

External Evaluation of the ESTHER Switzerland Program Term of Reference

1. Background and objective

ESTHER Switzerland (or ESTHER CH) is a network of institutions that engages Swiss hospitals and other institutions in effective and sustainable North-South partnerships. ESTHER partnerships strengthen the capacity of the health workforce and institutions to provide quality health services for people in low and middle-income countries, with a focus on universal health care coverage and strengthening health systems. ESTHER Switzerland promotes institutional health partnerships through knowledge generation, sharing best practice, collaboration, and advocacy. ESTHER Switzerland is an active member of the ESTHER Global Alliance for Health Partnerships (EA) and supports the EA Secretariat. Switzerland, through the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, joined the ESTHER Alliance in 2011 (then called European ESTHER Alliance). The ESTHER Switzerland Secretariat was first hosted by the Geneva University Hospitals and then, in 2015, ad interim by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) until moving at the beginning of 2016 to the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) at the University of Bern. The SDC provide technical and financial support at the Swiss as well as the European level. Switzerland is represented on the EA Board through the SDC. Switzerland is actively engaged in the implementation of the EA strategic framework. ESTHER Switzerland shares the vision of the ESTHER Alliance of a world in which advances and practices in health are shared equitably within and between countries, and where everyone has access to quality health services.

The ESTHER Switzerland Programme is implemented on behalf of the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and currently fully funded by SDC with an operational credit that covers the periods Feb. 1st, 2016 to Jan. 31st, 2019 (Phase 1). An extension for the running of the Secretariat has been granted for the period Feb. 1st 2019 to Oct. 31st, 2019 (Phase 1 extension).

The mandate of the ESTHER Switzerland Secretariat is defined by a Project Document (ProDoc, final version of January 22nd, 2016 and a relative Logframe).

ESTHER Switzerland's main activity is the twinning of Swiss hospitals, universities, laboratories, research institutions with partners in the South. ESTHER Switzerland will support North-South partnerships to strengthen individual and institutional capacities, reduce North/South inequalities in health and improve quality health care in low-income countries. Partnerships will be guided by the ESTHER Alliance Charter for Quality of Partnerships and characterized by:

- Adherence to national policies and strategies;
- Developing formal agreements between twinned institutions;
- Fostering equal involvement of partner institutions in project development and implementation;
- Equal accountability for outcomes;
- A commitment of both partners to sustainable interventions;
- Equity and respect with no hierarchical relation between North and South institutions;

- Transparency through declaration of conflicts of interest and regular narrative and financial reporting;
- Adherence to ethical principles, including clearance of data collected for research purposes by the responsible Ethics Committees or Institutional Review Boards.

In order to accomplish this ESTHER Switzerland is doing the following things:

- Managing a Grant scheme including larger grants and smaller start-up funds
- Promote the IHP approach among Swiss and LMIC health collaborations
- Liaise and coordinate with other global health stakeholder in Switzerland
- Operate within and collaborate with the ESTHER Alliance

As part of the SDC mandate, an external evaluation of the ESTHER Switzerland Program is planned during 2018/19.

The Objective of the external programme evaluation is to undertake a comprehensive and external assessment of the ESTHER Switzerland Program 2016-2019 (Phase 01) and to guide the development of Phase 02 of ESTHER Switzerland.

2. Aim of the external evaluation, scope and evaluation areas

Aim: The aim of the evaluation is, on the one hand, to assess the **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (DAC Criteria) of the ESTHER CH strategies, programs and partnerships**, in particular regarding the ESTHER Switzerland focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights including HIV/AIDS and its impact on health system strengthening. On the other hand, it shall also **evaluate its working procedures, governance structure, funding procedures/set-up and communication.**

Scope: The scope is Phase 01 of ESTHER CH, from February 2016 until the time of the evaluation. The evaluation will take note but not as such assess the work ESTHER CH before Phase 01 started, nor assess the work of the ESTHER Alliance.

Evaluation areas: The three main evaluation areas include the strategical, operational and management levels of the ESTHER Switzerland programme. The consultant is expected to formulate propositions for relevant questions addressing strategic, operational and management areas.

