COMPLEX RISK ANALYTICS Fund

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: CRAF'd ECOSYSTEM STRATEGY

A. BACKGROUND

The Complex Risk Analytics Fund (CRAF'd) is the first and only multi-partner instrument to finance, connect, and reimagine data to save lives. The Fund's mission is driven by the conviction that data, analytics, and artificial intelligence (AI) can help global partners better anticipate, prevent, and respond to the complex risks facing people and the planet in moments of crisis. The Fund's overall goal is to invest in data, analytics and AI capabilities that enable better resource allocation, decision-making, and programming that reaches people in fragile and crisis-affected settings earlier, faster, and in a more targeted and dignified way.

CRAF'd champions an ecosystem approach that recognizes the interconnected value of stakeholders and risks in fragile and crisis-affected settings. By investing in a network of diverse stakeholders – donors, UN entities, NGOs, academic institutions, data providers, and technology partners –, CRAF'd help connect data and people that often work in silos. Key components of the global crisis data ecosystem include, for example, datasets, models, standards, governance, infrastructure, knowledge communities, people, and other capacities.

CRAF'd partners intend to invest in an ecosystem strategy to help scale the financing envelope over the coming years in ways that unlock maximum value from data for crisis action. To this end, the CRAF'd Steering Committee decided in October 2023 to commission a long-term global crisis data ecosystem strategy.

This Request for Proposals aims to solicit proposals from qualified providers to develop a comprehensive global crisis data ecosystem strategy. NORCAP, the small grants manager for CRAF'd, will provide and administer the grant for developing the ecosystem strategy.

For more details, see the following:
- **ANNEX I SCOPE OF WORK**
- **ANNEX II DELIVERABLES**
- **ANNEX III RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

We invite submissions of proposals of a maximum of 3 pages by 25 January 2024. Proposals should align closely with the requirements outlined in E. Proposal Requirements and scope of work as outlined in ANNEX I SCOPE OF WORK.

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B. OBJECTIVES

The central objectives of the global crisis data ecosystem strategy design effort are:

1. **Strategy Development:** Develop a comprehensive ecosystem strategy for CRAF'd, including an investment framework. It will provide guidance for building a sustainable, scalable, and well-governed global crisis data ecosystem and making allocation decisions.

2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage with relevant stakeholders to enhance collective understanding and shape the vision of a joint global crisis data ecosystem.

3. **Global Impact:** Position CRAF'd as a key enabler within the global crisis data ecosystem, catalyzing multilateral partnerships and collaboration, strengthening governance, and driving impact to improve resource allocation, decision-making, and programs to reach people in fragile and crisis settings earlier, faster, and in a more targeted and dignified way.

C. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF PROVIDER

- **Strategy Development:** Experience in strategy development for international organizations, focusing on data-driven crisis prevention, anticipation, and response is required.

- **Data Ecosystem Design:** Expertise in data ecosystem design and support, encompassing a deep understanding of data, analytics, and AI, is required.

  - **Stakeholder Engagement and Analysis:** A proven track record in engaging and analyzing diverse stakeholders, including NGOs, UN entities, and academia, is required. The provider should excel in workshop facilitation, stakeholder analysis, and cultural adaptability.

    o **Geographic Diversity:** The provider should showcase experience engaging actors from diverse geographic contexts, including those in crisis and fragile regions.

    o **Gender Diversity:** The provider should have a track record of a commitment to gender equality and integrating gender-sensitive considerations.

- **Independent and Collaborative Team:** The provider's team should be capable of independent operation with transparent communication and effective stakeholder coordination. Essential personnel should include:

  o At least one highly experienced senior consultant/team leader with international expertise in strategy and ecosystem design and development, focusing on data-driven crisis prevention, anticipation, and response.

  o At least one additional consultant proficient in strategy development, with international expertise in strategy and ecosystem design and development, focusing on data-driven crisis prevention, anticipation, and response.

  o Any additional capacity as required by the endorsed inception report.

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D. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The assignment is expected to be completed by the end of June 2024.

E. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- **The Proposal should include at least the following components:**
  - o Proposed methodology and approach for developing the CRAF'd global crisis data ecosystem strategy.
  - o Detailed project timeline and milestones, including a budget with a cost breakdown.
  - o Team composition, including roles and responsibilities.
- **Format:** A maximum of 3 pages, submitted via email to the CRAF'd Secretariat at crafd@un.org no later than 25 January 2024.

F. CONTACT

For any inquiries or clarifications regarding this Request for Proposals, don't hesitate to contact the CRAF'd Secretariat at crafd@un.org.

