
CALL FOR TENDERS /ALERT/DRC/007/2025

Terms of Reference (ToR) – Study on the Sustainability of the Conflict Sensitivity Hub (CSH)

1) Context

Humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) actors are active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to respond to various humanitarian crises and support communities in organizing development and peacebuilding actions. These HDP actors carry out their work in areas—most of which are affected by conflict—particularly in Eastern DRC. This assistance increasingly needs to be conflict- and gender-sensitive to achieve greater impact.

Within this framework, International Alert implemented a pilot project for the Conflict Sensitivity Hub (CSH) in the DRC between March 2021 and February 2022, funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). This pilot project tested the implementation of the hub and gathered lessons and recommendations for operationalizing an effective CSH in the DRC over the long term.

From August 2022, the main implementation phase of the CSH began in the DRC, funded by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the FCDO, Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Developed as a centre of expertise for the humanitarian, development, and peace community in the DRC, the CSH aims to strengthen HDP actors' understanding and capacity in conflict sensitivity. It supports them in adopting a conflict-sensitive approach to ensure their actions have a positive and sustainable impact on beneficiary communities.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to improving the delivery and effectiveness of aid in the DRC through increasingly conflict- and gender-sensitive programming by HDP actors.

Specific objectives:

1. Provide HDP actors with continuous access to tailored resources on conflict and gender sensitivity, capacity building, technical assistance, and learning.
2. Increase the credibility, capacities, and sustainability of the CSH.

The CSH in the DRC is structured around four main areas:

1. **Research and Analysis** – Conducts conflict and contextual research and analysis, and provides recommendations to help partners better target their interventions, as well as support in developing their research and analysis skills.
2. **Technical Capacity Building** – Helps partners create and share tools to monitor contexts and intervention impacts, ensuring conflict sensitivity is addressed at both programmatic and institutional levels.
3. **Technical Support** – Offers three types of training: conflict analysis, conflict- and gender-sensitive programming and management, and thematic guidance for specific sectors (humanitarian aid, education, cash transfers, etc.).



4. Learning – Facilitates and encourages peer learning, experience sharing, and lessons learned among local organizations, national and international NGOs, and donors within a community of practice.

For nearly three years, the CSH has demonstrated its relevance and added value by supporting a wide range of actors—international NGOs, UN agencies, local CSOs, and clusters—in strengthening their capacities and accountability regarding local conflict dynamics. However, this experience remains highly dependent on external institutional funding, most of which ends in March 2026.

The CSH is entering a critical phase in its development, as it must lay the foundations for sustainability beyond current funding by strengthening its financial, institutional, and operational autonomy.

Currently hosted by International Alert, which provides administrative and logistical management, the CSH's hosting arrangement was intended as transitional, with the goal of becoming an autonomous structure led by a consortium of national and international actors engaged in its governance. The sustainability strategy must therefore consider this objective of autonomy.

The dual challenge—reducing financial dependency and transitioning to autonomous governance—requires in-depth strategic thinking, informed by concrete data on the market for CSH services, viable business models, risks and opportunities related to autonomy, and a clear implementation plan.

There are several Conflict Sensitivity Hubs around the world with different models. The consultant will liaise with these hubs to conduct a comparative analysis to identify lessons learned and models that could be adapted to the DRC CSH.

2) Objectives of the Study

The main objective is to examine modalities, opportunities, and possible scenarios to ensure the CSH's autonomy and sustainability beyond March 2026, and to propose a concrete, realistic strategy to ensure its institutional independence and financial stability.

The study should identify and analyze different options for the CSH's financial sustainability, including the feasibility of partial or full monetization of services, access to new types of funding (including private funds), and the market's ability to absorb a paid offer. The analysis should include an action plan starting in January 2026, detailing steps and a timeline toward financial and institutional autonomy.

Components:

- Market mapping / demand analysis – Identify which organizations (NGOs, donors, public institutions, CSOs, private sector) would be interested in contracting or directly funding CSH services, and their willingness and ability to pay.
- Comparative analysis of relevant business models – Propose a viable model with diversified funding (e.g., pay-per-training, subscription, private contributions replacing current institutional funding).
- Identification of institutional autonomy scenarios – Assess legal, logistical, human, and strategic implications of moving from a hosted project to an autonomous organization or consortium entity.



- Risk, opportunity, and success factor identification – Propose strategies to mitigate risks and leverage opportunities in the transition to independent governance and funding.
- Roadmap – Based on the current operating model, propose a clear, operational roadmap with timeline, milestones, required resources, and shared responsibilities.

3) Proposed Methodology

The consultant will define the methodology, which may include:

- Desk review (internal documentation, evaluation reports, global CSH experiences)
- Focus groups (with national/international organizations and UN agencies)
- Workshops to validate findings and scenarios

4) Deliverables

- Inception report/methodological note – 10 days after the start of the consultancy
- Final report – Including all analyses, recommendations, and an executive summary
- Operational sustainability roadmap – With steps, priorities, and needs (legal, HR, technical)
- Donor presentation – PowerPoint format

5) Duration and Timeline

The assignment is planned for 50 days starting September 2025. Deadline: 30 November 2025.

6) Consultant/Consulting Firm Profile

- Master's degree or higher in political science, international relations, development, economics, project management, or related field
- 7–10 years' experience in strategic studies, institutional assessments, or organizational planning
- Strong knowledge of the Great Lakes region or DRC context
- Expertise in institutional sustainability and financial viability, hybrid economic models, and organizational development
- Proven experience in peacebuilding, conflict sensitivity, or capacity building for national, international, and UN agencies
- Knowledge of DRC's context and funding dynamics in humanitarian, development, and peace sectors
- Ability to work in French (English an asset)



7) Submission Modalities

Applicants should submit:

- Detailed technical proposal (understanding of ToR, methodology, timeline)
- CV(s) of consultant(s)
- Financial offer
- Examples of similar studies conducted

Submissions by email only to: drc-hr@international-alert.org (cc: drc-programmes@international-alert.org) by 05 September 2025 at 17:00. Late applications will be rejected.

Email subject: "CALL FOR TENDERS ALERT/DRC/007/2025"

LA DIRECTION