Strategical area include (but is not limited to) the following points:

- a. The strategic orientation and funding base of ESTHER CH.
- b. Role of ESTHER CH as potential Swiss center of excellence for institutional health partnerships.
- c. Current focus of ESTHER Switzerland on sexual and reproductive health and rights including HIV/AIDS.
- d. Thematic scope of ESTHER CH.
- e. Geographic scope of ESTHER CH.
- f. Specific niche of ESTHER Switzerland and relation between ESTHER Switzerland and other country programs and.

- g. Balance in allocation of funds between project grants and start-up funds (shall this balance be maintained or changed for phase 2?) ESTHER CH's contribution to the ESTHER Alliance (e.g. contribution to the EA Board, EA working groups, funding, etc.) and benefits for ESTHER CH of being a member of the ESTHER Alliance (e.g. conceptual and operational guidance, advocacy, communication).
- h. External communication of ESTHER CH.

Operational area include (but is not limited to) the following points:

- i. Processes and instruments put in place under Phase 01 for allocation of project grants and start-up funds.
- j. Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and key results of start-up funds
- k. Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of project grants
- l. ESTHER contribution to the strengthening of Institutional Health Partnerships (IHP)
- m. ESTHER contribution to the strengthening of and Health Systems.
- n. Achievements and limitations of ESTHER Grants and Strat-up funds.
- o. Intervention modalities and key areas of interest of ESTHER projects.
- p. Duration of ESTHER projects.
- q. Communication and mutual learning within ESTHER CH.

Management area include (but is not limited to) the following points:

- r. Secretariat contribution to the fulfillment of the aims of ESTHER Switzerland.
- s. Processes and instruments put in place for overall management of ESTHER CH (ESTHER CH Secretariat).
- t. ESTHER CH governance structures (i.e. steering of ESTHER CH).
- u. ESTHER CH annual partnership forum

During the inception meeting between the consultant and ISPM/SDC, the questions will be further prioritized and refined with the consultants.

3. Methods

The consultant is expected to propose an adapted methodology, but this should include:

- a. Review of ESTHER Switzerland documents (as provided by the Secretariat)
- b. Interviews of a selection of main stakeholders and grantees (a list of possible key informants will be established by SDC and ISPM and provided to the consultant). The list will include: representatives from ISPM, Representatives from SDC, members of ESTHER CH Steering Committee, representatives from Swiss hospitals/institutions and "South" hospitals/institutions who receive ESTHER CH grants and start-up funds; Members of the ESTHER Alliance, representatives of relevant global health networks, etc.

- c. Consultation of recipients of ESTHER grants and start-up funds under phase 01 and other relevant stakeholders (a list of possible contacts will be established by SDC and ISPM and provided to the consultant). This could take place with an online survey, a questionnaire sent to the grantees or telephone interviews.

Field visits of ESTHER CH grant project and start up fund projects are not foreseen. When needed, the consultant will conduct phone/skype interviews with project partners.

4. Expected results

The consultant will provide an evaluation report based on quality standards of evaluations (DAC, Swiss Evaluation Standards). For the proposed structure of the Report, please refer to Annex 1.

The Report should not exceed 40 pages (without annexes).

The evaluation includes statements on the guiding questions, conclusions and recommendations. By this, it should be possible for ESTHER Switzerland to get a clear picture on its strengths and weaknesses as well as on its potential.

The evaluation provides ESTHER Switzerland with some testimonials, which can be used for further work.

In addition to the report, the consultant shall provide a short and concise presentation (PowerPoint) summarizing the main element of the evaluation report. The presentation will be used for information and communication by ISPM, SDC, ESTHER CH and the EA.

All deliverables should be in English.

5. Timeline of the evaluation

1	Aug. 20, 2018	Publication and diffusion of the Evaluation ToR and opening of the Call for consultancy
2	Sept. 28, 2018, 17h00	Deadline for submission of consultancy proposals
3	Oct. 15, 2018	Selection of consultancy proposals and final decision
4	2 nd half Oct, 2018	Inception meeting in Berne: ISPM, SDC, Consultant(s)
5	Nov. 1 st , 2018	Beginning of evaluation (duration 5 months)
6	March 31 st , 2019 (at latest)	End of evaluation, delivery of final products, debriefing meeting in Berne (ISPM, SDC, consultant(s))

6. Budget

A total number of about **20 working days** between November 2018 and March 2019 may be allocated to the consultant / consultancy team.

