

# **Call for proposals**

## **External review of the International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR)**

March 2019

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# 1 Technical information

Contracting authority:	Basel Institute on Governance
Tendering entities:	Per invitation
<b>Deadline for Expression of Interest:</b>	<b>30 April 2019</b>
Review scope:	2017 to mid-2019
Implementation of review:	June 2019 – January 2020

## 2 Background

The International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR) was established in 2006 by the Basel Institute on Governance as an independent not-for-profit centre of excellence in asset recovery. It is financed through core contributions from the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

ICAR pursues the mission of supporting and strengthening the capacity of developing and transition partner countries to investigate and prosecute corruption cases with a view to recovering scarcely needed resources and deter future corruption from happening. Its efforts to achieve this mission are guided by multi-year operational strategies which define ICAR's Theory of Change and the main activity streams designed to operationalise the Theory of Change. As per the OS 2017-20, ICAR operates along four mutually complimentary intervention lines which are case advice (50%), training (20%), legal and policy advice (20%) and global policy and research (10%).

In its 12 years of operation, ICAR has become a world leader in the field of asset recovery with a solid track record. A first external review, conducted in 2015/2016, confirmed the continued high relevance and effectiveness of ICAR's operational approach, including the increased shift from headquarter based to in-country based operations. Some recommendations were made relating to the weighting of activity streams and the relationship between technical assistance and program management which were subsequently reflected in the OS 2017-20.

Since the last external review, demand for ICAR assistance has continued to increase, as a result of which ICAR's operational portfolio and budget has again grown rapidly. Increased exposure of some of ICAR's work to political interference has put additional and enhanced challenges onto the pursuit of the organisation's operational strategy and may have temporarily hampered the full effectiveness of ICAR's Theory of Change. Finally, during the period since the last external review, the international policy debate on asset recovery and broader financial crime themes has continued to evolve.

## 3 Context

*Corruption* is a major impediment to economic growth, social stability and poverty reduction. It erodes public trust in government, it leads to sub-standard services and it wastes scarce public resources. The impact of corruption is particularly damaging for developing countries, which lose billions of dollars every year through corruption. With the adoption of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the essential role of asset recovery in the international fight against corruption has been widely acknowledged.

Recovery of stolen assets can serve *four distinct purposes*: First, it has the potential to provide additional resources to finance public investments and development goals. Second, it can have a deterring effect on corruption and theft by signaling that there are consequences to corruption and that corrupt money cannot be hidden. Third, when the capacity of key accountability institutions to recover stolen assets is increased this positively affects the quality of the criminal justice system and of the rule of law. Lastly, asset recovery and repatriation can provide justice for victims.

Despite the global agreement by UNCAC signatory states that *stolen assets must be returned to the countries of origin*, asset recovery continues to be an *emerging policy and practice arena* and cases remain few and far apart. Even in highly developed countries the capacity to undertake what is a lengthy and complex process is limited and cases take many years to be resolved. In developing and transition countries this is coupled with lack of access to tools and resources, limited exposure and experience with international cooperation networks and processes, and often uncertain levels of political support. In addition, the whole process involves numerous stakeholders whose activities need to be coordinated in a timely fashion on both domestic and international levels.

## 4 Objectives and key questions

The external review should look at the accountability of the ICAR program, should provide guidance to the steering of ICAR and contribute to learning. More specifically, the key purpose of this external review is to assess the effective implementation of the OS 2017-20 and to ascertain the continued relevance of ICAR's operational approach and organizational structure with a view to informing the development of the next 4-year operational strategy and related donor funding commitments. Further, it should reflect on the continued validity of ICAR's work and Theory of Change in view of current global policy debate, emerging trends in other international initiatives to combat financial crime, and efforts to achieve the SDGs.

