Hazard – Exposure – Vulnerability – Capacity (HEVC) Assessment in Muthana Terms of Reference (ToR)

Overview

Project title:	Strengthening National and Local Early Warning Systems (EWS) and Community Resilience to Natural Hazards in Iraq
Summary of project (max 300 words):	This action aims to strengthen disaster risk preparedness and reduce the exposure and vulnerability of communities in high-risk areas of southern Iraq, particularly in Thi Qar and Muthana Governorates, through three complementary components. First, it will enhance monitoring of climate-induced displacement by strengthening systems that track livelihood losses, migration pressures, and early warning signs of displacement linked to droughts, heat waves, and sandstorms, enabling earlier identification of critical hotspots and more timely preventive action. Second, it will build the capacities of national and local authorities and first responders through training, coordinated planning, and improved data-sharing, strengthening their ability to interpret early warning information and activate appropriate preparedness and response measures. Third, it will support at-risk communities by combining community-level disaster risk reduction measures, climate-resilient livelihood support for farmers, livestock herders, and women, and targeted awareness-raising, alongside clearer preparedness and response protocols that enable both proactive action and rapid response to climate shocks. Together, these components aim to reduce livelihood losses, limit negative coping strategies, and mitigate climate-related displacement pressures.
Location and region:	Muthana, Iraq
Coordinator/Manager (internal):	TBD - Project Coordinator Essam Al Rubaie - Programme Manager
Country Director/Programme Manager:	Rana Gorges - Iraq Country Director
Lead assessors (internal/external):	External Consultant/Consultancy Firm
Internal ToR reviewers:	Jennifer Hooker – Regional Programme Funding Manager Rana Gorges – Country Director
Project implementer (who is doing the project):	Tearfund Iraq

1. Background of the project

a) Project Overview

This action aims to improve disaster risk preparedness and reduce the exposure and vulnerability of communities living in at-risk areas of southern Iraq, particularly in the Thi- Qar and Muthana Governorates. It is structured around three complementary components that, together, address the causes and consequences of climate-related risks.

The first component focuses on monitoring climate-induced population displacement. The action strengthens systems for monitoring livelihood losses, migration pressures, and early signs of displacement in communities affected by droughts, and sandstorms. By improving institutional understanding of emerging risks and identifying potential critical areas, this monitoring enables authorities and partners to anticipate urgent assistance needs to prevent forced displacement.

The second component strengthens the institutional capacities of national and local authorities, as well as first responders. Through training, coordinated planning, and improved data-sharing mechanisms, the project enhances the capacity of institutions to interpret early warning information, activate proactive measures, and implement effective response protocols. This improved institutional preparedness enables authorities to guide and support communities more effectively during recurring climate shocks.

The third component aims to improve the preparedness of populations most affected by climate vulnerabilities. This involves combining community-level disaster risk reduction measures with support for climate-resilient livelihoods for farmers, livestock herders, and women whose incomes depend on climate-sensitive activities, while also conducting targeted awareness-raising activities. In this context, preparedness encompasses emergency planning, capacity building, and disaster response protocols, which differ from proactive measures and early warning systems. Proactive measures activate pre-agreed actions, such as livestock support or water management interventions, before risks fully materialize. Early warning systems, on the other hand, ensure that communities and authorities receive timely and actionable alerts in the event of droughts, heat waves, desertification, and sandstorms.

Together, these efforts help reduce livelihood losses, limit harmful adaptation strategies, and mitigate migration pressures.

To inform components two and three in Muthana, Tearfund is seeking an external agency to conduct a hazard – exposure – vulnerability – capacity (HEVC) assessment in Muthana.

b) Project Partners

The project was implemented by:

- **Tearfund Iraq**: A leading organization with significant experience in humanitarian response and environmental and economic sustainability projects in Iraq, coordinating implementation and ensuring strategic alignment while implementing activities under Result 2: Enhanced capacity of

governmental institutions in Thiqar and Muthana to lead disaster preparedness and response to natural disasters, including strengthened operational capacities of first responders.

The project is also in consortium with Action Against Hunger and Aid Gate Organization.

c) Project Logical Hierarchy

Overall Goal:
To improve disaster risk preparedness, reducing exposure and vulnerability of communities via evidence-based information products and increased coordination in hazard-prone areas in central and south of Iraq

Outcome 1:
Strengthen the Iraqi government's capacity to manage disaster impacts and develop robust Early warning and anticipatory actions by enhancing the national climate early warning system with a climate monitoring dashboard and an anticipatory model

Outcome 2:
Enhanced capacity of governmental institutions in Thi-Qar and Muthana to lead disaster preparedness and response to natural disasters, including strengthened operational capacities of first responders.

