**Terms of reference (TOR) of The Research Center**

***Gender Barriers, Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Women and Youth Accessibility to and Employability in Labor Market***

1. **Background:**

In light of the evolving context in Syria as a result of the crisis that started in March 2011, UN agencies, namely ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP prioritized, in coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSAL) and the Syrian Commission for Family Affairs and population (SCFAP), to conduct a study on Gender Barriers, Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Women and Youth Accessibility to and Employability in the Labor Market as per the attached brief guiding document ( Concept Note).

In brief, this study is very important and is considered as apriority by the above-mentioned organization and Government entities since it will secure needed information and data that can contribute to the following:

* get better understanding on the status of the labor market with a special focus on the challenges, needs and vulnerabilities of female workers and youth as a result of the crisis in the country ,
* understand the decision making power and dynamics in relation to the employment decision, factors and contexts
* Identify capacity-building needs that can enable women and youth to enter the labor market free of discrimination or abuse.

The Specific Objectives of the research are as follows:

* To get better understanding of the gender barriers and cultural and social factors that influence women and youth livelihoods and employability
* To identify the reasons leading to increased vulnerability among women and youth and affecting their accessibility to labor market
* To analyze the consequences of this vulnerability of women and youth livelihoods and employability
* To outline the results of the humanitarian response on increasing women and youth accessibility to the labor market
* To make recommendations on the improvement of the employability/ accessibility of the women and youth to the labor market in order to mitigate the consequences of the gender, cultural and social barriers.

As such, it was deemed appropriate to outsource research center to facilitate and conduct this research optimally.

1. **Process:**

Call for Expressing of Interest to outsource a research center will be sent to UN agencies to distribute it among their network of possible vendors. The call for interest period will be for 5 working days. It will also be shared with the research centers that can fulfil the following criteria, up on which the evaluation will be conducted:

1. Registration
2. Having the required skill set (economy, sociology, demography, and statistics)
3. Conducted similar researches
4. Ability to access the selected governorates( that were mentioned in the study guiding document)

The research center will be accountable to UNFPA, which will represent UN agencies. UNFPA will ensure through and continuous coordination with the UN agencies and national partners including SCFAP and MOSAL.

The Research center will send “an express of interest “to conduct the study, including the following documents:

* Cover letter including the interest of conducting the study
* Company profile including the registration date, location, number of staff, and implemented projects
* Technical offer including the approach of conducting the study / brief methodology , CV of consultants
* Financial offer noting that the cost of the all concerned experts, research assistants and other support staff, transportation , printing, mobile phones and calls should be covered by the research center and the cost of the venue and refreshment of the finally workshop.

The vendor should place the financial offer in different envelop sealed and stamped. Other documents can be put in other envelope and all can then be placed in one envelope (file sealed and stamped by the vendor).

Evaluation committee will be composed including UN agencies, SFPA and MOSAL will be composed to evaluate the offers up on the above-mentioned criteria.

1. **Duties and responsibilities:**

In light with the guiding document, the tasks implied in this assignment are as follows:

* Draw up a plan of action and timetable for accomplishing various components of the consultancy assignment (taking into account the below suggested timeframe). This should include also the human resources that will be engaged in conducting the study including the experts and research assistants ( data collectors)
* Meet with the concerned UN agencies to get a better understating on the ongoing or completed studies on, but not limited to gender, employment, women, youth and labor market and to be able to identify the data gaps that is related to the subject of this research
* Carry out desk/literature review about the subject of the study including the available books, reports and searching in the internet to review available reports and documentation; investigating similar studies/experiences carried out in the Arab region;
* Further to the literature review, prepare a analytical report highlighting the main findings and gaps ( it should be no less than 25 substantive pages)
* Prepare a Comprehensive Research protocol specifying the sample design and size; identifying the target population in the study; the tools to be used in the qualitative and quantitative studies, etc) including questionnaire or guidelines for households survey, meeting with key informants ( employers of public and private sectors and policy makers) and focus group discussions with representatives of households and employers
* Train field workers and pilot the tools and adjust them as it would require
* Undertake the field work
* Analyze qualitative and quantitative data that were obtained during the literature review and field work
* Prepare and ensure timely delivery of the first draft of the analytical report synthesizing the findings and outcome of the consultancy;
* Finalize report on basis of comments received and handled by SCFPA, MOSAL and UNFPA, noting that UNFPA will collect the inputs from UN agencies to facilitate the work of the research center.
* Adjust and revise the report following the feedback that will be received from UN agencies, SCFAP and MOSAL
* Provide SCFAP, MOSAL and UNFPA an electronic and hard copy of the final report in Arabic and English Facilitate a workshop to present the main findings

