

## **Terms of Reference for the Caritas Crisis Monitoring Report 2013**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Context / Background**

Caritas Europa is a network of 49 member organisations in 46 European countries. Caritas is present and active in every country in Europe, with well-developed national, sub-national and locally based structures assisting the poor at grass roots level. As major non-statutory providers of social services, Caritas member organisations have been extremely concerned about the way in which the EU's economic crisis is impacting on the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. The official response of governments to the economic crisis has been to implement austerity programmes at national level that involve deep cuts to funding for essential public services and welfare systems, thus increasing the gap between rich and poor and causing great hardship for vulnerable groups. Of particular concern to Caritas have been the deteriorating social and economic conditions in key 'programme countries' covered by IMF/ECB/EC Agreements - Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain as well as Italy, formally speaking not a programme country, but heavily impacted by the crisis.

The financial assistance provided to programme countries by the IMF/ECB/EC requires that short-term, and fairly drastic fiscal and financial reforms are implemented, cutting public expenditure in many areas including pensions, healthcare, labour, education and social welfare. Furthermore, although the principle of protecting the vulnerable is included in the Memoranda of Understanding signed by the governments of these countries, in reality the policies implemented to meet programme targets generally place a disproportionate burden of the fiscal adjustment on persons at risk or in situations of poverty and vulnerability.

#### **1.2 The Caritas Crisis Monitoring Report 2012**

The Caritas Crisis Monitoring Report 2012 entitled "The Impact of the European Crisis" was the first publication of its kind. Co-financed by the European Commission through the PROGRESS programme for employment and social solidarity, it was an attempt by Caritas as an NGO and major non-statutory service provider fighting poverty and social exclusion to document the cumulative impacts of the economic crisis on the poor and vulnerable in five programme countries, with a particular focus on the impact of austerity measures on these groups. The report, part of the INCLUSION project managed by Caritas Europa Secretariat, monitored the impact of the crisis on employment/active inclusion and welfare systems in the Member States examined. The report also attempted to identify good practices which served to support

individuals and families in poverty during the crisis, and to propose alternative policy proposals and initiatives to those based on an austerity approach. The focus of the report was not only on the groups that have traditionally experienced poverty but also on the “new poor”- those who have managed well in the past but whose situation has sharply deteriorated. In keeping with the commitment of Caritas to involve people experiencing poverty as much as possible in efforts to tackle and overcome their poverty, the Caritas Crisis Monitoring report 2012 also reflected the voices and testimonials of those struggling with poverty and social exclusion.

The Caritas network decided to produce a ‘crisis monitoring’ report on an annual basis for the duration of the crisis. The focus of the on-going monitoring activities will be on the impact of the crisis on employment/active inclusion and welfare systems in the Member States examined, and on the way in which innovative policies in these key policy areas can be used to prevent poverty - particularly in times of economic crisis - and to protect the most vulnerable members of society.

## **2. Terms of Reference for the 2013 Report**

- (i)** The overall **objective** is to provide a basis for Caritas advocacy on a national and European level seeking more appropriate short and long term policy responses to the crisis, building on the work of the Caritas Crisis-Monitoring Report 2012.
- (ii)** The 2013 report should **document** the social and economic impact of the crisis and austerity measures on seven countries including the two new countries of Cyprus and Romania, and in particular on the poorest and most vulnerable members of these societies.
- (iii)** The **focus** of the report should be on the groups that have traditionally experienced poverty, as well as the “new poor” (ie those who have managed well in the past but whose situation has sharply deteriorated due to the crisis and austerity measures), from the perspective of child and family poverty. It should examine the circumstances of children in poverty and their families, as this is a priority issue for the Caritas NRP process and for its annual Shadow Report.
- (iv)** The report should **evaluate** the social and economic conditions in the seven countries from the perspective of the EU’s Active Inclusion Policy Framework, and its three pillars: (i) Access to adequate income and resources (i) Access to quality and affordable services (iii) Access to the labour market. The latter should be expanded by the authors of the report to include different forms of work (including unpaid work) and other kinds of social participation/social inclusion.

