

## Call for proposals

### Evaluation expert for the mid-term review of the Hands Off programme

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Aidsfonds is seeking a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) expert to coordinate the mid-term review for the Hands Off programme.

## 1. Background

### 1.1 Background of Aidsfonds

Aidsfonds is working towards a world without AIDS. We are there to help everyone living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The main aim of Aidsfonds is to ensure that everyone has access to prevention, treatment, care and support. At the same time, our funding for scientific research contributes to advances in the understanding of AIDS. Aidsfonds always takes the lead when there are fresh insights that could be the start of new and better options. We use scientific research and innovative methods to optimise the programmes that we implement. We also believe in empowering people so they can act in their own interests. For more information see: [www.aidsfonds.org](http://www.aidsfonds.org)

### 1.2 Hands Off II programme

It is increasingly recognised that societal barriers such as stigma and discrimination and gender based violence, that hinder access for key populations to HIV prevention, need to be addressed to get on track to end AIDS by 2030. The risk of acquiring HIV is 26 times higher for female sex workers than for other adult women, 34 times higher for transgender women than for other adults and 25 times higher for gay men and other men who have sex with men than for heterosexual adult men.<sup>1</sup> Large-scale research shows that if violence against sex workers is tackled, we can prevent up to 25 percent of new HIV infections.<sup>2</sup>

The first phase of the Hands Off programme (2014 - 2019) has proven that the **Hands Off model**, a combination of (I) engagement with police in the HIV response, (II) crisis response and litigation, and (III) movement building results in reduced violence against sex workers. Hands Off 2 (August 2019 July 2025) works directly with sex worker-led groups, police and NGOs working on human rights and health services. Hands Off targets **female, male and transgender sex workers**. The programme is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Maputo and is part of the regional Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights programme (EKN SRHR).

Hands Off will contribute to the reduction of violence through four long-term outcomes:

1. An empowered and resilient sex worker movement that demands its rights
2. Increased access to and use of inclusive services for sex workers
3. A more enabling environment for sex work
4. Sex workers protected and served by law enforcement.

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<sup>1</sup> UNAIDS (2021). Confronting inequalities: lessons for pandemic responses from 40 years of AIDS. Geneva: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

<sup>2</sup> WHO, United Nations Population Fund, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Global Network of Sex Work Projects, The World Bank. (2013). Implementing comprehensive HIV/STI programmes with sex workers: practical approaches from collaborative interventions. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

Hands Off is implemented in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. As part of the programme a longitudinal study is implemented on the impact of the Hands Off model on the level of experienced violence and the number of new HIV infections in sex work communities. See for more information on Hands Off: <https://aidsfonds.org/work/hands-off-reducing-violence-against-sex-workers>

The Hands Off mid-term review (MTR) will provide the Hands Off team and partners with an opportunity to assess programme implementation, identify the best way forward for the remaining years, and importantly, strengthen capacity in the process.

## 2. About the assignment

### 2.1 The purpose of the mid-term review

The purpose of the MTR is to provide an independent assessment of the programme. In the MTR the focus will be on analysis and documentation of the progress of the Hands Off programme, as well as to provide recommendations to sharpen the strategic direction and operation of the programme for the remaining years.

The general objectives of the MTR are as follows:

1. To review if programme implementation is on track against the plans, aimed results and output and outcome indicators.
2. To provide an assessment of programme processes, such as the effectivity of the programme operations, structures and partnerships.
3. To reflect on integration of crosscutting themes such as young sex workers and gender in the Hands Off programme.
4. To identify recommendations in order to develop specific, owned, action points to improve Hands Off operations and performance and sharpen the strategic direction of the programme.

### 2.2 Review focus

In the MTR attention will be paid to the below **topics**:

- Contextual changes
  - What are the contextual changes that can influence the programme implementation?
- Review of the Theory of Change
  - Is the Theory of Change still valid in light of the contextual changes that took place since the start of the programme?
  - What is the progress towards achieving the outcomes identified as outlined in the Theory of Change and Hands Off MEL framework?
  - Into what extend is the MEL framework responsive to the Theory of Change?
- Cross cutting themes
  - How effective and coherent is the Hands Off programme in including young sex workers?
  - What strategies are used and resources are made available to ensure inclusivity of sex workers of all genders in the Hands Off programme?
- Hands Off added value
  - Alignment of programme's budget to the objectives and implementation: review of the investment made at outcome and partner level.
- Partnerships
  - To what extent are the partners in Hands Off working together at a community, national and regional level towards realising programme anticipated results?