Outcome 3:

Enhanced preparedness and resilience of exposed and vulnerable communities to natural hazards through improved resource management, strengthened adaptation capacities, and implementation of nature-based solutions

2. Goal and Objectives of HEVC Assessment

The overall goal of the Hazard–Exposure–Vulnerability–Capacity (HEVC) Assessment is to generate an evidence base to strengthen disaster preparedness and climate resilience in selected communities in Muthana Governorate. The assessment will identify and analyse priority climate-related hazards, patterns of exposure, vulnerabilities, existing coping capacities, and institutional preparedness mechanisms in order to inform locally appropriate and evidence-driven preparedness and resilience interventions.

The assessment will serve as the primary analytical foundation for the development of Disaster Readiness Protocols (DRPs) for two priority hazards in Muthana Governorate and will inform the design and targeting of nature-based and community-level resilience interventions under Outcome 3 of the project.

The HEVC Assessment will pursue the following objectives:

- Identify and analyse priority climate-related hazards affecting target communities in Muthana Governorate, with particular attention to recurrent and emerging risks associated with drought, heat waves, desertification, sandstorms, and related environmental stressors.
- Assess community exposure and vulnerability to identified hazards by examining livelihood systems, environmental conditions, social and economic vulnerabilities, displacement pressures, and the

differential impacts on vulnerable population groups, including women, farmers, livestock herders, and climate-sensitive livelihoods.

- Map existing coping, preparedness, and response capacities at community and institutional levels, including existing disaster preparedness mechanisms, local knowledge systems, coordination structures, and the capacities of local authorities and first responders.
- Identify geographic areas, communities, and population groups at highest risk, including the drivers and underlying factors contributing to heightened vulnerability and reduced adaptive capacity.
- Generate evidence to support the development of Disaster Readiness Protocols (DRPs) for two priority hazards in Muthana Governorate, including actionable recommendations to support preparedness planning, response activation, and coordination between local authorities and communities.
- Inform the design and targeting of nature-based and community-level resilience interventions under Outcome 3, including recommendations for disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation measures that reduce exposure, strengthen livelihoods, and improve preparedness. (consider use of NEAT+ tool in any potential project design).
- Provide practical recommendations for local authorities and project stakeholders to strengthen disaster preparedness, community resilience, and institutional coordination in response to recurrent climate-related risks.

3. HEVC Questions

As an example, the assessment will examine the following aspects (*note that the questions provided are a guide for this ToR framework and may be subject to change during the project*):

1. Hazard Profile and Risk Context

- What are the primary climate-related hazards affecting target communities in Muthana Governorate, including drought, heat waves, desertification, sandstorms, and other environmental stressors?
- What are the frequency, severity, seasonality, geographic distribution, and projected trends of these hazards?
- Which hazards pose the greatest risks to communities, livelihoods, infrastructure, and service systems, and why?
- What environmental, climatic, and socio-economic factors exacerbate disaster risks in the target areas?

2. Exposure and Geographic Risk

- Which communities, geographic areas, assets, infrastructure, and livelihood systems are most exposed to identified hazards?
- Which populations are most likely to experience livelihood disruption, displacement pressures, or reduced access to basic services due to climate-related shocks?
- How does exposure vary across different locations, livelihood groups, and population demographics?

3. Vulnerability Analysis

- What social, economic, environmental, and institutional factors increase vulnerability to identified hazards?

- How are vulnerable population groups—including women, farmers, livestock herders, female-headed households, youth, older persons, and people with disabilities—differentially affected?
- What livelihood, protection, food security, health, or water-related vulnerabilities increase disaster risk?
- What harmful coping strategies or negative adaptation practices emerge in response to repeated climate-related shocks?

4. Capacity and Preparedness Assessment

- What coping capacities, preparedness mechanisms, and resilience strategies currently exist at household, community, and institutional levels?
- What disaster preparedness systems, contingency arrangements, and coordination mechanisms are currently in place?
- What capacities and gaps exist among local authorities, first responders, and community structures to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to identified hazards?
- What traditional, local, or indigenous knowledge systems support climate adaptation and preparedness?