- (v) The report should be **based on** relevant EUROSTAT and national social and economic data and on data gathered by Caritas Member Organisations from each of the seven countries. The provider that is successful in being awarded the tender will liaise regularly with these Caritas Member Organisations from June to December 2013 to support them in identifying and collating the data required.
- (vi) The 2013 Crisis Monitoring Report should feature significant **programmes and interventions** delivered by Caritas Member Organisations in helping to protect vulnerable groups against the worst impacts of the crisis in their countries. These interventions include basic material assistance, financial counselling and micro loans, family support, legal counselling and representation, shelter and accommodation services, care services, vocational training and education initiatives, employment, social economy and self-employment initiatives amongst others.
- (vii) In keeping with the commitment of Caritas Europa and its MOs to involve people experiencing poverty as much as possible as active participants in efforts to tackle and overcome their poverty, the Crisis Monitoring Report 2013 should directly reflect the **voices and the testimonials** of those struggling with poverty and social exclusion. These testimonials are written from the perspective of the interviewed people experiencing poverty, and a maximum of two testimonials per country should feature in each of the country reports.
- (viii) The report should be informed by the principles of **Catholic Social Teaching**. References to CST, relevant publications and other documents should be provided where appropriate.
- (ix) The 2013 Crisis Monitoring Report will include a new section on **“Policy Frameworks for the Future”** which will promote innovative and sustainable systemic reforms that could be undertaken by the EU and its Member States. These proposals for reform will concern policy areas such as Monetary & Fiscal Policy, Welfare Policy, and Employment and Work, The reforms proposed will be part of an overall approach to sustainable systemic economic and social change where the European Union is concerned. The reforms proposed will, in line with the Catholic Social Teaching, be grounded in the research and analysis of a number of academics of repute who are linked with the Caritas Network and recognised as leading thinkers in their fields.
- (x) The 2013 report should yield a number of conclusions and **policy recommendations** that can be used by Caritas to advocate for sustainable policy options, targeted both at national governments and EU institutions. In particular the report should frame some of its key recommendations in the light of the

upcoming European Parliament elections in June 2014 and the appointment of a new EU Commission later that year.

### **3. Core Tasks**

The core tasks to be completed by the consultancy that successfully bids for the tender include:

- Compile a crisis monitoring report according to the specifications provided analyse the main problems and trends, and draw policy conclusions. Propose short, medium and long-term recommendations that can form the basis of Caritas advocacy campaigns targeted at national governments, EU institutions and the IMF with a special focus on the European Parliament elections in 2014 and the formation of a new Commission later that year.
- Attend an initial meeting in Brussels with all seven Member Organisations involved to agree on the implementation of the task
- Liaise regularly on an individual basis with the seven MOs to respond to data received and request additional data if necessary (ongoing)
- Participate in regular skype meetings organised by the Caritas Europa Secretariat to update CE & the MOs involved on progress, to clarify issues and to seek shared solutions to any difficulties being encountered (monthly).
- Collate and analyse the data forwarded by MOs, having subjected it to necessary quality control (ongoing)
- Examine the NRPs and National Social Reports existing for the seven countries being examined and incorporate any important data/findings from these reports into the crisis monitoring report in close consultation with the CE Secretariat (ongoing)
- Examine the Memoranda of Understanding signed by the governments of the programme countries and assess the impact of the different elements of the MOU's on the social conditions in each country, with a particular emphasis on Ireland, Greece and Romania (ongoing)
- Interview and/or seek written contributions from academic experts identified by Caritas Europa for the "Policy Frameworks for the Future" section of the 2013 Crisis Monitoring Report (June/July/Aug/Sep 2013)
- Track any changes in the socio-economic profiles of the five countries that were examined in the Crisis Monitoring Report 2012 (ongoing)

- Provide a more in-depth assessment of the causes of the crisis in Romania and Cyprus, and how the EU's response to them reflects any changes or evolution in its thinking about the most appropriate way to respond to countries in crisis. (ongoing)
- Submit final draft of 2013 report to the CE Secretariat ( Nov 2013)
- Carry out any edits of the final draft that are requested by the CE Secretariat (Dec 2013)
- Participate in public launch of Crisis Monitoring Report 2013

#### **4. Deliverables:**

By **Mid December 2013** the consultant will have prepared:

A Caritas Crisis-Monitoring Report which examines the social and economic impact of the crisis and austerity measures on poverty levels in each of the seven Member States that are programme countries (with a more in-depth examination of the situation in Cyprus and Romania), and in particular on the poorest and most vulnerable members of these societies.

