

Evaluation – Refugee Programming in India and Sri Lanka

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This Terms of Reference outlines the requirements of the combined summative evaluation for the *Strengthening the Sustainability of Sri Lankan Refugee Return and Reintegration ('SLRRRP')* project and the *Encamped Sri Lankan refugees have preventive support and health care treatment leading to improved health ('Refugee Health Program')* to be conducted during March to May 2025.

Expressions of Interest - Deadline 2 March 2025

Please submit expressions of interest to fxavier@actforpeace.org.au and sdoyle@actforpeace.org.au and include:

- A proposal including methodology
- Timeframe for undertaking the assignment (must be completed by early May 2025)
- A quote/costing for completion of the work
- CVs for any consultants who will be involved in delivering the assignment

Contracting for the successful EOI will be completed by 17 March 2025.

BACKGROUND

Act for Peace (AfP) is the International humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia and works with local partners throughout the Pacific, Middle East, Asia and Africa. AfP has been working with OfERR and OfERR Ceylon on the *Strengthening the Sustainability of Sri Lankan Refugee Return and Reintegration ('SLRRRP')* project since 2015 to make voluntary repatriation a sustainable durable solution for refugees and a viable alternative to protracted encampment and irregular migration. The SLRRRP is implemented in Tamil Nadu, India and in the North-East Sri Lanka, and is funded by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) in Australia.

AfP also supports OfERR to implement the Australian Government ANCP (Australian NGO Cooperation Program)-funded project *Encamped Sri Lankan refugees have preventive support and health care treatment leading to improved health ('Refugee Health Program')*. This project is implemented in Tamil Nadu, India.

The beneficiaries of these projects are the approximately 58,000 refugees living in camps in Tamil Nadu and the returned refugees and IDPs living in Sri Lanka.

Strengthening the Sustainability of Sri Lankan Refugee Return and Reintegration (SLRRRP V)

SLRRRP was conceived in 2014, during a time when the voluntary repatriation of refugees from the camps in India back to Sri Lanka was at an all-time low. Any discussion of return in India's 103 refugee camps was quickly shut down by refugee leaders, people smugglers, refugees hoping to leave and claim asylum, and Indian Tamil political parties who had rallied against the persecution of their brethren in Sri Lanka. Consequently, there was very little support available to refugees wanting to

return to Sri Lanka, resulting in most refugees seeing their only option as 'getting on a boat'. Moreover, any refugees who did choose to return to Sri Lanka were poorly prepared and lacked visibility, reintegration support, or access to services, causing them to become burdens on family and community, deplete absorption capacity, and without civil documents they were unable to access government services or build livelihoods. Many then returned back to the camps only to find they had been cut off from support.

In July 2015, SLRRRP set out to transform this situation through implementing an innovative locally-owned and refugee-driven project designed to resurrect 'voluntary repatriation' and make it a viable durable solution. The four key elements of the project are full mobilization of refugees, comprehensive stakeholder management, support and advice to officials, and direct support to refugees. By mobilising and empowering refugees in the return process, the project builds confidence in returning and makes repatriation a viable option, not only discouraging refugees from pursuing irregular migration but also making voluntary repatriation more successful in practice. Furthermore, by engaging and supporting officials of the Government of India (GoI), Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) to meet their obligations in providing assistance and protection to returning refugees, SLRRRP is working towards achieving a sustainable, government-owned voluntary repatriation project that is able to extend over the long-term without the need for external funding.

SLRRRP is best placed to respond to the project context due to OfERR's strong working relationships with the GoI, GoSL and GoTN, their access to all 103 camps, and existing project infrastructure that enables them to support systematic change in Sri Lanka. Further, OfERR's Refugee Health Program has been running for more than 10 years in India to provide critical healthcare services and information to encamped Sri Lankan refugees.

Encamped Sri Lankan refugees have preventive support and health care treatment leading to improved health ('Refugee Health Program').

The Refugee Health Program (RHP) has been active since the mid-1980s, with partial funding from Act for Peace (NCCA) beginning in 1991 and Christian World Service under the Australian Council of Churches. Additional support from various international donors has also sustained the program over time. Contributions from the Tamil Nadu Government's health system, the Tamil Nadu Health Association (TNHA), private hospitals, clinics, and medical professionals have played a significant role in delivering healthcare services to refugees for many years.

