Terms of Reference:

Mid-term Review of the ESPER programme

Position description	
Position	Evaluation Expert Team to conduct the Mid-term Review of the ESPER programme (*Ensemble pour la Sécurité et la Paix à l'est de la RD Congo)*
Introduction of the ESPER programme	**Rationale** The fragility of the security and judicial governance system at several levels of State management, particularly the village, *groupement, chefferie, commune* and town levels, is an internal factor that aggravates the dynamics of (violent) conflicts. The ESPER program supports the Government's efforts to put in place a participatory and inclusive security governance system that allows for the diagnosis of security problems and their causes. This feeds the development and implementation of local security action plans (PAS) by local security committees (CLS), including community participation. The main security issues addressed in the PAS are: Harassment (military/police/administrative/judicial/barriers), kidnapping, armed group activism, drug abuse, customary power conflicts, sexual and gender-based violence, and land conflicts. The ESPER programme builds on the results, best practices, and lessons learned from the 2015-2019 CISPE program. ESPER seeks alignment stabilization priorities of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo[1]. The programme in its second phase also focuses on activities to address two cross-cutting causes of these security problems, namely 1) corruption and 2) impunity. Land conflicts are predominantly addressed by other programmes also supported by the Dutch Embassy. ESPER is assuring close coordination with these programmes in order to have the best impact possible. **Programme objectives** ***Contribute to stabilization by promoting and improving security and justice governance and social cohesion in eastern DRC*** 1. Enhanced security governance: Support inclusive planning and monitoring mechanisms for security and development 2. Effective and accessible security and judicial services: Accompany the action on security priorities to the needs of the population 3. Enabling environment for peace: Influencing action to address security challenges **Intervention zones** • **North Kivu**: Nyiragongo Territory, Rutshuru Territory, Masisi Territory, Karisimbi Commune (Goma) • **South Kivu**: Uvira Territory, Uvira Town, Kalehe Territory • **Ituri**: Irumu Territory, Mahagi Territory and during year one Djugu Territory **Intervention strategies** **1. Enhanced security governance** Security governance: The programme supports local security committee members (CLS) to strengthen capacities on inclusive governance and the organization of the CSL(E). Security diagnostics lead up to PAS development/revisions. Support to specific actions by CLS members to act on recommendations from the security meetings are also foreseen.

[1] Previously the STAREC program outlined the DRC stabilization strategy. STAREC has been merged with the DDR program to make way for the PDDRCS.

	2. Effective and accessible security and judicial services Results-Based Financing (RBF): Security service providers and regulators (mainly CLS members) receive quarterly subsidies based on performance contracts reflecting the indicators (actions) from the PAS. Partners are accompanied by coaching and technical training. Each quarter, evaluations and community surveys form the basis for calculating the subsidies to be paid to each contracted institution. Community engagement: To ensure community participation in CLS meetings, community structures were strengthened. They are also accompanied on community conflict resolution, the implementation of local PAS actions and advocacy with the authorities. **3. Enabling environment for peace: lobbying, advocacy, research** Political engagement: Advocacy with local, provincial, and national authorities addresses the most pressing security issues, as identified at the local level in the PAS as well as to formalize and promote good practices. Advocacy methods include support for community engagement and a media campaign in partnership with Radio La Benevolencija. CLS recommendations, research, democratic dialogues, and monitoring and evaluation findings are the most important inputs for advocacy agendas. **Collaboration with state authorities** A Steering Committee (Comité de Pilotage) was established and formalized between the three provincial governments and the ESPER consortium in December 2020 and operates through an annual tripartite meeting hosted on a rotating basis by each of the three provincial governments. Points to be brought to the Steering Committee for discussion/decision-making come in part from field missions by the Monitoring Committee (*Comité de Suivi*), which is co-chaired by the "Provincial Minister of Planning" and the "Provincial Minister of the Interior". Both committees form a framework for concerted consultation on achievements, challenges and recovery measures.
Consortium partners	ESPER is implemented through a consortium composed of VNG International (lead) and Cordaid. ESPER staff share offices in Goma, Bunia and Uvira. ESPER is funded through the Great Lakes Programme (Dutch Embassy) for a period of four years (September 2020 through august 2024) against an overall budget of EUR 16 million. **VNG International** (the international cooperation agency of the Association of Dutch Municipalities strengthens democratic local governments around the world by providing capacity building services to strengthen local governments, their associations, training institutes and the decentralization task forces in dynamic contexts. VNG International implements programmes in 42 countries. **Cordaid** (Catholic Organization for Humanitarian and Development Assistance) promotes social inclusion and resilient societies by strengthening the social contract between citizens and their leaders, including in the most fragile contexts in the world. Cordaid has extensive experience capacity strengthening of community-based organizations, local NGOs and government officials in the DRC, where it has been active for over 40 years. Results-based financing (RBF) in the security and justice sectors is one of the approaches used to strengthen the social contract between citizens and public institutions, while also contributing to the restoration of State authority.
Aim of this assignment	This assignment aims to conduct a mid-term review (MTR) of the ESPER programme. The mid-term review should make a ***qualitative assessment*** of the programme's progress towards achievement of its planned objective and results and should provide recommendations for improvement. More specifically the evaluation aims to: 1. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability efforts of the ESPER programme to improve inclusive security governance.