- To what extent are the partners working together with other key population networks and civil society groups, including other regional sex worker movements (for example in joint advocacy) and with other actors (such as government departments)?
- How can the collaboration between Hands Off and EKN SRHR programme implementing partners be strengthened to add more value?
- How is Hands Off engaging with stakeholders at different levels and which stakeholders can be engaged by the Hands Off programme to increase impact of the Hands Off programme?
- Sustainability
  - How well do the Hands Off interventions lead to sustainable outcomes which will exist beyond the programme (e.g. how does the programme address young leadership, community-involvement)?
  - What are the existing opportunities in the Hands Off programme that can increase the programmes sustainability (expected policy changes, government commitments, increased investment opportunities)?
  - Are there lessons learned that can already be identified for the future programming?
  - How do we make sure that sex workers are empowered throughout the programme and beyond the programme?
  - Where are opportunities for upscaling of the programme (reach, intensification of interventions at country and regional level, new interventions, linking and learning between partners and other key population networks, linking with other regional activity)?

Results and recommendations of the MTR will be used to inform and support our programme implementation, to strengthen the dialogue among partners and key allies and stakeholders and to improve the quality and delivery of interventions.

### **2.3 Scope of the review**

The study will be conducted within focus areas in **four programme countries**:

1. Botswana
2. Mozambique
3. South Africa
4. Zimbabwe

Participants of the review include the Hands Off programme team, Hands Off partners, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN), the Hands Off Advisory Committee and EKN implementing partners (representatives from UNDP, UNFPA, IOM, Frontline AIDS, Young Africa).

The MTR will focus on the start of the programme till December 2021. It will start in January 2022 and be finished by the end of May 2022.

### **2.4 Review design and methodology**

The consultant is responsible for recommending an appropriate methodology. The recommended design introduces a combination of both quantitative and qualitative tools and can include a desk study, analysis of partner level results and interventions, complementary interviews with partners and EKN stakeholders, facilitation of review sessions and self-assessments.

The suggested methodology will require opportunities for capacity strengthening and learning for partners. The emphasis of the MTR will be on a participatory approach. Because of the participatory nature of the MTR the consultant will work closely together with a MTR working group, consisting of

representatives of Hands Off partners with a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) background or MEL experience.

There will be a strong focus on use of secondary data, based on Hands Off reporting and outcomes of the context analysis done in the longitudinal study on Sex work, violence and HIV<sup>3</sup>. Suggested data collection activities include:

- Collection, collation and analysis of routine MEL data and routine financial data.
- Reflection and learning events in the form of a self-assessment led by the MTR working group.
- Reflection and learning events for the Hands Off partners and Hands Off advisory Committee.
- Interviews with EKN SRHR programme implementing partners.
- Interviews with the Hands Off programme team.

### 3. Responsibilities

The Hands Off programme team is looking for a consultant who will work together with the MTR working group to implement the mid-term review. In this, the consultant is responsible for the below tasks:

1. Analyse the contextual changes relevant to the Hands Off programme in coordination with the Hands Off Research Partner.
2. Implementation of methodology and tools responsive to the purpose of the MTR.<sup>4</sup>
3. In collaboration with the MTR working group:
  - Advise the MTR working group members in the use of methods and tools used for self-assessment on progress relevant to the MTR;
  - Support the MTR working group members with the roll out of the self-assessments.
4. Strengthen the capacity of partners and the members of the MTR working group throughout the MTR process, for example by working jointly with MTR group members and staff of the partner organisations in the coordination of the MTR, hands-on mentoring and supervision and coaching during self-assessments.
5. Facilitation of a 3 day workshop in collaboration with the MTR working group, with a focus on :
  - Consultations with Hands Off partners, programme team and the advisory committee on validation of the Theory of Change;
  - Consolidation of the self-assessment outcomes to identify the progress made;
  - Critical reflection on partnership and opportunities for linking and learning.
6. Interviews with the EKN and EKN implementing partners.
7. Identification of four case studies, one for each outcome of the Hands Off ToC presenting the progress on the case studies and identifying possible lessons learned.
8. Stakeholder analysis of the Hands Off programme.
9. Development of a concise research report (max 25 pages) reflecting the outcomes of the review, including a set of recommendations on the topics of the MTR and advising the strategic direction of the programme.