The RHP operates in 103 refugee camps, and enhances the health services offered by the Tamil Nadu Government and the private sector. This long-standing initiative, originating in 1983, has been essential for over two decades. Following the end of Sri Lanka's military conflict in May 2009, OfERR's focus shifted toward its overarching goal of preparing refugees for voluntary and successful repatriation and reintegration in Sri Lanka. This includes fostering awareness of health practices, self-motivation, and full access to Sri Lanka's healthcare system as citizens. However, local integration utilizing Tamil Nadu's health system may also occur, as the camp system gradually phases out.

The health team collaborates with NGOs, private healthcare providers, and government facilities. OfERR's referral system has significantly benefitted refugees through services such as de-addiction programs, chronic condition detection, treatment, surgeries, and counseling.

While the government bears primary responsibility for preventive and curative care and chronic disease management, the OfERR RHP complements these efforts. Health workers facilitate refugees' access to services, provide referrals, administer first aid medications, and support chronic patients.

PROGRAM CONTEXT, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As of January 2025, **SLRRRP V** (the 5th phase) is reaching the conclusion of the current project cycle, as is the Refugee Health Program. This evaluation is planned to be conducted in early 2025 to evaluate the impact and efficacy of SLRRRP IV (Jan 2022 – Dec 2023), SLRRRP V (Jan 2024 – Dec 2024) and the Refugee Health Program (July 2022 to Dec 2024) in meeting their objectives and expected outcomes in the context of economic and social volatility in Sri Lanka.

The overall goal for SLRRRP is to “Strengthen the sustainability of Sri Lankan refugee return and reintegration.”

The Program has three objectives, and related outcomes:

Objective 1: Refugees in India have strengthened preparedness for return and reintegration in Sri Lanka.

This objective area includes the following outcomes:

- 1.1 Refugees in India intending to return are better prepared for return and reintegration.
- 1.2 Refugees in India are better able to identify, assess and compare the risks they may face by remaining in camp, making irregular movements, and returning to Sri Lanka, leading to better informed decisions about their future.

Objective 2: Returnees in Sri Lanka have more sustainable, safe and dignified reintegration through enhanced refugee protection and through enhanced GoSL capacity and willingness to implement their responsibilities.

This objective area includes the following outcomes:

- 2.1 Returnees are better able to access, claim and enjoy their rights, including access to government services as documented Sri Lankan citizens.
- 2.2 Reintegration needs of returnees are met through direct service delivery.
- 2.3 Returnees, internally displaced persons, and host communities have increased social cohesion and are better-organised and able to prevent, mitigate and respond to risks of violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation of the resources required for safety, justice and dignity.

Objective 3: The willingness and ability of government authorities and key stakeholders to support the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Sri Lankan refugees is maintained and consolidated.

This objective area includes the following outcomes:

- 3.1 The GoSL, GoI and GoTN have stronger policy and regulatory arrangements to facilitate

the return and reintegration of Sri Lankan refugees and key stakeholders have an understanding of return.

3.2 Logistical challenges to return are reduced for refugees on route from the camps to their home villages in Sri Lanka.

Key target groups are:

- Refugees in the 103 camps in Tamil Nadu, India, considering and/or preparing to return to Sri Lanka;
- Already returned, or newly returned, refugees reintegrating in the six districts in Sri Lanka; and,
- Local communities in areas of return in Sri Lanka including IDPs, asylum seekers and previously reintegrated returnees.

In reaching its objectives, the program seeks to address protection risks through strengthening community-based protection (CBP) mechanisms and the capacity of returnees and host communities to prevent and respond to a wide range of protection risks, which is essential to ensure the safety, dignity and rights of returned refugees. Good results have been achieved over the past years, under SLRRRP I, II, III and IV phases and the current SLRRRP V phase, however, significant risks and gaps remain in returnee and host-community capacity to prevent and respond to protection problems.¹

The Refugee Health Program that OfERR operates in India for encamped Sri Lankan refugees (same target group as for SLRRRP) has the following objective and outcomes:

Project Objective: Encamped Sri Lankan refugees have preventive support and health care treatment leading to improved health

