

Annex 1: Data Collection Service Agreement Terms of Reference

1. Partnership objectives

The framework agreement is aiming to achieve the following set of objectives:

- 1- **Deliver high-quality and reliable primary data collection services:** Guarantee the consistent implementation of robust data collection processes that meet agreed methodological standards, ensuring accuracy, reliability, and relevance of the information gathered.
- 2- **Maintain operational flexibility for regular and ad-hoc assignments:** Ensure the ability to respond effectively to both planned and urgent data collection needs, adapting resources and approaches to evolving operational demands.
- 3- **Ensure safe and timely access to local populations in Gaza:** Facilitate efficient and secure access to affected communities, enabling the implementation of data collection activities in a manner that prioritises the safety of both respondents and field staff while adhering to local sensitivities and operational constraints.

2. Overview of the Data Collection Activity

The data collection activities implemented under this agreement may vary significantly in terms of methodology, modality, complexity, duration, geographic coverage, and operational requirements. Activities may include quantitative and qualitative approaches, and may be conducted through in-person, remote, phone-based, or mixed-method modalities depending on the context and operational needs. In general, all of the above-mentioned attributes are typically determined by the contracting authority based on the programmatic needs.

To ensure clear alignment and activity-specific planning ahead of the planned implementation timeline, the Contracting Authority will prepare and share a concise technical overview for each requested activity under this agreement. This overview will serve as a technical annex to the relevant Purchase Order (PO) and will outline the key operational and methodological attributes required for implementation.

The activity overview may include, but is not limited to, the following attributes:

Activity Attribute	Description
Activity Title	Name of the research cycle or data collection activity
Objective(s)	Purpose and intended use of the collected data
Geographic Coverage	Target governorates, districts, or communities
Target Population	Profile of respondents or participants
Data Collection Method	Household surveys, KII, FGD, market assessment, etc.
Modality	In-person, phone-based, remote, or mixed-method
Sampling Approach and Sample Size	Sampling methodology and expected sample size
Geographic Coverage	Number of interviews in each of the governorate, municipality or neighbourhood, site, etc.
Data Collection Tool	Type of questionnaire or instrument to be used

Training Requirements	Required technical training or briefings
Training Duration	Expected duration and format of trainings
Team Composition	Required number and profiles of enumerators/supervisors
Timeline	Planned implementation and submission deadlines
Additional Requirements	Any assignment-specific operational considerations

3. Expectations from the Service Provider and Responsibilities

This section of the terms of reference will explain the general expectations from the Service Provider before and during the implementation of each service under this service agreement. The Data Collection Service Provider shall be fully responsible for the effective planning, management, and execution of all assigned data collection activities under this agreement. The Service Provider is expected to ensure operational readiness, adequate staffing, adherence to methodological standards, compliance with security requirements, and maintenance of high-quality outputs throughout the duration of each assignment.

1. Ensure the **safety and security** of staff deployed to conduct household-level interviews for the assessments during the full contracting period.
2. Ensure **legal registration** and **permission** from relevant authorities to conduct the data collection for any of the activities included in the agreement as required.
3. Inform the Contracting Authority focal points of any security incident affecting enumerator staff within 24 hours.
4. Deploy **the minimum number of qualified enumerator staff** to implement the planned activities, to be confirmed with the Contracting Authority, based on the data collection plan, which will be shared at least one week before the start of the data collection. The staff qualification will be assessed during the enumerators' training, which will be facilitated by the Contracting Authority.

While the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reject proposed enumerators and request their replacement at any stage of the assignment, the Service Provider shall ensure that all personnel deployed for data collection possess, at a minimum, the following skills, qualifications, and operational capacities:

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, particularly when engaging with vulnerable groups.
- Attention to detail and ability to record information accurately.
- Availability to travel within assigned governorates as required across Gaza Strip.
- Ability to work independently and adapt to changing field conditions.
- Basic digital literacy and confidence using smartphone-based data collection tools.
- Familiarity with platforms such as Kobo Toolbox applications.
- Understanding of confidentiality, informed consent, and ethical interviewing practices.
- Awareness of local cultural and social dynamics.
- Familiarity with the assigned area, preferably being from the same governorate or community.
- Use of reliable and functional devices for data collection, with correct settings before interviews begin.
- Professionalism, neutrality, and respectful conduct at all times.

As indicated in the service agreement terms, the Contracting Authority has the right to reject a staff member proposed by the Service Provider, should he/she prove unable to fulfil the above-listed requirements during the enumerators' training.