	2. To make recommendations for improvement regarding the programme's design, approach and management which can be used in the second half of the programme implementation. Important to note is that the mid-term review coincides with the mid-line evaluation of progress on the indicators of the ESPER results framework. This exercise is conducted by the ESPER M&E team and local partners involved in perception and satisfaction surveys. The midline evaluation will also make a qualitative interpretation of quantitative findings, explaining these findings. The mid-term review and mid-line evaluation ought to work in a complementary manner when it comes to analysis of findings. This will be operationalized as follows: - The MTR consultant will be involved in/provide input on the mid-line evaluation data collection tools. - The MTR will make use of the data and analysis of the mid-line evaluation as a basis to design the data collection tools and process. The aim is to focus on findings, observed gaps that require further interpretation and analysis.
Specific questions for this evaluation	The specific questions for the mid-term review align with OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and are listed below. **Relevance** 1. How relevant is the ESPER programme for security governance actors in the Congolese context? 2. How does the ESPER approach relate to (inter)national priorities on stabilisation of the eastern DRC and the efforts of other main players in the security governance sector? What is ESPER's added value? **Strategy/design** 3. What is the quality and coherence of the programme's intervention strategies in relation to the Theory of Change? 4. What strategy adaptations can be suggested? **Management** 5. How is the consortium management set-up perceived by stakeholders involved in ESPER? How does it contribute to advancing the programme's objectives? What can be learned about internal complementarities of the consortium? 6. How is conflict sensitivity managed by the ESPER programme? 7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the collaboration within the programme; within the consortium and with the partners within the programme. 8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of collaboration with other programmes and the donor (EKN)? **Effectiveness** 9. What are the internal and external factors that facilitate or hamper programme planning and implementation? 10. What observable qualitative changes have been influenced by the programme so-far? And did the programme respond effectively? 11. How likely is it that the expected outputs/outcomes will be realised in the years to come? 12. Is the Monitoring & Evaluation system appropriate for measuring the effectiveness of the programme? **Efficiency** 13. How do programme achievements/results relate to expenditures? What efficiencies can be made to enhance value for money? **Sustainability** 14. How well is ownership by key stakeholders at different levels ensured? 15. To what extend can processes and changes sustain beyond support from the ESPER programme? What factors need to be considered to enhance sustainability of the programme?

