

Environmental and Economic Sustainability (EES) Theological Research: Middle East

Terms of Reference - Sep 2020

Background

The Tearfund Corporate Strategy states 3 priorities: Church and Community Transformation (CCT), Fragile States and Environmental and Economic Sustainability (EES).

- Objective 1 of the EES Priority focuses on theology, and the importance of theological ideas and discussion in contributing to transformation of the church and through the church in pursuit of Environmental and Economic Sustainability.
- This work package is a part of the project to develop a global theological framework for EES, focusing on Middle Eastern perspective.

Key Objectives

- Contribute to the development of Tearfund's EES Theological Framework with insights from the Middle East, reflecting its diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, age group and theological perspective.
- Provide a desk-based literature review and analysis of existing Middle Eastern written theology on environment and economics.
- Hold interviews / focus groups (if possible) with key theological voices on the topic (especially in cases where written theology is not available) .
- Prepare a research paper with the key findings from the Middle East, based on the literature review and interviews / focus groups, which could contribute to advance Tearfund's EES work globally.
- This research is not to be exhaustive. Rather, it is to reflect key thinking/narratives/themes from significant voices¹ in the region.

Product

- Written report compiled by consultant on EES (that is, both economic theology and creation care theology, and the intersection thereof²) from a Middle Eastern perspective.
 - Report paper to identify key theological discussion topics, questions, arguments and narratives around EES from a Middle Eastern perspective.
 - Research paper to include an executive summary of no more than 3 pages.
 - Bibliography of key influential or noteworthy literature from the region.
 - This paper can be up to 20 pages maximum, excluding the bibliography.
 - Paper to be written in English.
- Online meeting with key Tearfund staff to deliver the report, present the findings and clarify information.

Research Questions

- What does the **existing Middle Eastern theological literature** say in regards to EES (that is, the intersection of economy and environmental care)?

¹ Significant here is not necessarily the loudest or most influential, but rather the voices that are most beneficial for including into these conversations, including voices who have historically been excluded.

² In the research completed so far, we have found an imbalance towards environmental care theology; there has been less of a focus regarding the economy. We need forthcoming research, including this Middle East research, to aim for more of a balance between these two key elements.

- What are the **traditional and indigenous Middle Eastern narratives** around Environmental & Economic Sustainability?
- What are the **prominent themes and narratives** in present theological discussions around economic development and environmental/creation care? Wherever possible or relevant, note the ways in which these prominent themes and narratives are distinctively Middle Eastern.
- What are the **remaining gaps** in the theological discussion around environmental and economic sustainability in the Middle East?
- What could a **Middle Eastern, theological EES framework for a 21st century context**³ look like?

Secondary Literature

The consultant will start with access to the existing completed research that relates to this work:

- Tearfund's Theory of Poverty
- LAC Regional EES Report
- Africa Regional EES Report
- Notes on Theology and Bibliography: Asia, Middle East, Europe & North America
- The World Rebooted (drawn from the Restorative Economy)
- Abundant Africa (TBC)

Methodology

The consultant is to propose a methodology for this research.

- This research will necessarily include:
 - Literature review key Middle Eastern literature.
 - Conversations with key Middle Eastern theological voices around the topic, in order to:
 - Dig further into specific key issues identified through the literature review
 - Explore existing oral (non-written) theologies and thinking, especially coming from indigenous and marginalised communities in the Middle East. These conversations can be online 1-1 interviews with 2-5 key thought leaders, focus groups or an online workshop to draw out insights and discussions on the themes, gaps and opportunities the report identifies from several Middle Eastern thought leaders.

Whatever methodology is proposed, we'd like to ensure that 2-5 key thought leaders have been engaged in a meaningful way.

Timeline

Activity	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Middle East Paper				
Agree on ToR and contract				

³ By 21st Century context we mean: post-colonial, the impacts of climate change (experienced & predicted), economic growth, age of the internet and information, poverty in communities, unemployment, migration to cities.

Confirm consultant				
Confirm methodology				
Research				
Draft report			10 Nov	
Comments & input				
Final Report				10 Dec

Budget

- Maximum total budget of \$4000 to which we can extend. However, we're asking all applicants to quote and compete on pricing.

Application

To apply for this consultancy research, please submit a CV and a methodology proposal via email to Clark Buys (clark.buys@tearfund.org). For the methodology proposal, please draft the proposal for how you envisage doing this consultancy work. Please also indicate why your experience, training, and/or cultural context positions you well for this work. Please keep this at a high level overview - 2 pages max. Describing proposed steps, contacts, and existing resources available to you, demonstrate how you aim to achieve the objectives outlined in the Terms of Reference. Please also include within this document your quote for this work. Please submit these two documents by end of September 2020 (or contact Clark Buys if an extension is required). Depending on the applicants, we may request interviews at this point.