5. Disaster Readiness Protocol (DRP) Development

- Which two hazards should be prioritised for the development of Disaster Readiness Protocols (DRPs), based on risk severity, exposure, vulnerability, feasibility, and stakeholder priorities?
- What preparedness, coordination, and response actions should be activated before, during, and after the onset of these hazards?
- What actors, roles, responsibilities, triggers, communication channels, and coordination mechanisms should be included in the DRPs?
- What practical measures can improve preparedness and reduce disaster impacts at both community and institutional levels?

6. Nature-Based and Community Resilience Solutions

- What nature-based, ecosystem-based, and community-level disaster risk reduction measures are feasible and appropriate within the Muthana context?
- Which interventions are likely to reduce vulnerability, strengthen livelihoods, improve climate resilience, and mitigate displacement pressures?
- How can interventions be tailored to the needs of climate-sensitive livelihood groups, particularly farmers, livestock herders, and women?

7. Recommendations and Forward Planning

- What evidence-based recommendations should be prioritised to strengthen disaster preparedness, institutional coordination, and community resilience?
- What actions should be prioritised by local authorities, communities, and project stakeholders to reduce climate-related disaster risks over time?

4. HEVC Scope

The Hazard–Exposure–Vulnerability–Capacity (HEVC) Assessment will be conducted in Muthana Governorate, with a primary geographic focus on the district and surrounding communities of Samawah. The assessment is expected to generate a comprehensive understanding of climate-related disaster risks, vulnerabilities, capacities, and preparedness systems affecting at-risk populations in the target area.

The scope of the assessment shall include a holistic analysis of climate-related hazards and their impacts on communities, livelihoods, institutions, and ecosystems. Particular attention should be given to recurrent and emerging climate-related risks relevant to the governorate, including drought, heat waves, desertification, sandstorms, water scarcity, and related environmental stressors. The assessment should examine the interaction between hazards, livelihood vulnerability, environmental degradation, migration and displacement pressures, institutional preparedness, and community coping mechanisms.

The assessment shall adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to ensure robust triangulation of findings. The external agency is expected to design and implement an appropriate methodology that generates representative, credible, and actionable findings.

The assessment should adopt a community-centred and participatory approach, ensuring that the perspectives of affected populations—particularly women, farmers, livestock herders, youth, and other vulnerable or climate-sensitive groups—are adequately represented in the analysis.

The assignment is expected to take place between December 2026 and April 2027, inclusive of inception, data collection, analysis, validation, reporting, and final deliverables. The external agency will be expected to propose a realistic timeline and methodology to complete all components of the assessment within this implementation period.

5. Users of HEVC Report

The findings and outputs of the HEVC Assessment will be used by multiple stakeholders to strengthen disaster preparedness, climate resilience, and evidence-based planning in Muthana Governorate. The primary users of the assessment are expected to include:

- Tearfund programme and technical teams, who will use the findings to inform programme design, implementation, and adaptive management, particularly the development of Disaster Readiness Protocols (DRPs) for two priority hazards and the design of community-level and nature-based resilience interventions delivered by the local partner under Outcome 3.
- Relevant national and sub-national government institutions, including governorate authorities, technical ministries, disaster management actors, and first responders operating in Muthana Governorate, who may use the findings to strengthen preparedness planning, coordination, risk reduction, and response mechanisms.
- Local communities and community-level structures, including community leaders, women's groups, farmer groups, livestock herders, and other vulnerable populations, who may benefit from preparedness measures, community planning processes, and resilience interventions informed by the assessment findings.
- Project partners and implementing stakeholders engaged in climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, livelihood recovery, and community preparedness activities, who may use the evidence to guide implementation priorities and coordination efforts.
- Donors and external stakeholders supporting climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, displacement prevention, and resilience programming, who may use the findings to understand contextual risks, intervention priorities, and programme rationale.

The HEVC Assessment report is expected to serve as both a strategic and operational document, providing an evidence base for preparedness planning and programme design, while also offering practical

recommendations to strengthen coordination, resilience, and climate-related disaster risk reduction at community and institutional levels.

