Terms of Reference Mid-Term Review Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Purpose   Consultancy to conduct the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the GPPAC
                       Strategic Plan (2021-2025) for the period covering January 2021 to June
                       2023
Budget   Maximum budget is € 50.000 (including VAT)
Duration consultancy June 2023 - December 2023
Deadline application Friday 26 May 2023 12:00 PM CEST, to PMEL@gppac.net

Overview of the Consultancy

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is the world's largest member-led global network of local peacebuilders. We bring together over 200 civil society organisations actively working to prevent violent conflict and build more peaceful societies.

GPPAC is currently midway implementing its strategic plan "Building Peace Together: GPPAC Strategic Plan 2021-2025" (Abridged Version, 2022). In this context, **GPPAC is seeking to engage a consultant or a team of consultants (preferred) to conduct a network-wide mid-term review (MTR)** over a period of seven months from June to December 2023. The MTR will cover the period January 2021-June 2023.

GPPAC is committed to the principles of **participation, inclusion and empowerment**[1] and we would like the MTR to reflect these principles in its approach and methodology. We aim to **prioritise the MTR and its findings** such that the review is owned by the network and its findings are put to practical use by the members[2]. Therefore, we envision the consultant(s) to work in close collaboration with the network-rooted MTR Reference Group and the GPPAC Global Secretariat (GS) MTR Team (see Roles and Responsibilities below).

Background and Context

Founded in 2003, GPPAC is a member-led network consisting of fifteen Regional Networks and five global Working Groups. Each Regional Network and Working Group is represented in the International Steering Group (ISG), the prime decision-making body that consultatively determines the network's global agenda and approach. The GS supports the network and facilitates connections and exchanges between network members (local to local) and with regional and international policymakers and institutions (local to global and global to local).

Our current Strategic Plan 2021-2025 provides a road map for our network and the overarching goal for 2025 is: **Peacebuilding policies, practices, and infrastructures are rooted in locally-led and locally-grounded peacebuilding.**

To achieve this goal, GPPAC has adopted a **Network Approach**, which enables members to jointly co-lead a learning process that is rooted in their expertise and experience and peer-to-peer sharing. This not only strengthens their organisational capacities, it also builds solidarity, amplifies their voices beyond their local context, and bolsters their ability to contribute to and influence local, regional and global peacebuilding processes.

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[1] Based on the Feminist Evaluation approach

[2] Based on the Utilisation-Focused Evaluation (Quinn Patton, 2013)

In 2021, GPPAC went through a network-wide transition process to make the network fit-for-purpose and the ISG unanimously identified **learning and exchange** as the network's core focus. GPPAC prioritises learning that is:
1. Rooted in member's expertise;
2. Geared towards increasing the impact of peacebuilding practice and
3. Informing policy through local peacebuilding expertise.

Our Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Framework can be found in the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 as Annex I - GPPAC Results-oriented Learning Framework.

To achieve our overarching goal for 2025 (*peacebuilding policies, practices and infrastructures are rooted in locally-led and locally-grounded peacebuilding*), we have identified two mutually reinforcing result areas around the two stakeholders central to learning and exchange:

- **Result Area 1:** *GPPAC members* strengthen local, regional, and global impact as a result of the GPPAC learning platform
- **Result Area 2:** *Policymakers* act on regional and global policies and practices which are rooted in the learnings of locally-led and locally-grounded peacebuilding

According to our current results-oriented learning approach, the results or consequences of our member's peacebuilding practices and experiences are the starting point for learning and adaptation. Results may be positive, negative or neutral. GPPAC facilitates learning around three thematic focus areas identified for this strategic period: 1.) Locally-Led Peacebuilding Action, 2.) Inclusion of Women and Youth Peacebuilders; 3.) Climate Security and Emerging Threats. These thematic areas are reflected in the pathways of change in our results framework (Annex I, Strategic Plan 2021-2025).