ANNEX I: SCOPE OF WORK

ANNEX II: DELIVERABLES

ANNEX II: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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ANNEX I: SCOPE OF WORK

I. Environmental Scan and Benchmarking:

- Conduct a comprehensive environmental scan of the current global crisis data ecosystem. Identify its strengths, weaknesses, gaps, opportunities, and best practices across various dimensions, including datasets, models, standards governance, infrastructure, knowledge, communities, people, and other capacities. This should ideally also include:
  - o Review investment flows in data to understand trends and patterns in crisis data funding, encompassing the Official Development Assistance (ODA) and other funding sources.
  - o Conduct a stakeholder mapping to visualize key actors and relationships within the global risk data ecosystem, including end-users, decision-makers, policymakers, and technical stakeholders.
- Perform a SWOT analysis for CRAF'd within the broader global crisis data ecosystem context and benchmark CRAF'd against similar initiatives in different sectors and contexts.
- Refer to the research questions outlined in Annex III RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

II. Stakeholder Engagement

- Conduct interviews with relevant stakeholders in the global crisis data ecosystem; this should include but not be limited to technical experts, regional experts, community leaders, donors, end-users, decision-makers, academia, and implementing experts.
- Facilitate workshops for joint strategy development, ensuring the strategy is inclusive and comprehensive.
  - o Include diverse perspectives from fragile- and crisis-affected settings and incorporate gender-sensitive considerations.

III. Ecosystem Strategy

- Building upon the findings from the environmental scan and benchmarking through the stakeholder engagement, develop a structured plan that outlines how CRAF'd can build and strengthen a sustainable, scalable, and well-governed global risk data ecosystem.
- The strategy should include recommendations on better linking data-driven approaches to decision-making, resource allocation, and programming for better crisis action.
- Overall, the strategy should include the following components:
  - o Investment framework for CRAF'd funding windows, outlining funding universe, allocation criteria, and pathways to impact.
  - o Recommendations to ensure success in strategy implementation.
  - o Detailed recommendations for evolving the Terms of Reference, including the Theory of Change and Results Framework.

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ANNEX II: DELIVERABLES

I.   Inception Report (Maximum ten pages by the end of March 2024)

- Finalized research questions and lines of inquiry.
- List of envisaged stakeholder interviews and workshop participants.
- Preliminary stakeholder mapping and results of the environmental scan.
- Workplan, timeline, resource allocation roles, and responsibilities.

II. Workshops and Interviews

- 3-5 workshops as interactive sessions with relevant CRAF'd ecosystem stakeholders for collaborative engagement and joint strategy development.
- Interview guidelines, executive summaries of individual interviews and consultations.

III. Strategy (Maximum 3-5 pages[1] by end of June 2024)

- Ecosystem strategy document that provides a structured plan for building and strengthening a sustainable, scalable, and well-governed global crisis data ecosystem, answering agreed research questions and lines of inquiry, including:
  - o   Results of environmental scan and benchmarking.
  - o   Investment framework to guide future funding decisions.

    Detailed recommendations for evolving the Terms of Reference, including the Theory of Change and Results Framework.

IV. Presentations of Findings and Recommendations

- Regular progress briefing to Steering Committee working-level focal points and the CRAF'd Secretariat.
- Presentation of the main findings and recommendations of the review to the CRAF'd Secretariat.
- Presentation at the CRAF'd Steering Committee meeting scheduled for June 2024.
- Other presentations as required.

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[1] The strategy itself should be short and concise. Other deliverables can be included in the annexes.

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ANNEX III: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Key research questions guiding the development of a CRAF'd crisis data ecosystem strategy should include the following:

Topic	Research Question
Strategy & Baseline Assessment	1. What is the universe of investment components/areas where CRAF'd can add value?
	2. Who are critical stakeholders in the global crisis data ecosystem, and how can CRAF'd optimize their engagement for impact?
Investment Mechanics & Criteria	3. What are methods to establish potential target ranges for annual CRAF'd investments/overall size?
	4. What criteria should be established to guide the allocation of CRAF'd resources, including selecting, sizing, prioritizing, sequencing, and other relevant investment decisions?
	5. How should funding windows be structured to cover high-value investment components?
Governance	6. How can CRAF'd foster data, analytics, AI principles, standards, quality, interoperability, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and other crisis data ecosystem governance incentives?
	7. How can CRAF'd foster progress in tackling ethical considerations associated with data collection, management, and use in fragile settings?
Ecosystem Strengthening	8. How can CRAF'd engage with developing countries and local actors to enhance and build local capacity?
	9. What strategies can maximize the impact of the global crisis data ecosystem and ensure long-term sustainability?
	10. How can the ecosystem better cater to user needs and ensure that the data platforms developed are user-friendly, accessible, and effectively utilized by decision-makers in crisis situations?
	11. How can CRAF'd and partners ensure that data and insights are efficiently linked to policy and decision-making processes within the ecosystem?
	12. To what extent should CRAF'd accept financial contributions from non-governmental institutions?
	13. How and to what extent should CRAF'd build non-financial partnerships with non-governmental organizations in the private, academic, and philanthropic sectors to support the global crisis data ecosystem?
	14. How can CRAF'd further strengthen knowledge transfer, stakeholder engagement, and brokerage of partnerships across the global crisis data ecosystem?