Evaluation scope and general approach	The review should cover the programme implementation period September 1st 2020 to August 31st 2022. The review should prioritize the use of (innovative) qualitative methods that enable the capturing of observable changes in practices, processes, policies, etc, around inclusive security governance, and that prioritize the participation of key staff and stakeholders. The review should take place according to the following timeline/planning, with the final deadline for delivery and approval of the report set for 30th September 2022. The work is foreseen to take place in three inter-connected phases: <u>Phase 1: Inception phase (July and August)</u> The inception phase will start by a kick-off meeting (remotely) with key staff members of the ESPER team to get introduced to the programme and to discuss the modalities of execution of the evaluation. During the inception phase the consultant(s) should conduct the following: • Initial document/data collection (to be provided by ESPER) and definition of methods of analysis. Information that is available: project proposal, baseline study report, inception phase report, signed collaboration agreements with Congolese state authorities, collaboration framework between VNG International and Cordaid, annual plans Y1 and Y2, annual report Y1 and semi-annual report Y2, results framework and data collection tools, Theory of Change, approved and revised budgets, local security plans, L&A strategy, conflict sensitivity framework, activity reports, etc. • In-depth document analysis (focused on the Evaluation Questions) • Reconstruction of Intervention logic, incl. objectives, specific features and target beneficiaries • Provide advice to the midline evaluation data collection tools executed by the ESPER M&E team; • Participate in analysis of the midline evaluation data gathered by the ESPER M&E team • Methodological design of the MTR Field Phase **Output of Phase 1**: an inception report detailing the first findings and proposing a detailed plan for the field phase. <u>Phase 2: Field Phase</u> (September) During this phase, the consultant(s) will visit the field. Activities should include: • Gathering primary evidence through selected field visits, direct observation, key informant interviews, and other data gathering techniques as appropriate. • Small workshops making use of a qualitative methodology capable to capture observable changes influenced by the ESPER programme **Output of Phase 2**: A list of interviews includes programme stakeholders such as local project teams, experts, partners, beneficiaries (local governments and citizens), as well as external development partners. <u>Phase 3: Synthesis Phase</u> During this phase the consultants will finalize the evaluation report through: • Final analysis of findings (with focus on the Evaluation Questions) • Formulation of the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations • Submission of the draft evaluation report for comments from the different stakeholders

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>

Facilitate an ESPER team workshop to present, discuss/interpret and validate findings;
Finalization of the report based on the comments received and insights from the ESPER workshop.

Output Phase 3: Methodology and presentation for the Comité de Suivi validation; Final evaluation report
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Outputs / Deliverables</td><td>

Inception report and Evaluation work plan
Specific evaluation question matrix
Draft and final report of findings including recommendations,
Final presentations for discussion/validation sessions

</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reporting requirements</td><td>
The evaluation process and reporting occurs according to the following guidelines:

The evaluation team will work in close collaboration with the Programme Manager (lead, VNG International), the ESPER Chief of Party/VNG International country representative (in DRC), the ESPER Deputy Chief of Party/Cordaid, and the ESPER M&E coordinator (Cordaid) to ensure alignment of the activities
The evaluation team will ensure that a proper level of information during and after the activity is provided to the above-mentioned people.
The evaluation team will report directly to the Project Manager (lead, VNG International) and the ESPER Chief of Party.
The evaluation report will obey by internationally accepted quality standards for evaluation processes and reporting (e.g. OECD). Conflict sensitivity is an additional important criterium.
The budget and financial report should follow VNG International guidelines for financial reporting, which are derived from accounting rules and regulations from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These are based on actual costs and documentary proof.

</td></tr>
<tr><td>Provisional planning and implementation</td><td>
<table>
<tr><td>June</td><td>Procurement of the evaluation team</td><td>ESPER</td></tr>
<tr><td>Early July</td><td>Input and advise towards the midline evaluation data collection tools prepared by the ESPER M&E team</td><td>Home-based & partime</td></tr>
<tr><td>Early August</td><td>Participate in a discussion/presentation of the analysis of quantitative midline data by the ESPER M&E team</td><td>Home-based & partime</td></tr>
<tr><td>Early August</td><td>Input and advise towards data collection tools for field-based interpretation of quantitative midline data prepared by the ESPER M&E team</td><td>Home-based & partime</td></tr>
<tr><td>August</td><td>Develop the inception report, including MTR data collection tools and final planning</td><td>Home-based & partime</td></tr>
<tr><td>Late August/early September</td><td>Analysis of the midline report and finalize the data collection tools and planning</td><td>Home-based & partime</td></tr>
<tr><td>September</td><td>MTR with field visit/presence in DR Congo, with a focus on:

- Selected field-visits to the programme implementation zones in the provinces of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu, including all shared ESPER offices (Goma, Bunia, Uvira).to organize key stakeholder interviews/FGD on identified topics of attention derived from the midline data</td><td>DRC</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>
<table>
<tr><td></td><td>- Small workshops making use of a qualitative methodology capable to capture observable changes influenced by the ESPER programme</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Late September</td><td>- Delivery of a draft MTR report
- Facilitate an ESPER team workshop to discuss, further interpret and validate findings and recommendations</td><td>DRC</td></tr>
<tr><td>30 September</td><td colspan="2">Delivery of final MTR report</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Minimum qualifications evaluation team</td><td>The team should be composed of at least two experts, complemented by a team of experts involved in field-based data collection and analysis. For the latter we propose to share profiles of the researchers that have been regularly involved in ESPER field research, which can be complemented by profiles recommended by the experts too.

A Senior Evaluator with at least a Master’s Degree in a domain relevant to the assignment, as well as a minimum of 15 years of working experience, including confirmed international experience in development cooperation in a domain relevant to the assignment (e.g. governance, security). The Senior Evaluator should also have a solid background in evaluation, particularly complexity-aware, qualitative and participatory methodologies. S/he should be able to provide at least two examples of published evaluation work in complex and/or fragile settings, preferably for (local) governance programmes. S/he will act as the Team Leader of this evaluation.

An Associate Evaluator with a university Degree in a domain relevant to the assignment, as well as a minimum of 8 years of general working experience, including confirmed experience in working with local authorities around the themes of local governance and decentralisation. Previous experience in monitoring and evaluation is required.

For both evaluators:
• Experience in DR Congo and the specific programme context (required).
• Familiarity with Dutch development cooperation is an asset
• Strong facilitation skills of meetings/group settings (required)
• Solid analytical and writing skills (required)
• For at least one, fluency in English, for both fluency in French (required), knowledge of Kiswahili is an asset
• For at least one, knowledge of the RBF methodology is an asset</td></tr>
<tr><td>Consultancy offer and budget</td><td>The selection of the consultants will be based on the following:

A Technical proposal (80% of the total grade).

The technical proposal should include the following:
1. Understanding of the assignment, its context, and its complexity (no more than 1 page; 10 points)
2. Approach to the assignment including planning, data collection, analysis, and reporting (no more than 2 pages; 30 points).
3. Past experience with similar assignments (no more than 2 pages, including links or to published work or annexed reports of assignments; 30 points) (a copy of a similar evaluation should be included in the bid, incl. contacts of references)
4. Quality of the team (CV plus no more than 1 page plus appended resumes; 30 points)
(Min. score of 70 points will be applied)

Budget (20% of the total grade)</td></tr>
</table>

	The budget should show the amount of working days spend by the evaluation team according to the breakdown shown in the table below. **Activity** | **Location** | **Senior Evaluator** | **Associate Evaluator** | **Indicative dates** **Inception phase** … | | | | | … | | | | | **Field phase** … | Country 1 | | | | … | | | | | **Synthesis phase** …. | | | | | …. | | | | | **TOTAL** | | | | Aside, the total budget should be calculated based on: - The number of days by the fees of the respective experts - Travel costs (flights, per diem, local travel costs) - Not exceed EUR 38.000, inclusive of all relevant taxes/VAT Offers should be received by email the latest **24th June 2022** COB. Please send your offer to Volkert.Doop@vng.nl, with in CC Nynke.Douma@vng.nl and Nicole.Osuji@vng.nl Upon request an example of a local security plan (PAS) can be obtained, as well as a copy the results framework. This request, as well as other questions pertaining the assignment must be received the latest 16th of June (via the Chief of Party, see below). Answers to the questions will be addressed collectively latest 17th of June 2022.
Place of the evaluation	Democratic Republic of Congo (provinces of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu)
Programme management	**Nynke Douma**: nynke.douma@vng.nl (ESPER Chief of Party, Goma) **Olivier Chibashimba Rukomeza**: olivier.chibashimbarukomeza@cordaid.org (ESPER deputy Chief of Party, Goma) **Evaluation management support**: Lisette.van.t.Klooster@cordaid.org (MEL coordinator Cordaid DRC, Goma) **Volkert Doop**: volkert.doop@vng.nl (ESPER Project Manager, The Hague)