5. For the phone-based data collection, the Service Provider shall provide the required list of survey/activity respondents in case of phone-based data collection, ensure an ideal response rate and consider rotation to avoid assessment fatigue.
6. The Contracting Authority will not compensate for the enumerators' time when the data collection is on hold or interrupted due to access and security reasons.
7. To the greatest possible extent, the Service Provider should retain the same enumerators who have undergone training throughout the entirety of the data collection process and promptly inform the Contracting Authority if the Service Provider intends to replace any of them for any reason.
8. The Service Provider will ensure having enough human resources capacity to deploy gender-balanced pairs of enumerators to conduct household-level surveys if this is explicitly requested by the contracting authority.
9. The Service Provider shall provide staff with the necessary IT equipment (phone devices) to perform the training and data collection activities. The equipment provided shall fulfil the minimum quantity and quality requirements.
10. The Service Provider is responsible for securing an adequate and suitable venue for the enumerators' training, equipped with solid and adequate internet connectivity to allow for remote training.
11. The Service Provider's enumeration team should participate in the data collection tool and other employed instruments' pilot testing following the training and engage in a feedback session to exchange practical experiences that were collected during the pilot.
12. The Service Provider and their enumeration team are expected to share their context-related feedback on the data collection tools and instruments during the training and engage in a constructive conversation to eliminate any possible context-sensitive issues.
13. The Service Provider is responsible for providing a solid and reliable internet connection to allow for a remote training setting at all venues.
14. The Service Provider is expected to make the full enumeration team and their supervision personnel available for ad-hoc sessions to discuss data quality-related issues. Such sessions will typically be planned for early morning or towards the end of the working hours, and during a normal data collection working day. The data quality-related sessions normally take between 30 minutes and one hour.
15. The Contracting Authority should consider in their staffing plan the possibilities of operational delays or a full pause as a result of technical faults, security situation, severe data quality issues or other out-of-control circumstances.
16. The Service Provider is responsible for establishing reliable and direct communication channels between the enumeration team and the contracting authority's focal point to allow for real-time communications and addressing of inquiries as they arise during the implementation days and data collection working hours.

17. The Service Provider will ensure timely response to requests for clarification and additional information related to the data cleaning process throughout the service contract duration:
 - 17.1. The Service Provider shall promptly and, in any event, no later than 48 hours, address all requests for clarification related to the data cleaning of the submitted interviews:
 - 17.2. The Service Provider shall provide all necessary information related to the data collection and challenges identified in terms of security or tool deployment, as per the Contracting Authority's request.
18. Ensure no data is saved or recorded other than through the Kobo and in line with the data collection procedures specified in the Partner-specific Data Collection Plan.

4. Responsibilities of the Contracting Authority

The Contracting Authority will provide the technical leadership, operational guidance, and oversight necessary to ensure the effective implementation of all activities under this agreement. Its responsibilities include the following:

1. Develop and configure all data collection tools, questionnaires, and supporting materials required for implementation.
2. Conduct any technical preparations relevant to the activity, including testing, piloting, or refinement of tools and processes.
3. Develop and communicate the data collection workplan with the Service Provider.
4. Deliver training sessions and technical training for enumerators and supervisors on methodologies, tools, and quality standards.
5. Monitor incoming data, perform regular data checking processes, and communicate data quality flags or corrective actions promptly as they are spotted.
6. Provide ongoing technical support and clarification, limited to the ongoing data collection activity, throughout the implementation period as needed and as requested by the enumeration team and their supervisors.
7. To ensure safe operations and support the Service Provider's duty of care for their staff, the contracting authority will share relevant security-related information and updates, limited to what is typically shared with its field staff, during implementation days to support safe and informed field operations.
8. Maintain regular communication and coordination with the Service Provider to address operational challenges and ensure alignment on expectations.

5. Data Protection and Data Privacy Compliance Requirements

This section outlines comprehensive measures and guidelines aimed at safeguarding data integrity, confidentiality, and privacy throughout the duration of the agreement. By establishing clear expectations and responsibilities regarding data protection and compliance, the Service Provider is expected to uphold the principles of transparency, fairness, and accountability during the implementation of the data collection services. This section of the terms of reference and the full adherence to its content are very important, given the fact that ensuring robust data protection and compliance with relevant regulations is paramount in this contractual agreement that involves the handling of sensitive data.

Data Protection

TheService Provider must ensure full compliance with relevant data protection regulations, including but not limited to the Contracting Authority data privacy and security regulations. This includes understanding and adhering to principles such as lawfulness, fairness, and transparency in data collection, as well as respecting individuals' rights regarding their personal data.