Outcome 1: Multi-year Outcome 1: Refugees make consistent choices and take positive action on health, diet, and lifestyle to prevent health care issues as a result of health education and preventive treatment

Outcome 2: Reduce the impact of medical conditions through treatment for women, chronic patients, PWDs and maximizing the quality of life for those refugees living in the camps and those planning to return to Sri Lanka

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

Act for Peace seeks an independent consultant to undertake a combined summative evaluation of the *Strengthening the Sustainability of Sri Lankan Refugee Return and Reintegration Project (SLRRRP)* and the *Refugee Health Program*. The evaluation should cover the program period of SLRRRP phases IV and V, and the Health Program focusing on the activities implemented from January 2022 to December 2024. This consultant will collaborate with a co-evaluator from Act for Peace, Australia.

The intended purpose is to demonstrate impact, and support learning and improvement for future

¹ Previous phases (I, II and III) were evaluated and findings from those evaluations informed the development of the design of IV and V.

programming, taking into account the changes to context since the program was designed. The evaluation is also a critical accountability tool, which will inform donor reporting.

The evaluation's primary intended users are Act for Peace, DFAT-ANCP and the Department of Home Affairs (donors), OfERR (implementing partner), and the communities the project serves. Secondary audiences include the Indian government, Sri Lankan government, UNHCR and other relevant stakeholders; the Executive Summary of the evaluation report will be shared with these stakeholders.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to determine:

- The relevance of the programs' activities
- The extent to which the programs have achieved its program outcomes
- Lessons learnt from the programs that can be applied to design and implementation of similar future projects.

KEY EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The priority evaluation criteria are:

- **Impact**
- **Relevance**
- **Effectiveness, and**
- **Efficiency**

Criteria 1: Impact

- What were the key positive and negative impacts of the project?
 - Were there any unintended or unexpected outcomes and/or consequences as a result of the project? What were they?
- To what extent do target groups enjoy greater safety, justice and dignity as a result of reduced protection risks?
- Is there a significant difference in the success of reintegration of SLRRRP prepared returnees compared to returnees who did not prepare for return through SLRRRP prior to returning?

Criteria 2: Relevance

- To what extent is the project responsive and flexible to emerging protection risks and evolving context?
- Was the intervention designed in ways that respond to the needs and priorities of those people with the greatest reintegration and protection needs and vulnerable individuals such as the elderly, single women, female headed households and children?
- How well does the project align with refugee policies of the governments of Sri Lanka and India, and donor priorities?

Criteria 3: Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project achieved its outcomes and to what extent are these changes equitable across sex, age, and dis/ability?
- What are the key factors enabling successful reintegration according to the local communities in areas of return?
- Which of the activities or assistance provided through SLRRRP were most / least helpful in supporting sustainable, successful reintegration of Tamil refugees from India back to Sri Lanka? Please be specific with examples.
 - What percentage of beneficiaries who have made an informed decision about return, made the decision based on the information provided by the project? What other factors are influencing people's decisions about return?
 - To what extent do refugees feel confident that information they have is relevant and accurate?
- What key lessons and findings can be documented (taking into account any constraints and opportunities identified) and applied to design and implementation of similar future projects?
- What were the key challenges in achievement of outcomes, and how responsive was the project in adapting to and overcoming them?

Criteria 4: Efficiency

- To what extent did the project efficiently use the resources available, including the database to track refugee preparedness and returnee reintegration?
- (Linked to relevance) To what extent was the program responsive and flexible to emerging needs in its use of resources?

Nb. All questions should be examined with reference to beneficiary demographics, particularly whether people with disabilities and people of different genders experience project effectiveness and change differently.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

It is important to note that it is not expected that the Consultant should need to collect all data related to the Key Evaluation Questions above, but rather that some data already exists in OfERR's database and would be shared with the Consultant upon request (this could be compiled by OfERR, with the help of the Act for Peace Return and Reintegration Advisor, prior to the Consultant commencing work so that the Consultant is aware of how much data exists and determine further primary data collection requirements).

