

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is requesting for proposals for an impact assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on undocumented migrant workers in Malaysia.

Background

The global experiences around COVID-19 have reaffirmed how important the contributions of migrant workers are to communities and economies around the globe. Migrant workers, especially women, have been at the forefront of responses to the pandemic in the health and care sector.¹ They have also helped sustain global supply chains and essential sectors, such as agriculture, sales, and logistics.²

The Malaysian economy is significantly dependent on migrant workers, who make up more than 30% of the workforce in the agriculture sector, and more than 20% in the construction and manufacturing sectors³. Migrant workers in Malaysia are mostly from Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, and India. According to the Malaysian Immigration Department under the Ministry of Home Affairs, 1.98 million migrants were employed through regular channels in Malaysia as of September 2019. Data on the number of undocumented migrants vary, but according to World Bank estimate⁴, the undocumented migrant worker population in Malaysia is between 1.2-1.4 million.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, migrant workers in Malaysia contributed to the COVID-19 response by supporting the operation of crucial economic sectors. For instance, with increasing demand globally, the glove industry in Malaysia posted a 20 per cent growth; in this sector, migrant workers consist of 61 per cent of the workforce, equivalent to over 40,000 workers. Similarly, in the palm oil sector, 70 per cent of workers are migrants, who continued to work during the movement restriction orders (MCOs) by virtue of special permission granted by the Malaysian government in consideration of the relevance of the sector for the country's economy.⁵ Despite their contribution, migrant workers face several COVID-19 related challenges, as frequently highlighted in research. In particular, migrant workers are at heightened risk of facing violations of human rights and labour rights; suffer discrimination; and have limited access to public services including health, which exacerbates their vulnerability^{6,7}.

While the above findings apply generally to migrant workers in Malaysia, they are further magnified when considering the undocumented migrant worker populations. At the height of the pandemic, a series of raids resulted in the arrest of a number of undocumented migrants, detention, and subsequent deportation. The arrest and detention of undocumented migrants led to overcrowded

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/women-at-the-core-of-the-fight-against-covid-19-crisis-553a8269/>

² <https://crest.iom.int/news/turning-page-our-plans-support-protection-migrant-workers-2021>

³ <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/seac/2020/10/01/the-economic-case-against-the-marginalisation-of-migrant-workers-in-malaysia/>

⁴ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/953091562223517841/pdf/Malaysia-Estimating-the-Number-of-Foreign-Workers-A-Report-from-the-Labor-Market-Data-for-Monetary-Policy-Task.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/protecting-palm-oil-workers-malaysia.pdf>

⁶ http://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_751600.pdf

⁷ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/briefingnote/wcms_741512.pdf

IOM Malaysia/RFP No. 2021-004/MALAYSIA/Country-level impact assessment immigration detention centres and high rates of COVID-19 infections in the centres, a situation further exacerbated by limited access to healthcare.⁸ With public discourse referring to migrants as culprits of increasing COVID-19 cases, undocumented migrants were further marginalized and discouraged from seeking assistance and treatment⁹. While existing studies and assessments have provided a punctual overview of the socio-economic impact faced by migrant workers, more comprehensive research focusing on the undocumented migrant worker population is needed to inform targeted, short and long-term evidence-base responses, and policy making.

Ensuring that migrants and undocumented migrants are not left behind in the response is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on goal 8 and goal 10, and the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).¹⁰

Objectives

The overall objective of this consultancy is to provide up-to-date and evidence-based information on the COVID-19 socio-economic impact on undocumented migrant workers in Malaysia, and recommendations for a strengthened socio-economic response. This will be done through a migrant-centred and gender-sensitive impact assessment and short-term and long-term recommendations for stakeholders including policy makers and businesses. The assessment will cover, at a minimum: 1) an overview on the situation of undocumented migrant workers in Malaysia; 2) the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on undocumented migrant workers including 2a) poverty; 2b) access to services including healthcare services; 2c) access to information; 3) the impact of COVID-19 on labour issues and working conditions for undocumented migrant workers; 4) the impact of COVID-19 on legal status and access to justice/remedy for undocumented migrant workers; 5) recommendations.