1. **Reporting:** The Research Center/ Lead Consultant will report to UNFPA representing adminstratively and financially in relation to this study concerned UN agencies, SCFAP and MOSAL
2. **Deliverables:**

* Analytical Report as a result of the literature review
* Research protocol including the guidelines of the data collection tools, the sample size and timeframe
* Report on the piloting of the tools including the amendments made
* Hard copies of completed forms and questionnaire and FGDs raw data. All of these be kept at SCFAP that can be accessible by all UN agencies involved in the study
* Report of the workshop on the findings and suggested recommendation
* Final report which constitutes the final outcome of this consultancy ( in Arabic and English)

1. **Requirements for Experience and Qualifications:**

Depending on the skills that will be available in the local market, the research center that will be outsourced should have the following skills and qualifications:

* Registered in Syria since 2 years at least
* Has a lead researcher who can be a socialist, economist and demographer, who have at least Master degree in Demography, Sociology, Social Work, Social Statistics, Development Studies, Public Policy or a related field.
* Has at 2 additional experts in the fields of sociology, economy, demography or statistics and should differ from the specialty of the lead researcher
* Conducted similar studies before including social studies on women or gender, youth, or relevant economic or demographic studies. The center should show experience in Data collection, analysis, report writing, and demonstrate proficiency in use of computerized data processing software is required.
* Previous experience with UN , academia or government in facilitating/ completion of researches
* Fluency in Arabic ( Arabic Speaker is preferable) and English

1. **Assignment Duration and Time Frame (Tentative):**

June- Nov. 2018. The detailed (Tentative) schedule of the research is tentatively as follows:

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| **Activity** | **Tentative Time / duration** | **Expected output** |
| Outsource the research center/ consultant | By the 10th of June at Max | Contract signed |
| Meeting with UN agencies to collect relevant secondary data and get better understanding on the agencies interest | 20th of June | List of key documents obtained |
| Literature review and prepare detailed research protocol | 20 July | Report on the lit review submitted |
| Submit the research protocol including detailed guidelines for the household survey , FGD and meeting with key informants to the UN to review and to be finalized and adopted | 20-30 July | Research protocol including the guidelines for the household survey , FGD and meeting with key informants submitted and reviewed |
| Pilot, revise and adopt the guidelines for the household survey , FGD and meeting with key informants | 1-7th of July | Guidelines adopted |
| Conduct the field work | 7 July- 7 Sept. | Primary data collected |
| Data analysis | 8-31 Sept. | Data analysis completed |
| Submission of the draft research report for the revision of UN agencies , SCFAP and MOSAL | 15 Oct. | Report draft and feedback from the UN agencies obtained |
| Submit the final clean version of the report after incorporating the comments of the UN agencies, SCFAP and MOSAL | 25 Nov. | Report submitted and study completed |
| Facilitate a workshop to present the findings | 25-30 Oct. | Workshop report including the recommendations delivered as a result of the workshop |

1. **Payment Schedule:**

UNFPA will pay the contract amount to the contractor as the following:

* **40%** of total cost against the Research Protocol including the guidelines of the data collection tools, the sample size and timeframe;
* **60%** will be paid against Final report which constitutes the final outcome of this consultancy (in Arabic and English).