MTR Objectives and Evaluation Questions

The objectives of the MTR are:
1. To deepen our understanding and build the evidence-case (including concrete impact stories and examples) for GPPAC's Network Approach, which includes learning, collaboration, solidarity, and inclusion;
2. To learn from our progress, outcomes, best practices and lessons learned, through collective sensemaking;
3. To adapt our way of working in order to better contribute to our strategic objectives and add the greatest value to our members and the wider peacebuilding sector.

Suggested evaluation questions
In line with the objectives of the MTR, the following key evaluation questions are **suggested**. The consultant(s) are encouraged to build on these key questions and adapt the set of evaluations questions in close consultation with the MTR Reference Group during the inception phase.

1. **The Network Approach**
   - How does learning happen in the network at and between national, regional, project and global level? What types of learning approaches or strategies are applied? How is a (context-specific) culture of solidarity and inclusion facilitated?
   - How has GPPAC (1.) Network members; 2.) Regional Secretariats; 3.) Working Groups;

4.) GS; and 5.) the ISG) changed since 2021 to adjust to the renewed core focus of learning and exchange?
- How does GPPAC currently position itself as a learning network within the wider peacebuilding sector?

2. **Change and GPPAC's contribution**
    - What early (and unanticipated) outcomes are emerging? At which level are the outcomes being achieved (local/regional/global; result area 1 or 2; thematic area 1, 2 or 3)? Which actors are being influenced?
    - To what extent do the (project) outcomes demonstrate progress/contribute to a) GPPAC's strategic objectives, and b) members' needs? Are there outcomes that fall outside the scope of the strategic objectives?
    - What is the contribution of GPPAC's Network Approach to the outcomes? To what extent are the outcomes the result of collaboration in the network (showcasing the value of the Network Approach) vs single members?
    - What are the main gaps, obstacles, or challenges for GPPAC to facilitate impactful learning (within the network and externally)? What lessons are emerging and what could have been done differently? What other contextual factors must be present or absent for the GPPAC's Network Approach to contribute to outcomes?
    - What other evidence is emerging that supports or proves impactful learning through the Network Approach?

3. **Recommendations for Adaptation**
    - How can GPPAC add the greatest value to its members through the Network Approach? What reorientation (practical recommendations) is required from GPPAC (1.) Network members; 2.) Regional Secretariats; 3.) Working Groups; 4.) Global Secretariat and 5.) the ISG) to strengthen impactful learning that serves the members' needs?
        - Result area 1: What type(s) of network learning or solidarity approaches or strategies are impactful? What are the most effective ways for GPPAC to facilitate knowledge flows and collaboration between the members?
        - Result area 2: How can members' peacebuilding expertise and practices best influence policymakers and shape national, regional, and global policy and programming on peacebuilding and conflict prevention?
    - How can we adapt the PMEL system (including recommended methodologies) to better facilitate learning and to improve the collection and quality of evidence? How can the Learning and Results Framework be further aligned?
    - How can GPPAC add the greatest value and relevance to the peacebuilding sector, showcase the value of its Network Approach and ensure sustainability?

MTR Scope and Suggested Methodologies

Scope

The review is envisioned to cover GPPAC's contributions, impact and added value at all network levels, which includes: 1.) Regional Networks, including the change at member-level, 2.) Working Groups and 3.) Global Secretariat. This also includes GPPAC's relationships with and influence towards external stakeholders, donors, and the policy field.

The MTR will be primarily implemented virtually, with the possibility of a potential in-person International Steering Group week (to be confirmed).

Suggested evaluation methodologies

Based on previous evaluations and current methodologies used for monitoring, an overview of suggested evaluation methodologies is outlined below. We strongly encourage the consultants to identify additional methodologies (building upon existing data) in close consultation with the MTR Reference Group and GS MTR Group. We encourage the consultant(s) to explore participatory data collection and sensemaking methodologies, while remaining respectful to network members' time and priorities. The GS MTR Team will ensure the consultants have access to the existing data from the start of the inception phase (such as Annual Reviews, Outcome Harvesting data and other relevant documents).

