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TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Expert Needed for Developing a Training Module and Providing Training of Trainers (ToT)

Objective: To raise awareness of gender equality and disability inclusion within volunteer first responder services.

1. Context & background

Title of the project	Institutionalising a Volunteer First Responder Service in Armenia (VolFiRe)
Country / Location	Armenia / countrywide
Date of the Action	01.12.2022 - 31.08.2025

The Civil Protection system in Armenia is currently mainly based on professional responders from governmental institutions. They are to a large extent on-duty firefighters and other paid staff of the Rescue Service (RS) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). But Armenia has numerous remote areas particularly affected by the limited coverage through the regional fire and rescue services. These areas are often out of reach if we consider international standards for rapid response to emergencies and disasters. Closest MIA RS local fire brigades are established far from these municipalities, 20km to 45km, and access is often difficult (bad road conditions, mountainous roads...). In some cases, the emergency services cannot at all reach the municipalities due to snow fall in winter or landslides in spring. This fact also applies to ambulances and other medical services. Therefore, the Armenian population living in remote areas is extremely vulnerable in case of emergencies (accidents, medical emergencies, house fires...) and disasters (landslides, forest fires...).

The Austrian Red Cross (AutRC) implemented the StrengthVOL project (<https://strengthvol.org/>) from 2020 – 2022 (funded by DG ECHO and co-funded by the Austrian Development Agency). In the frame of this project the Rescue Services of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Armenia (MES)¹, Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) and Austrian Red Cross (AutRC) developed a comprehensive model for Civil Protection volunteering for Armenia.

In this model, the volunteers are first responders, firefighters and rescuers called “Volunteer Fire Rescue Groups” (VFRGs). The volunteers are affiliated to the Armenian Red Cross Society. Volunteers pass also an exam with the MIA Rescue services (RS) and successful candidates receive from the RS an official rescuer ID.



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The VFRGs are alerted and deployed by the MIA Crisis Management Centre (911) for any emergency or disaster occurring within their municipality. They are available 24/7 and should deploy within 15 minutes after the alert. The groups themselves are responsible for running a VFR station, and maintaining equipment and a fire truck. They are alerted and deployed on a regular basis. They are volunteer firefighters like in similar volunteer systems in many European countries, e.g., Austria.

The current project “Institutionalising a Volunteer First Responder Service in Armenia (VolFiRe)” is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), co-funded and coordinated by the Austrian Red Cross (AutRC). It is implemented in Armenia along with three project partners: Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS), Caritas Austria (CA) and Armenian Caritas (AC). All activities are implemented in close cooperation with the Rescue Services of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia (MIA, formerly Ministry of Emergency Situations). The project should contribute to the further development of 4 VFRGs already established within the preceding StrengthVOL project and facilitate the establishment of 8 additional VFRGs in Armenia. The following 12 municipalities will be targeted (see ANNEX: Project map): Alaverdi, Areni, Ashotsk, Baghramyan, Champbarak, Garni, Kapan, Noyemberan, Spitak, Talin, Vayk, Vedi.

Based on the lessons learned from the StrengthVOL project and its main recommendations, one of the outputs defined for the VolFiRe project was:

Enhanced integration of gender equality and disability inclusion in the Volunteer Fire Rescue Groups of Armenia (Output 5)

Within the pilot project, it became clear that the different pilot fire rescue groups were composed differently in terms of gender and age. While one group contained many younger volunteers, including women, other groups were mainly frequented by men over 40. This has prompted the necessity to explore how to ensure more diverse volunteer teams and provide framework conditions to allow people from all walks of life to participate in the teams. Cultural beliefs and social practices are often the cause of discrimination and lead to leaving out certain groups of people from DRR planning and activities. People with disabilities are commonly considered a homogenous group in national DRR plans, although there are multiple forms of disabilities which entail different needs.

The international community recognizes inclusion as a guiding principle of DRR. This is reflected in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-30), which acknowledges that DRR requires an all-of-society engagement and partnership, which promotes the empowerment and inclusive, accessible, and non-discriminatory participation of all people disproportionately affected by disasters. Thus, several activities will be carried out to enhance the participation of women and to include people with disabilities in the VFRGs. This output will also support ARCS to improve their capacities to work with people with disabilities in the DRR context and mainstream gender equality and disability inclusion throughout the VolFiRe program.

2. Objective

The objective of this assignment is to **develop a Training Module and Provide Training for Trainers (ToT)** on gender equality and disability inclusion to build the capacity of volunteers, mentors, and stakeholders to systematically integrate gender and disability aspects into the planning and implementation of Volunteer Fire Rescue activities.