Confidentiality

TheService Provider must agree to maintain the confidentiality of all data collected during the provision of services under this agreement. This includes implementing robust security measures to prevent unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration, or destruction of the data. Confidentiality extends to both the data itself, and any information or insights derived from the data.

Security Measures

TheService Provider shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure the security of the data during the collection process. This includes but is not limited to erasing the finalised questionnaires, which were permanently removed after submission. TheService Provider shall not collect any personally identifiable information besides what is required in the data collection instruments and tools. TheService Provider shall not allow unauthorised access to the collected data. For the purposes of some activities, theService Provider will need to collect and store key informant phone numbers, names and occupation, which requires a safe and high level of data storage and privacy.

Data Ownership

The contracting authority retains full ownership of the data collected, unless certain rights or licenses are granted to theService Provider for specific work-related purposes. Any use of the data beyond the scope of the agreement must be expressly authorised by the contracting authority.

Informed Consent and Permissions

TheService Provider shall ensure that all data collection activities are conducted in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing consent and permissions. This includes obtaining valid informed consent from individuals before collecting their personal data and providing clear and transparent information about the purposes of data collection and any third parties involved. TheService Provider is responsible for obtaining the required permissions from the relevant local authorities to allow the data collection, and the contracting authority will be responsible for providing the required documentation to facilitate the process.

Data Quality

TheService Provider must take measures to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and reliability of the data collected. This includes implementing quality control processes, including but not limited to spot checks on the enumerators, to detect and correct errors or inconsistencies in the data, as well as documenting any data quality issues or matters to be communicated with the contracting authority to maintain an auditable trail of data provenance and integrity.

Audits and third-party monitoring (TPM)

The contracting authority reserves the right to conduct periodic audits or reviews of theService Provider's performance and compliance with the terms of this agreement and applicable data protection laws and regulations. TheService Provider shall cooperate fully with any such reviews, providing access to relevant documentation and personnel as required.

Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM)

During the implementation of the data collection services, theService Provider is committed to maintaining a robust and functional Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM). This mechanism will serve as a vital avenue for stakeholders to report any concerns or provide feedback regarding the data collection process. TheService Provider will ensure that the CRM remains operational and accessible throughout the duration of the data collection service provision, facilitating responses to any issues raised. By upholding the integrity of the CRM, theService Provider aims to foster accountability, transparency, and trust among all stakeholders involved in the data collection process.

6. Service Completion Verification

This section of the ToR will explain the verification process of each service, which will be used by the Contracting Authority to decide on the service completion status.

TheService Provider shall implement and maintain a list of minimum standards for each service that it provides to the Contracting Authority under this agreement. The minimum standards listed in the table below shall specify the quality, quantity, timeliness and other criteria that theService Provider shall meet or exceed in performing the services. The minimum standards shall be subject to the approval of the Contracting Authority and may be revised from time to time as required and communicated in writing by the Contracting Authority.

The payment for each service unit shall be determined based on the status of the service as per the minimum standards stated for each service type. If theService Provider delivers the service unit in accordance with or above the minimum standards, theService Provider shall be entitled to receive the full payment for that service unit as specified in the table of prices within the service agreement. If theService Provider fails to deliver the service unit in accordance with the minimum standards, theService Provider shall be subject to a reduction or withholding of payment for that service unit, as determined by the Contracting Authority in its sole discretion, taking into account the nature and extent of the non-compliance and its impact on the Contracting Authority's objectives and operations.

Table 1: The minimum standards and requirements for each service unit to be considered eligible

Service Item	Minimum standards
Household-level interview	1- Complete the assigned household-level interviews in accordance with the methodology, sampling approach, and sample provided by the contracting authority. 2- Conduct the assigned interviews within the agreed coverage and among the communities of interest specified by the contracting authority in the relevant order form, following the agreed non-response and replacement procedures. 3- Provide the respondent with the approved introduction and obtain informed consent in accordance with the agreed consent procedure. Where follow-up or monitoring rounds are part of the research activity, the respondent shall be informed accordingly as part of the consent process.