- **Outcome Harvesting:** Outcome Harvesting is one of the main building blocks of the PMEL system and has been used as the main monitoring tool over previous and current strategic periods. The consultant(s) will be asked to review the Outcome Harvesting data during the inception phase to determine which follow up or methodology best suits the review.
- **Most Significant Change/Change Stories:** GPPAC is exploring and piloting storytelling approaches such as the Most Significant Change, especially to capture the learning and behaviour change at member level. We strongly encourage the consultants to explore this further.
- **Contribution Analysis:** Since the contribution of GPPAC's Network Approach to the results will be identified, and learning approaches or strategies that are most impactful would also be determined, we expect a type of contribution analysis to be embedded in the evaluation methodologies.

Roles and Responsibilities

An overview of the different roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders involved in the MTR is provided below.

International Steering Group (ISG)

The primary user of the MTR findings is the International Steering Group (ISG). It is **GPPAC's principal decision-making body** and includes:
- the Regional Representatives of 15 Regional Secretariats;
- Chairs and Co-Chairs of the GPPAC Working Groups;
- Non-Regional ISG Members.

To ensure that the MTR and its findings are owned and used by the network, a Reference Group consisting of network members (including ISG members) will closely advise the consultant(s). Ultimately, the **MTR findings should benefit the GPPAC network members**.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Sida and GPPAC have been **partnering** since 2017 with Sida providing financial support to GPPAC's core activities as described in GPPAC former and current Strategic Plan. As part of the partnership, Sida is financially supporting the MTR.

Consultant(s)

The consultant(s) will be tasked to undertake the MTR **facilitating a collaborative evaluation process that fosters learning and adaptation,** is empowering and is rooted in network members' ownership. An overview of timeline and deliverables (including indicative due dates) is provided below under 'Timeline, deliverables and budget'. The consultant(s) will be tasked to:

- Co-design (in consultation with the Reference Group) an inclusive, participatory and utilisation-focused MTR process (outlined in an inception report), including participatory analysis and sensemaking of data.
- Identify suitable methodologies and conduct research, including review and analysis of available data and information, and thereafter suggest collection of new primary (qualitative and/or quantitative) data (for triangulation and validation) and effectively implement any agreed-on participatory approaches to data collection that build capacity and support process uses.
- Facilitate one to two participatory data collection workshops (online) and three participatory validation and sensemaking workshops with 1.) the ISG; 2.) the Global Secretariat and and 3.) GPPAC Network Members to ensure ongoing and instant learning through the MTR process;
- Prepare an evaluation report (format to be determined during the inception phase) that prioritises use and adaptation and facilitate one adaptation event for the ISG.

MTR Reference Group

The MTR Reference Group consists of seven network members (two Regional Representatives, two Working Group Representatives, two Network Representatives, one Global Secretariat Representative) and one external member. The Reference Group will have an **advisory and ambassador role** throughout the MTR process (design, execution and follow-up). We envision the consultants to work closely together with the Reference Group. Concretely, the Reference Group will:

- Provide input to the MTR ToR;
- Approve the MTR ToR;
- Assess proposals and interview potential consultants;
- Select (together with the GPPAC Global Secretariat MTR Team) the consultants;
- Be available for consultation for the consultants during the inception phase;
- Approve the inception report;
- Be an ambassador for the MTR, engaging the network to ensure participation;
- Be part of relevant learning or sensemaking initiatives;
- Review the draft report(s) and provide input;
- Approve the final report;
- Follow up (together with the GPPAC GS MTR Team) on review findings and recommendations.