In view of this overall objective and purpose, the external review should aim to answer the following questions:

- Is the mix of ICAR activities/intervention lines and their respective weighting adequate in view of a) ICAR’s theory of change, b) key asset recovery challenges in developing and transition countries and internationally, and c) what other organisations are offering in the field of asset recovery?
- Is the organisational and funding structure (HQ; country programs) suitable and sufficient in view of the objectives set forth by ICAR in its OS 2017-20 and as formulated by ICAR management jointly with ICAR core donors?
- Have resources been employed effectively to achieve objectives as set forth in ICAR’s Theory of Change?
- Are the visibility and external communications of ICAR suitable and adequate in view of its operational objectives?
- What measures can be taken to ensure that program management, including reporting, M&E continues to be adequate and proportionate to the operational objectives of ICAR?
- What international dynamics that may influence funding and demand for technical assistance in asset recovery should ICAR and its core donors take into account when formulating the OS 2021-24? What sustainability risks and opportunities can be identified that should inform the formulation of the OS 2021-24?
- What (if any) synergies with other actors (in the asset recovery or broader governance/development sphere) should be explored further to strengthen ICAR’s mission and the pursuit of its unique operational strategy?
- What change(s) in operational and other risks have occurred or are likely to occur and how should these be addressed in a future OS?

DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability should be used when suitable.

## 5 Methodology – expected results

The reviewer will conduct:

- A desk review of relevant documentation such as: ICAR operational strategy 2017-20; annual reports against work plans, country program operational reports and training evaluation reports; financial statements; results report of 2019 Basel Institute functional review; etc.
- Phone or in-person interviews with all ICAR core donors (HQ staff and, where applicable, country office staff) and other key stakeholders from ICAR donor countries.
- Phone or in-person interviews with up to 10 representatives from key (partner) organisations actively engaged in international asset recovery efforts.
- 2-3 in-country visits in countries where ICAR has an existing program of work and on-site interviews with ICAR field staff, in-country ICAR core donor representatives and ICAR beneficiaries.

## 6 Offer and deliverables

Offers should comprise a proposal on how to address the task, a work plan and a financial offer. Offers to be based on a tentative expected work load of 7 to 9 weeks (person-week).

Deliverables are:

- Revised work plan (based on work plan submitted in offer) after first consultation with ICAR management and ICAR donors
- Short aide-mémoire based on desk review and initial meeting with ICAR management
- Draft report and in-person presentation at ICAR HQs in Switzerland
- Final report (max. 25 p without annexes, in English), containing:
  - Summary of findings / recommendations
  - Description of methodology and work process
  - Presentation of results according to contract signed
  - Recommendations for all goals of the external review

**Offers should be submitted in pdf format to: Ms Andrea Poelling, Head of Operations, [andrea.poelling@baselgovernance.org](mailto:andrea.poelling@baselgovernance.org), by no later than 30 April 2019.**

## 7 Documentation and interview partners

This is a joint external review mandated by all ICAR core donors and coordinated by ICAR. The ICAR core donor group has the lead on the adoption of results. ICAR is responsible for ensuring that all relevant documentation is accessible to the reviewer. ICAR and core donors are jointly responsible to ensure that key persons are available for interviews.

## 8 Timeframe and schedule

What	Who	Until when
Submission of revised TORs to donors	ICAR	31 Jan 2019

Donors provide final comments and suggestions for list of invited tenderers	Donors	15 Feb 2019
Invitation to tender (by invitation)	ICAR	28 Feb 2019
Submission of EOIs by invited tenderers	Tenderers	31 March 2019
Selection of evaluator	ICAR, donors	30 April 2019
Refining of work plan, signing of contract	ICAR, reviewer	15 May 2019
Desk study, preparation of meeting schedule, initial meeting with ICAR management	ICAR, reviewer, donors	June 2019
Short aide-mémoire based on desk review and initial meeting with ICAR management	ICAR, reviewer, donors	7 July 2019
Field visits/interviews (ICAR donors, other stakeholders)	Reviewer	Aug/Sept 2019
Draft report and presentation of findings to ICAR and donors	Reviewer	End October 2019
Final report	Reviewer	15 Nov 2019
Joint Donors' management response	Donors	15 Dec 2019
Publication and dissemination of executive summary of findings	ICAR, donors	January 2020

## 9 Required profile of evaluator

Apart from a solid evaluation expertise, the following requirements are needed for the mandate:

- Profound knowledge of asset recovery (whole process cycle, including, ideally, specific technicalities of the various phases of the process)
- Know-how of international corruption and asset recovery policy debate and key players
- Profound knowledge of development cooperation and context
- Proficiency in English. Russian or Spanish might be an advantage according to country visits