	4- Conduct and submit all completed interviews to the designated cloud server within the timeframe specified by the contracting authority for each activity or round. 5- Ensure that each interview meets the agreed data-quality and falsification criteria. Interviews identified as invalid or falsified shall not be considered successful and shall be replaced in accordance with the agreed replacement procedure. 6- Ensure that interview durations are consistent with the expected duration specified in the relevant order form. Interview duration shall be assessed using timestamps recorded by the data-collection tool and may be used as part of the data-quality verification process. 7- Process and respond to data-quality follow-up requests from the contracting authority within 24 hours of receiving the request, including providing clarifications or conducting follow-up with the relevant respondent where required. 8- As requested by the contracting authority, provide the required number of relevant staff members to participate in contextualization or debriefing sessions following the data-collection round. 9- Where explicitly requested for a specific activity and permitted by the approved research and consent procedures, collect the respondent's phone number and at least one alternative household phone number, with the aim of obtaining two contact numbers for follow-up purposes.
Key informant interview	1- Conduct interviews with key informants who meet the profile and eligibility criteria specified by the contracting authority for the relevant research activity. 2- Conduct the assigned interviews within the agreed coverage and among the communities of interest specified by the contracting authority in the relevant order form. 3- Provide the respondent with the approved introduction and obtain informed consent in accordance with the agreed consent procedure prior to the interview. 4- Conduct and submit all completed interviews to the designated cloud server within the timeframe specified by the contracting authority for each activity or round. 5- Ensure that each interview meets the agreed data-quality and falsification criteria. Interviews identified as invalid or falsified shall not be considered successful and shall be replaced in accordance with the agreed replacement procedure, where applicable. 6- Ensure that interview durations are consistent with the expected duration specified in the relevant order form. Interview duration shall be assessed using timestamps recorded by the data-collection tool and may be used as part of the data-quality verification process. 7- Process and respond to data-quality follow-up requests from the contracting authority within 48 hours of receiving the request, including providing clarifications or conducting follow-up with the relevant respondent where required. 8- As requested by the contracting authority, provide the required number of relevant staff members to participate in contextualization or debriefing sessions following the data-collection activity.

Market-based Key informant interview (Vendors)	1- Conduct interviews with vendors who meet the profile and eligibility criteria specified by the contracting authority for the relevant research activity. 2- Conduct the assigned interviews within the agreed coverage and among the communities of interest and/or markets specified by the contracting authority 3- Provide the respondent with the approved introduction and obtain informed consent in accordance with the agreed consent procedure before the interview. 4- Conduct and submit all completed interviews to the designated cloud server within the timeframe specified by the contracting authority for each activity or round. 5- Ensure that each interview meets the agreed data-quality and falsification criteria. Interviews identified as invalid or falsified shall not be considered successful and shall be replaced in accordance with the agreed replacement procedure, where applicable. 6- Ensure that interview durations are consistent with the expected duration specified in the relevant order form. Interview duration shall be assessed using timestamps recorded by the data-collection tool and may be used as part of the data-quality verification process. 7- Process and respond to data-quality follow-up requests from the contracting authority within 48 hours of receiving the request, including providing clarifications or conducting follow-up with the relevant vendor where required. 8- As requested by the contracting authority, provide the required number of relevant staff members to participate in contextualization or debriefing sessions following the data-collection activity.
Focus group discussion (FGD)	1- Identify and recruit FGD participants who meet the eligibility and participant selection criteria specified by the contracting authority for the relevant research activity. 2- Provide two suitably skilled staff members for each FGD: one facilitator and one scribe/note-taker, as required by the research activity. 3- Provide participants with the approved introduction and obtain informed consent in accordance with the agreed consent procedure prior to the FGD. 4- Submit a complete and accurate script in Arabic for each completed FGD to the contracting authority within 24 hours of the session, while securely retaining the original notes and supporting materials until completion of the relevant activity, or as otherwise instructed by the contracting authority. 5- 5. For mapping FGDs, provide the stationery and other materials required in accordance with the agreed mapping approach. 6- 6. Ensure the availability of the relevant FGD staff for a debriefing session with the contracting authority's technical focal point, where requested, to clarify the discussion, provide contextual information, and address additional probing requirements.

Training sessions for the research activity purposes	1- Provide the required number of enumerators at the training as requested by the contracting authority during the preparation phase. 2- Ensure that the assigned enumerators meet the staffing requirements communicated by the contracting authority and are available for the agreed data-collection period. 3- Provide suitable training venue(s), with adequate internet connectivity, electricity, equipment, devices, and other materials required for the training, as agreed with the contracting authority. 4- Ensure that all assigned enumerators attend and complete the full training, including all mandatory exercises, practical activities, and data-collection tool/application training. 5- Ensure that all enumerators complete the pre- and post-technical tests and any required practical assessments, where applicable. 6- Ensure that only enumerators who have completed the required training and practical exercises are deployed for data collection. 7- Replace or retrain any enumerator who does not complete the required training or is not considered ready for deployment, as requested by the contracting authority. 8- Maintain and provide, upon request, the final list of trained enumerators, attendance records, test results, and other relevant documentation required to verify completion of the training.
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