The MTR working group will support the consultant with implementing the MTR. Members will support with data collection and facilitation of the workshop with Hands Off partners and the Hands

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<sup>3</sup> Parallel to the mid-term review a research partner is conducting a longitudinal study to ascertain whether the interventions of Hands Off have had a positive and sustainable impact on reducing violence and HIV infections amongst sex workers in in Southern Africa.

<sup>4</sup> All materials and conversations will need to be translated in Portuguese. Under the operational budget of the MTR there will need to be budget reserved for the translations and interpretations.

Off Advisory Committee. The MTR working group will ensure direct connection and communication with Hands Off partners and the sex worker-community.

#### 4. Deliverables

The expected outputs of the MTR are as follows:

- MTR report, including a set of four case studies on each of the Hands Off outcomes (maximum 25 pages excluding annexes).
- A set of recommendation to inform the strategic direction of the programme, including recommendations for Hands Off partner programming per country.

#### Timeline

Period	Phase	Deliverables
Dec	0: Recruitment and contracting phase	Contract
Jan	1: Inception phase	Interview schedule and plan, MTR tools
Feb	2: Data collection phase	Workshop with Hands Off partners and advisory committee
March	3: Analysis and draft reporting	Cost benefit analysis Draft report, including selection of case studies
April – May	4: Completion and final report	Final MTR report, including a set of recommendations

#### 5. Profile

We are looking for an enthusiastic, skilled and flexible consultant with MEL expertise and excellent coordination skills. The consultant be familiar with the theme of sex work and have a neutral attitude towards female, male and transgender sex workers who receive money or goods in exchange for sexual services and towards other key populations.

##### Requirements include:

- Proven experience with leading (midterm) evaluation and review processes in a development context, in particular in Theory of Change processes.
- Strong analytical skills to analyse quantitative and qualitative data and ability to filter successes.
- Experience with facilitation of workshops and trainings, preferably with a focus on capacity strengthening on monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- Experience with participatory (research or monitoring and evaluation) assessment methodologies.
- Experience with working with Civil Society Organisations and international (I) NGOs representing key population communities.

- Ability to facilitate and lead an open conversation around the priorities of participants, while keeping mandatory themes and structures in mind.
- Ability to establish a safe (interview) setting and trusting relationship with participants.
- Open to introduce new innovative methods of data collection, flexible in planning and adaptive to contextual changes.
- Not affiliated with any of the Hands Off partner organisations or other organisations that have been involved in the designing, executing or advising on aspects of the Hands Off programme.
- Excellent writing skills and ability to document and present data in an accessible way, with this a strong ability to communicate.

## 6. How to apply

We are looking for a consultants who is available to start January 2022. The selection process will take place in December 2021 and decisions will be made in close consultation with Hands Off programme partners, specifically the Hands Off Monitoring and Evaluation working group.

### How to apply

You can apply by sending the following information to Soraya Bouwmeester [sbouwmeester@aidsfonds.nl](mailto:sbouwmeester@aidsfonds.nl) before **03 December 2021**.

1. Letter of interest (max 2 pages) including a preliminary proposal of the methods to be used for the MTR.
2. Financial proposal including the daily rate and indication of number of days needed (there is maximum budget of €20.000).
3. CV or resume.

There is an operational budget for the consultancy available, which includes the costs for the workshop and translation. This operational budget will be drafted together with the Hands Off programme team following the approval of the MTR methodology.

*Proposals must include all documents requested. Proposals that do not meet the requirements will not be considered.*