3. Scope of work

a. To identify the specific requirements of the Volunteer Fire Rescue Groups regarding gender equality and disability inclusion, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Disability Inclusion and Gender Analysis (realized within the VolFiRe project¹) and the specific backgrounds of the volunteers involved

b. Develop a comprehensive training module that addresses the identified needs of the potential training participants and motivates the participants to engage themselves for disability inclusion and gender equality within their volunteer groups, including but not limited to:

- Sensitizing the importance of disability inclusion and gender equality
- Understanding the principles of disability inclusion.
- Recognizing and addressing unconscious biases.
- Communication and interaction with individuals with disabilities.
- Provide and exercise practical tools and resources for volunteers and mentors to apply the acquired knowledge in their roles (as peer-to-peer educators).

With respect to gender equality, the module will enable stakeholders to:

- Understand what the advantages of gender-balanced volunteer teams are
- Which framework conditions are necessary to allow women and men, girls and boys to participate in the VFRGs
- Hear about practical guidelines and recommendations on how to encourage more gender-balanced VFRGs

c. Provide training for trainers (**ToT**) on gender equality and disability inclusion for the targeted audience based on the elaborated module to build the capacity of volunteers, mentors, and stakeholders to systematically integrate gender and disability aspects into the planning and implementation of Volunteer Fire Rescue activities. The training is meant to strongly focus on practical exercises and concrete examples (rather than the presentation of theoretical concepts).

4. Target

The module is mainly foreseen for:

- Volunteers of the Volunteer Fire Rescue Groups
- Mentors providing guidance to volunteers

But might also be used for:

- Key decision-makers within the organizations
- Stakeholders

The module will be of use not only to hands-on practitioners, but also to policymakers, and it refers to information that is applicable at local, regional or international levels. This module can also be used by persons with disabilities and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (DPOs/OPDs) for policy advocacy and collaborative action.

5. Methodology

¹ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PjXTq7PYM50ru9ZzwX79w88bqOcFiTOZ/view?usp=sharing>

- Utilize participatory and interactive training methods.
- Incorporate real-life case studies and examples.
- Facilitate discussions and workshops to encourage active engagement.
- Include tools and material that can easily be used by future peer-to-peer educators.

6. Deliverables

The Inclusion Expert will submit the following deliverables:

- a. An inception report containing the outline of the training module (including a short description of the aim of each chapter), a detailed timeline indicating milestones / including time for feedback and revisions.
- b. Detailed training module on gender equality and disability inclusion with a strong focus on practical exercises and concrete examples
- c. Training materials, including presentations, handouts, multimedia resources and a peer-to-peer education package
- d. Pre- and post-training assessments to measure the impact of the training.
- e. A comprehensive report outlining the methodology, findings, and recommendations.

7. Timeframe

The deliverables will be developed from November 01, 2024, to December 15, 2024.

Two TOTs are planned for February 2025

- a. Develop a detailed timeline indicating milestones and deadlines.
- b. Include time for feedback and revisions.

8. Reporting

The Inclusion expert will be recruited and managed by Armenian Caritas.

The Inclusion Expert will report to the VolFiRe AutRC Programme Manager and AC manager. The work will be done remotely with online contacts with the AC project Manager.

9. Budget

- Provide a detailed budget breakdown ensuring transparency and cost-effectiveness.

10. Qualifications

- A demonstrated expertise in gender equality and disability inclusion.
- Experience in developing and delivering inclusive training programs.
- Familiarity with the context of Volunteer Fire Rescue operations is an asset.
- Communication, report writing and analytical skills.
- Fluent in Armenian and English, both oral and written.



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11. Evaluation

- Proposals will be evaluated based on expertise, methodology, and budget.
- The selected expert will be expected to align closely with the organization's values and objectives.

12. Submission

Interested experts should submit their proposals by October 25, 2024.

Proposals should include :

- A cover letter summarizing relevant experience.
- CVs of all consultants proposed.
- A detailed proposal (work plan, methodology description, examples of similar work, and contact details for two referees) with the subject "VolFiRe – Inclusion Expert" at: Girard Thierry (OeRK) Thierry.Girard@roteskreuz.at, Elisabeth Haun Elisabeth.Haun@caritas.tirol and Gayane Norikyan, : g.norikyan@caritas.am

The financial offer should include a proposed budget with an all-inclusive fee in AMD