Scope of the consultancy and timeline

IOM is seeking a qualified research consultant or a team of consultants to conduct the impact assessment, and produce a gender-sensitive report with tailored recommendations for stakeholders including policy makers and businesses. The development and implementation of the assessment will be conducted for a total period of six months, tentatively from November 2021 to April 2022. The consultant research plan will be reviewed and confirmed in the first month. Literature review and data collection will be conducted in the second, third and fourth months. Preliminary data and a draft assessment should be presented in the fifth month. The finalized assessment incorporating IOM feedback is expected to be presented in the sixth month. The assessment report may be published and disseminated to stakeholders in the networks of IOM. The applicant can choose to be responsible for the copy-editing and design of the final assessment report, which will have to follow IOM House Style Manual and guidelines. If the selected researcher or research team does not opt for the copy-

⁸ <https://idcoalition.org/news/covid-19-outbreaks-in-malysias-immigration-detention-centres/>

⁹ <https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/countries/asia-pacific/malaysia>

¹⁰ <https://malaysia.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/UN%20Malaysia%20-%20Socio-Economic%20Response%20Plan%20%28SERP%29%20February%202021.pdf>

IOM Malaysia/RFP No. 2021-004/MALAYSIA/Country-level impact assessment editing and design of the final assessment report, IOM will issue another call for proposals for this specific part of this project.

Tasks to be performed

Under the direct supervision of the Programme Coordinator of IOM Malaysia and the overall supervision of the Chief of Mission (COM), the consultant will:

- i. Develop a work plan and research methodology for conducting the COVID-19 socio-economic impact assessment on undocumented migrant workers in Malaysia;
- ii. Conduct a literature and document review based on publicly available materials;
- iii. Conduct data collection from stakeholders, such as undocumented migrant workers, CSOs, relevant Government of Malaysia authorities, UN Agencies, consulates of origin countries through surveys, interviews, of focus group discussions or other means, with gender considerations included in the data collection and analysis;
- iv. Submit a draft impact assessment report with an analysis of preliminary findings and recommendations for IOM review and approval;
- v. Submit a final impact assessment report including an executive summary, methodology, literature review, findings and recommendations, considering all the comments/input provided by IOM and other stakeholders at different stages;
- vi. Copy-editing and design of the final report in line with the IOM House Manual, if the applicant chooses to be responsible for this part as well.

Close consultation with IOM at every step is required

Ethical Consideration

The consultant/team should follow the principles outlined in the UNEG - Ethical Guidelines for research and/or study. Under the ethical consideration, special care will be taken to respect the confidentiality of the information provided and rights to responding or not responding. The information and data assembled in this study process will only be used for the objective of this project and not for other any kind of uses without the express authorization of IOM. The consultant/team will be held to the highest ethical standards and follow IOM's data protection principles.

Method of Application

The proposal shall include:

- A cover letter (one page maximum), specifying clearly the qualifications and suitability. For applicants who are teams researchers, this should be clearly stated in the letter;
- Detailed curriculum vitae with information on previous assessment and/or research work;
- Samples of previous assessment and/or research reports;

IOM Malaysia/RFP No. 2021-004/MALAYSIA/Country-level impact assessment

- A description of the approach, methodology, work plan and budget for performing the assignment (eight pages maximum). The work plan should be consistent with the timeline stated above;
- The budget should not exceed USD 30,000 or MYR equivalent. The budget will cover all costs needed to conduct this assessment, including interpretation, venue rental, and transportation allowance for interviewees (if applicable); design of the assessment report; and other relevant costs. If the applicant does not opt for the copy-editing and design of the assessment report (in strict accordance with IOM's publication guidelines), the budget should not exceed USD 27,000, as IOM will have to set aside a sum for this specific aspect of the project.

Interested candidates are invited to send their submission of Technical and Financial Proposals in English by 5 November 2021 COB by email to iommytender@iom.int, using the subject line IOM Malaysia/ RFP No. 2021-004/MALAYSIA/ Country-level impact assessment.

For more information, please contact in writing IOM Kuala Lumpur Procurement kulprocurement@iom.int copying Ms Amanda Ng, IOM Senior Project Assistant, sng@iom.int.

Education and Competences

The proposed researcher/ team should have following competencies:

- Proven relevant experience in research and study on migration, business and human rights topics;
- Prior experience working with UN Agencies, research institutions or non-profit organizations;
- Thorough understanding of issues pertaining to labour migration, ethical recruitment standards, forced labour, human trafficking;
- Familiarity with the subject matter regarding migrant workers, especially undocumented migrant workers in Malaysia and issues they face especially during COVID-19;
- A good command of data collection and interviewing techniques;
- Excellent time management skills and ability to produce outputs as per agreed deadlines;
- Experience in engaging with migrant workers, including undocumented migrant workers, is a distinct advantage;
- Strong analytical, oral and written communication skills, and report writing skills in English.

Mode of Payment

Payment to the service provider will be made on the instalment basis as follows:

20% upon signing the contract and submission of the work-plan.

40% upon submission of the first draft of report.

40% upon submission of the final report and approval from IOM.



IOM Malaysia/RFP No. 2021-004/MALAYSIA/Country-level impact assessment
The proposal should be written in English.

Any attempt for persuasion will be considered as a disqualification

ONLY SHORT-LISTED CONSULTANTS/ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE ASSESSED

FIRMS/Consultants WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY TAX OR VAT ISSUES IF APPLICABLE