The structure of the report will be as follows:

##### **Part One: The European Crisis - Introduction**

This section will contain a brief overview of the causes of the economic crisis in the European Union, and its social and economic impacts. This section should draw on recognised data sources for EU-wide data, trends etc. The section should also briefly outline the official response of EU institutions to the crisis, in particular as they relate to the seven countries examined countries.

##### **Part Two : The impact of the crisis – country by country analysis**

This section should deal with each of the seven countries on an individual basis. It should briefly outline the economic and social circumstances in each of these countries before the crisis occurred, particularly where Cyprus and Romania are concerned. Where five countries previously examined by the 2012 Crisis Monitoring Report are concerned it should particularly focus on any changes that have taken place since the report was produced. It should interrogate each of the main economic and social indicators for these countries (particularly in relation to employment and welfare systems) and comment briefly on the implications of any changes in relation to these indicators since the crisis began.

### **Part Three : The Caritas response**

This section should describe the full range of programmes and initiatives implemented by Caritas member organisations, and other Civil Society Organisations where appropriate, in the seven programme countries since the crisis began. It should comment on the effect of these programmes/initiatives in assisting people experiencing poverty to cope since the crisis began, should identify good practices and challenges faced, and should directly reflect – in as far as possible - the voices and testimonials of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

### **Part Four : Policy Frameworks for the Future**

This section will promote proposals for innovative and systemic reforms that could be undertaken by the EU and its Member States in the future. These proposals for reform will concern policy areas such as Monetary & Fiscal Policy, Welfare Policy and Employment and Work, amongst others. The reforms proposed will be of a kind that could not be implemented at present given the constraints posed by current EU treaties. The reforms will have the potential to complement each other and to be part of an overall approach to systemic economic and social change where the European Union is concerned. They will be grounded in the research and analysis of a number of academics of repute who are recognised as leading thinkers in their fields and will be identified by Caritas Europa.

### **Part Five : Conclusions and Recommendations**

This section should bring together the main findings from each of the seven countries examined, particularly where the impact of the crisis on employment and welfare systems in those states is concerned, and the extent to which these systems were able to protect vulnerable groups and prevent a significant increase in poverty levels. The section should also provide the main conclusions of the study and should formulate a set of recommendations which can form the basis for Caritas advocacy initiatives, with a particular focus on the European Parliament elections in June 2014 and the formation of a new EU Commission later that year. The format should be similar to the relevant section of the Crisis Monitoring Report 2012 in which recommendations were targeted at European decision-makers, national and local governments and civil society. This section of the 2013 report should also address the role and commitment of Caritas.

## 5. Required Profile:

The service provider will:

- Have proven, in-depth knowledge of the EU social policy environment, including the EU 2020 strategy, and a clear understanding of the process related to the national reform programmes (NRP), Social OMC Process and National Social Reports
- Demonstrate that he/she has previously conducted research in the area of EU social policy
- Have demonstrated capacity of elaborating quantitative and qualitative data
- Have previously been involved in similar processes and can demonstrate cooperation with EU governments and major NGOs in this policy area;
- Have knowledge of and - preferably – experience with the Caritas Ethos, ideally through having worked with National Caritas Member Organisations;
- Have excellent reporting skills in English.

We estimate that in **2013** an average of 60 **person** days in total will be needed for delivering consultant's services. The offer value should be not more than **18,000 EUR** (incl. all costs related to delivering the services specified in the ToR).

If interested in this assignment, please send us:

- A brief technical note reflecting your understanding of tasks and the methodology you foresee to apply;
- Your financial offer based on the number of person days that you intend to spend on this assignment as well as any travelling costs to be foreseen;
- The justification of how your profile matches the above requirements.

Above will be submitted by e-mail to Caritas Europa by the deadline of **noon on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May** to the following address: [JNunoMayer@caritas-europa.org](mailto:JNunoMayer@caritas-europa.org)



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