It is expected that the evaluation will use a mixed methods approach that will include:

- A desk-based review of documents and project materials, and information regarding what services are provided by the Government of India for both refugees and host community populations
- Participatory data collection engaging relevant partner staff and beneficiaries in reflection and analysis
- Key informant interviews and case study collection (including government and non-

- government stakeholders, particularly decision making stakeholders)
- Field visits to project locations where safe, practicable and appropriate
- Presentation of initial findings / draft report to project staff in a participatory ‘project outcomes and lessons learnt’ reflection and analysis session prior to the draft report being submitted, to allow for partner validation, feedback and clarifications to be incorporated into the draft report prior to submission, and
- Production of final report and executive summary.

Sampling strategy and requirements

- The sample should be calculated to be practical, but all efforts need to be taken to ensure it is a representative sample which includes people with disability (PWD), and women and men 18 years and above. Sampling methodology should be as random as possible, and the sampling methodology and size should be outlined in the Consultant’s inception report.
- Sampling could include members of the local community in India surrounding the camps and also refugees who were not involved in the SLRRRP project.
- Data will need to be disaggregated by sex, age and status of disability.
- The camps and villages chosen should be a combination of remote and less remote, and should not be the same locations as included in the evaluations of SLRRRP Phase I, II, III or ANCP 2021 evaluation (to be advised). A diversity of locations should be sourced in Sri Lanka which represent different experiences of return (i.e. villages which are entirely Tamil, villages which are mixed groups, etc.).
- A sample of relevant government officials will need to be included in the evaluation to assess Outcome 4.

DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

Deliverable	Tentative due date	Suggested days
Evaluation Plan: Detailing the evaluation approach, methodology incl. sample size and data collection tools, and work plan.	End Mar 2025	4-5
In-country field visits, key informant interviews and team reflections	1-12 April 2025	10-12
Draft Evaluation Report: involves data analysis, evaluative judgements, presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations	21 Apr 2025	10
Presentation of findings	23 Apr 2025	1
Final Evaluation Report	5 May 2025	2
	TOTAL	27-30

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The evaluator/evaluation team will be required to adhere to, and be guided by, professional and ethical standards while contracted to Act for Peace. Evaluation managers are to ensure that evaluation team members and subcontractors have a copy of these standards. These standards include:

- Act for Peace Code of Conduct (to be signed)
- Act for Peace Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct
- Australian Evaluation Society Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations.

All documents and discussions relating to this evaluation are confidential and all products remain the property of Act for Peace to be shared only with their express approval.

Safeguarding Risk Assessment:

Child Safeguarding	PSEAH
<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
<input type="checkbox"/> Med	<input type="checkbox"/> Med
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> High
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very High

Act for Peace prioritises the safeguarding of all people, including the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and the protection of children. Engagement is conditional upon the outcome of Police Background checks for any country in which the applicant has lived for more than 12 months during the last five years and each country of citizenship and Working With Children Checks where possible. Our policies, including our Child Safeguarding Policy, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy and Code of Conduct can be found at: <http://www.actforpeace.org.au/our-policies>

EVALUATOR

Expected role and responsibilities:

The lead evaluator will:

- Undertake the evaluation within the timeframe agreed;
- Undertake desk-based review of project documentation;
- Develop the methodology for undertaking the evaluation with OfERR and AfP personnel including data collection and analysis;
 - The methodology and tools are to be sent to OfERR and AfP before commencement of the evaluation.
- Manage the evaluation;
- Lead data collection and analysis processes;
- Ensure information collected is jointly analysed and recommendations developed with project team members and the evaluation reference group;
- Deliver a Project Team Reflection and Analysis Workshop;
- Produce and submit an evaluation report including recommendations; and
- Amend report in light of feedback from the OfERR and AfP.

Required competencies:

- Locally-based evaluator with experience of local context (Tamil-Nadu)
- Tamil language
- Strong evaluation technical skills and experience managing evaluations
- Adept use of mixed methods
- Interpersonal skills
- Willingness to collaborate with AfP co-evaluator, advisers and the evaluation reference group
- Experience working with displaced persons
- Gender sensitive approach

Details of the requirements of the evaluation report will be provided to the successful applicant.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Please include:

- A proposal including methodology
- Timeframe for undertaking the assignment (must be completed by April 2025)
- A quote/costing for completion of the work (estimate of 27-30 days)
- CVs for any consultants who will be involved in delivering the assignment

Enquiries regarding this consultancy should be directed to: Florina Xavier: fxavier@actforpeace.org.au and Sarah Doyle: sdoyle@actforpeace.org.au