The proposal should include a detailed budget (hours per activity) and the hourly cost of the consultant(s).

The budget should explicitly include the VAT.

7. Profile of the consultant

Consultancy proposals will be accepted from an individual consultant or from a team of max. 2 consultants.

The consultant(s) should in particular demonstrate:

- Up to date knowledge and experience in health development cooperation in different regions
- Knowledge of different modalities in development cooperation (project, programme, policy dialogue, partnerships; multilateral and bilateral work, etc.)
- Proven expertise and knowledge of the Swiss development cooperation system and of the SDC health policies.
- Proven expertise on sexual and reproductive health and rights including HIV/AIDS and health system strengthening
- Sound expertise in public health, especially in development context.
- Conducting evaluations, incl. ability to apply the DAC-OECD evaluation standards.
- Project management and organizational development
- Proven expertise knowledge of Swiss health sector
- Familiarity with Institutional Health Partnerships (IHP)
- Competency with gender and human rights issues

The consultant(s) should demonstrate a solid experience in methodological evaluations (min 5 years) and demonstrate previous experiences in similar evaluations.

The consultant(s) should be able to work in English as main language of the evaluation and demonstrate excellent writing skills in English. Fluency in German and/or French may be an asset.

Consultancy proposals should include a detailed CV of the consultant(s).

Exclusion criteria:

Consultancy proposals coming from the following persons will be excluded from the selection:

- Anyone currently being a formal employee of the ISPM or SDC.
- Any member of the ESTHER CH Steering Committee.
- Any person being a direct recipient of an ESTHER CH Grant under Phase 01.
- Any employee of an institution being a direct recipient of an ESTHER CH Grant during phase 01.

Conflict of interest: any other possible conflict of interest should be brought to the attention of the ESTHER Secretariat in the consultancy proposal.

8. Structure of the consultancy proposal

The consultancy proposal should be structured as it follows:

- Cover page with name and contacts of the consultant(s)
- Interpretation of the mandate
- Proposal of relevant evaluation questions (according to the evaluation areas defined in chap 2 of this ToR; questions will be discussed and finalized at the inception meeting)
- Methodology
- Timeline
- Budget
- Consultant(s) expertise
- Annexes: CV, note on possible conflict of interest

The consultancy proposal should not exceed 10 pages (excluding annexes)

9. Guiding documents

As a basis to prepare the proposal, it is advised to consult the [ESTHER Switzerland Website](#), the [Website of the European ESTHER Alliance](#) including the Alliance's [Strategic Framework 2015-20](#) and the ESTHER Switzerland Project Document. The Project Document can be obtained from Mr. Ruggia, on a confidential basis.

10. Deadline for submission

Deadline for submission of consultancy proposal is September 28th, 2018, at 17h00 CET.

11. Contact

Consultancy proposals should be sent in electronic format to Mr. Ruggia.

Luciano Ruggia, ESTHER Switzerland Project Manager
Email: luciano.ruggia@ispm.unibe.ch

Annex 1:

Standard Format for Evaluation Reports

The format for the presentation of the evaluation given here is to be considered as minimum standard. Where indicated it can be extended with additional chapters and sub - chapters.

- **Content page**
- **Acronyms and abbreviations**
- **Acknowledgements**
- **Executive summary**
- **Introduction**
 - Purpose and objectives of the evaluation
 - Scope and limitations of the evaluation, short statement on the evaluation methods used
- **Description of the development intervention resp. ESTHER**
 - Context of the intervention, including policy and institutional context; description of the intervention and the intervention logic and the implementation arrangements
- **Findings**
 - Presentation and interpretation of the factual evidence in relation to the evaluative questions.
- **Conclusions**
 - Assessment by the consultant of the intervention results against the expected results (as identified at the planning stage or as reconstructed by the consultant).
- **Lessons learned**
 - Lessons that may have implication for the future of the development intervention or may be relevant for wider application.
- **Recommendations**
 - Proposals for improvements for the client and users of the evaluation.
- **Annexes:**
 - TORs
 - List of stakeholders consulted
 - Detailed description of the evaluation process and methodology: description of the evaluation process, the methodology used (including any limitations of this method), information sources (including any data issues), stakeholders participation and consultation.