6. Assessment Methodology

The HEVC Assessment is recommended to adopt a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative, quantitative, and geospatial techniques to ensure a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of hazard, exposure, vulnerability, and capacity dynamics in Muthana Governorate. A structured desk review should be conducted at the outset to synthesise existing secondary data, including climate and meteorological records, relevant government reports, previous assessments, early warning data, and humanitarian and development literature related to drought, heat stress, desertification, sandstorms, and water scarcity in southern Iraq. This will be complemented by remote sensing and GIS analysis to map environmental degradation, land-use change, vegetation stress, water availability, and hazard-prone areas over time, providing an objective spatial baseline for field inquiry and risk mapping.

Primary data collection should include a combination of household quantitative surveys and qualitative methods to capture both statistically relevant patterns and contextual depth. Household surveys should be designed to assess exposure, livelihood impacts, coping strategies, access to services, and differential vulnerability across population groups, with appropriate stratification by geography and livelihood type to ensure representativeness. Qualitative methods should include key informant interviews (KIIs) with local authorities, disaster management actors, technical line ministries, NGOs, and community leaders to understand institutional capacities, coordination mechanisms, and preparedness systems. In addition, focus group discussions (FGDs) should be conducted with diverse community groups—including women, farmers, livestock herders, youth, and other vulnerable populations—to capture lived experiences of climate risks, coping mechanisms, and perceived gaps in preparedness and response.

To strengthen participatory analysis and validation, the methodology should also incorporate community-based tools such as participatory hazard mapping, seasonal calendars, and transect walks where appropriate, enabling communities to directly identify risk hotspots, exposure pathways, and local adaptation strategies. Findings from all components should be triangulated across data sources to ensure reliability and analytical robustness, and a validation workshop with key stakeholders is recommended to confirm preliminary findings and refine recommendations, particularly for the development of Disaster Readiness Protocols (DRPs).

Ethical Considerations and Data Protection

All primary data collection must comply with recognised ethical standards, and climate vulnerability risks, particularly given the sensitive nature of preventing violence against women and girls. Data collection processes must ensure informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and adherence to do-no-harm principles. The assessment must align with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and relevant local regulations.

The consultant will be expected to:

- Submit an inception report outlining the assessment design, tools, sampling strategy, and workplan for approval prior to data collection;
- Provide a detailed schedule and resource plan disaggregated by location;

- Recruit, train, and supervise enumerators (including both men and women), ensuring appropriate safeguarding measures;
- Secure necessary permissions from relevant authorities for fieldwork;
- Deliver cleaned datasets to Tearfund Iraq, granting the office rights of storage and further use;
- Strictly adhere to Tearfund's Safeguarding Policy and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) protocols, ensuring zero tolerance for misconduct, explicit risk assessments for community interactions, and clear reporting mechanisms for sensitive cases.

Data Analysis and Triangulation

Quantitative data will be statistically analysed to assess performance against outcome-level indicators. Where qualitative methods are included, findings will be thematically analysed and triangulated with quantitative and secondary data to enhance validity and depth of interpretation.

This approach ensures that contractual indicator measurement remains rigorous and statistically sound, while allowing space for broader evaluative learning where proposed.

7. Ethics

The assessment person / company should adhere to Tearfund's approach to research ethics, outlined in this guidance: https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/tools-and-guides/doing-research-ethically, and work with the Tearfund team to complete an ethics risk assessment ahead of data collection. The proposal should outline key ethical considerations and how these will be addressed.

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8. Deliverables and Outputs

Deliverable	Specification/Expectations
Inception Report	Outline of Methodology and tools to be used during the assessment
Final Report	● A stand-alone Executive Summary (maximum length 5 pages) ● A detailed report (maximum length 35 pages exc. annexes) with the suggested following sections: Section 1 – Executive Summary (no more than two A4 sides) Section 2 – Introduction Section 3 – Methodology Section 4 – Context Analysis Section 5 – Project Overview Section 6 – Key Findings Section 7 – Conclusions Section 8 – Key Insights including a list of lessons learned and good practices Section 9 – Specific Actionable and Prioritised Recommendations (maximum 10) - this may be supplemented by a list of learning points

	Section 10 – Annexes (indicative) a. Terms of Reference for the assessment b. Profile of the Review Team c. Data collection schedule d. Documents consulted during the assessment e. Tools used for **qualitative and quantitative** data collection f. Persons participating in the assessment g. Field data used during the assessment, including baselines h. A self-assessment of the review using the BOND evidence principles

All collected data is legally owned by Tearfund and the consultant is expected to hand over all data sets and notes of the interviews to the organization. The Consultant shall maintain in confidence and protect all information provided to him/her by Tearfund, its employees, its partners and beneficiaries. The consultant may only disclose the extent necessary to perform the assessment.

