaluation report and organization of feedback meeting
- 25 October 2019: deadline for the submission of the final evaluation report

The kick-off meeting will preferably be held in Brussels (in exceptional cases this can be done in a virtual way). The field research will mainly be done in Tartous, which is the project location. It is advised to provide time for meetings with staff and external stakeholders based in Damascus. The exchanges with staff of SOS IO (based in Casablanca) can be organized in a virtual way. The feedback meeting will be organized in Damascus or Tartous.

4.2 Steering of the evaluation

A steering committee will be responsible for the coordination of the evaluation. The main roles of the steering committee are to organize the briefing of the evaluator during the kick-off meeting, to facilitate the mission during its unfolding, to participate in the debriefing of the evaluator and to evaluate the quality of the report.

The steering committee consists of representatives of SOS Belgium (lead applicant), SOS SY (co-applicant and implementing partner) and SOS IO.

4.3 Expected deliverables

The evaluator is expected to deliver:

- A preliminary evaluation report (Word or PowerPoint)
- A debriefing for the feedback meeting (PowerPoint)
- A final evaluation report (Word): maximum of 25 pages. It must contain at least the following information: (i) Introduction (object, objectives and context of the evaluation; used methodology, limits of the evaluation); (ii) Analysis (analysis of the evaluation criteria and of the evaluation questions); (iii) Conclusions (main observations, recommendations and lessons learned)
- An executive summary of the results and the recommendations of the evaluation: maximum of 3 pages, description of the main observations, successes, challenges and recommendations.
- Annexes justifying the information of the final evaluation report: ToR of the evaluation and CV of the evaluator (max. 2 pages); program of the field research; methodology of the evaluation; list of consulted documents and literature; list of people met and consulted; reports of the consultation sessions with the

target group and final beneficiaries of the project; all other information which is used to formulate the conclusions and that leads to a better understanding of the results of the evaluation.

All documents have to be delivered in English.

5 Budget

The indicative budget for the whole evaluation process is 10.000 EUR.

The evaluator is asked to present the financial offer using this template:

		Cost per unit in €	Unit	Quantity	Total
1.	Fixed costs				
1.1.					
1.2.					
1.3.					
1.4.					
	SUB-TOTAL				
2.	Refundable expenses				
2.1.	Per diem				
2.2.	Travel expenses (in Europe)				
2.3.					
2.4.					
	SUB-TOTAL				
	Unexpected costs and/or administrative costs	%			
	TOTAL				

Unless otherwise agreed, SOS Belgium will book the flight tickets for the realization of the evaluation. As a rule, flights will be to Beirut. Travel to Damascus and Tartous by road will be organized by SOS Syria. This implies that flight and travel costs during the field mission do not have to be included in the financial offer.

6 Content of the offer and deadline

The offer must be sent SOS Children's Villages Belgium before 29 July 2019 (9:00 Brussels time) to:

job@sos-kinderdorpen.be

The offer must include:

- A proposal of the methodology, including the evaluation questions, the volume of the samples of the beneficiaries that will participate in the evaluation, the timing of the activities and the proposed facilitation techniques (maximum 10 pages)
- A financial proposal, using the template mentioned in chapter 5 of these ToR
- The CVs of the evaluators (maximum 2 pages per evaluator)
- Overview of relevant evaluations of other sort-like projects

7 Contact

The contact person within SOS BE for these Terms of Reference is Mr. Stijn Raes, stijn.raes@sos-kinderdorpen.be or +32 (0)2 639 09 70.