Global Secretariat MTR Team

The GS MTR Team consists of four staff members of the GS and will **facilitate the MTR process and support the consultant(s)** during the evaluation process. Concretely, the GS MTR Team is

responsible for:
- Providing access to existing data and information;
- Facilitate contact to the network (members);
- Support and advice throughout the MTR process;
- Consult SIDA at the necessary moments for their inputs and approval;
- Provide advice and inputs for the management response;
- Follow up (together with the Reference Group) on review findings and recommendations.

Timeline, deliverables, and budget

Overview of the timeline and expected deliverables is provided below:

Timeline (month)	Phase	Deliverables consultant(s) and Indicative due dates
March - April 2023	**MTR Preparation**	
May - June 2023	**Selection and Start Inception Phase**	1. **Inception report** incl. updated evaluation questions, assessment of existing data, participatory and utilisation-focused evaluation approach with methodologies for data collection, validation and data analysis, suggested format MTR report, timeline, budget and deliverables *(end of June/beginning July)* 2. Throughout the MTR Process: Monthly **progress meetings** with MTR Reference Group and GS MTR Team *(June-December)*
July - September 2023	**(Participatory) Data Collection and Network Engagement**	3. **Raw data** collected during the evaluation 4. **1-2 participatory data collection workshops** with relevant stakeholders *(July-September)*
October - November 2023	**Collective Sensemaking and Validation**	5. **A draft report (format to be determined) and presentation**, including preliminary data, findings and recommendations *(end October)* 6. **3 participatory validation and sensemaking workshops** building on draft report/presentation, 1. with ISG; 2. Global Secretariat and 3. wider network *(November)*
November 2023- January 2024	**Report and Follow up**	7. **Final report** (format to be determined with consultant(s) and MTR Reference Group) incl. evaluation approach, analysis and sensemaking, recommendations and reflections on MTR process *(December)* 8. **Adaptation event** for ISG, organised together with Reference Group *(December-January)*

Financial information
The maximum budget available is **€ 50.000 (including VAT)**. The consultants' proposal should include a breakdown including number of working days, consultant fees, travel costs, VAT/taxes, etc. Payments will be based on deliverables as per the schedule above. All cost proposals should be presented in euros.

Qualifications and Experience

We give preference to a **multilingual team of consultants**. The consultant(s) are expected to meet the following selection criteria:

- Proven experience of conducting similar participatory and utilisation-focused evaluations;
- Proficiency in qualitative evaluation methodologies of data collection and analysis;
- Experience in the use of outcome harvesting, including analysis and substantiation;
- Experience with conducting evaluations 1.) with networks or social movements; 2.) with programs focused on learning; 3.) in the field conflict prevention & peacebuilding;
- In-tune with power dynamics and relations of power, including their own;
- Experience in organising virtual meetings/workshops (by making use of e.g., Zoom, Teams, Mural, Miro, or an equivalent) and using remote data collection methods;
- Excellent co-design, coordination and facilitation skills;
- Fluency in English and at least one of GPPAC's languages spoken (Arabic, French, Spanish, or Russian).

How to apply

Please send your application to PMEL@gppac.net **by Friday 26 May 2023, 12:00 PM CEST**. Please write *MTR Application [Team name or lead applicant name]* as email subject. This application should include:

- **A cover letter (max 1 page)** including consultant(s)' motivation for MTR and view on embedding learning through participation, inclusion, and empowerment.
- **An approach paper (max 4 pages)**, including:
  - Indicative approach and methodologies;
  - The division of responsibilities in the consultant team based on expertise;
  - A work plan summary, including allocation of team budget, days allocated per consultant and expected timeline against deliverables.
- **CV (max 3 pages each) of consultant(s)**, primarily showcasing/highlighting the criteria outlined above.
- **One example** of similar assignments (e.g. inception or final report).
- **Two references** of similar assignments.

Interviews with (max 3) shortlisted consultants will take place on **Friday 2 and/or Monday 5 June**.

Please submit any clarification questions to w.overbeek@gppac.net.