9. Timetable/schedule

The assessment is expected to be conducted in its entirety within the period of 01 October 2026 to 30 April 2027* with the completed, approved final version of the assessment report (including all annexes and supplementary and complementary documentation and materials) to be submitted to Tearfund by/before 30 April 2027

The individual/firm selected for this assignment is expected to develop a realistic schedule based on the timeframe mentioned above taking care to include the following key milestones:

- Inception meeting with TF Iraq Staff
- Review of primary and secondary literature provided by Tearfund;
- Submission of detailed inception report including data collection tools;
- Submission of first draft of the report;
- Submission of final draft of the report;
- Conduct a virtual dissemination session with TF and its partners.

10. Assessment leadership and execution

Leadership: Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Tearfund Iraq Country Office, and relevant members of the ENA Regional and Global teams, the assessment will be conducted by an external, qualified assessment team.

External Assessment Team: The assessment will seek independent consultant/consultancy firm who have the ability to mobilize a local experienced team of data collectors with adequate knowledge of the area, conditions and culture. The assessment team will be expected to propose a detailed team configuration that meets the demand of the assignment and is responsible for:

- Obtaining required operational security clearances, local authority approvals, and permissions from relevant governorate authorities and police/security commands prior to fieldwork.

- Managing all local logistics, transportation, and team security during data collection.

Consultant/s Eligibility (for Team/Assessment Lead)

Attribute/skill	**Important**	**Desirable**
Education and Qualifications	Degree-level qualification or equivalent in relevant discipline	Research Specialization (Masters by research or PhD)
Skills/ability	Good communicator Excellent interpersonal skills Excellent Report writing Proven assessment skills Proven Data analysis and interpretation skills Leadership skills Significant past similar experience as proven by submission of past similar assessments. Arabic and English proficiency	

NOTE: Tearfund reserves the right to demand changes in the composition of the assessment team and the nomination of the team lead based on its internal assessment of the candidate firm's credentials and suitability for the assignment.

Tearfund will be responsible for:

- Supporting the consultant's team members by providing reasonable assistance and support in accessing communities and stakeholders for the successful implementation of agreed field visits and activities;

Tearfund will NOT be responsible for providing any personnel or resources to directly conduct any field visit or agreed activity.

11. Budget and Payment Schedule

The consultation fees available for this end of project assessment will include cost of recruitment of data collectors/data entry clerks and data collection, data entry, translation fees, communication and report writing. A detailed budget breakdown needs to be submitted by the consultant.

Payment will be made in instalments linked with project deliverables and outputs. The expected schedule is as follows:

20% upon approval of the Inception Report, methodology, and finalized data collection tools.

40% upon submission of the first draft of the HEVC Assessment report and preliminary findings presentation.

40% upon final approval of the full report package (including cleaned datasets, annexes, DRP recommendations, and validation session completion).

12. Conflict of Interest

The service provider must be impartial and independent from all aspects of management or financial interests in the entity being monitored. During the tenancy period, the assessment should not be employed by, serve as director for, or have any financial or close business relationships with any of TF or partner's entities being monitored. The service provider and the Third Party Monitors sub-contracted (if it applies) should declare any potential conflicts of interest which may affect or compromise their ability to conduct neutral and independent service.

Such conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

- Business interests in a community where a TF partner(s) is delivering a programme.
- Business interests or financial gains from TF or its partners through other activities or projects where applicable.
- Financial, family, political and business affiliation with an organisation with whom TF has a partnership.

In such a scenario or similar, the service provider is expected to declare the conflict of interest to the contractor who will present to Tearfund Iraq Office. Declaration of conflict of interest will not be viewed negatively but will be considered in the programming of activities. Failure to declare a conflict of interest may be considered and may lead to a review of the expected deliverables from the monitor or the service provider, thus with a possible negative impact on the contract of the monitor or service provider.

13. Submission

The consultant should submit the below by the end of **Saturday 5 December 2026 at 23:59**. All the submission need to send to Mehreen Saba / Arblina Seudin via email mehreen.saba@tearfund.org/arblina.seudin@tearfund.org

The document should submitted:
1- Technical Proposal
2- Budget.
3- CV.
4- Any experience document.
5. Any examples from other assessments or Certificates of completion the assessments