

Terms of Reference

Mapping: Systemic approaches to understanding inequality and their potential for designing and implementing interventions to reduce inequality

Background

The Robert Bosch Stiftung (RBSG) is one of Europe's largest foundations associated with a private company. It is non-partisan, operational and grant-making. Based on the legacy of its founder, the Robert Bosch Stiftung is active in the areas of Health, Science, Active Citizenship, Education, and International Understanding and Cooperation. For more information, please visit our website at www.bosch-stiftung.de/en.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung has recently completed an extensive strategic review of its international relations portfolio. From 2020 onwards, RBSG's focus area "International Understanding and Cooperation" is comprised of the four topics of "Peace", "Climate Change", "Migration" and "Inequality". In our newly established **Inequality** strategy, we focus on systemic approaches to understanding and reducing inequality – with a special emphasis on an intersectional perspective. One of our main objectives is to strengthen the agency of actors tackling inequality by providing a better knowledge base on systemic approaches to understanding and reducing inequality.

Among the core tenets that we consider constitutive of a systemic approach to understanding and reducing inequality are:

- a) a holistic view of inequality, taking into account the multi-dimensionality of inequality and the relationships and intersections between different forms of inequality and discrimination as well as other global challenges;
- b) a fundamental understanding of inequality as being linked to systemic/structural root causes that are usually associated with power relations.

At this stage, we have largely focused on intersectionality as a concept for understanding and potentially reducing inequality. In order to broaden our perspective and inform our thinking on the subject we are looking for a comprehensive synopsis of alternative and/or complementary systemic approaches to understanding and reducing inequality in theory and practice. In this regard, we are looking for qualified consultant(s)/researcher(s) to conduct a mapping on systemic approaches addressing inequality and their potential for developing meaningful interventions.

Purpose and scope of work

The consultant(s)/researcher(s) will conduct a mapping comprising two main tasks:

1. An **overview and brief analysis** of key approaches, concepts, frameworks and analytical tools used to conceptualize and address inequality from a systemic perspective, how they relate to and differ from each other, the linkage with systemic and structural inequalities, and whether and how these approaches, concepts, frameworks and tools have been operationalized into interventions to tackle inequality.

The overview should aim to neither be exhaustive, nor include purely theoretical or historical examples, but should comprise a systematic outline of current and most promising systemic approaches to addressing and tackling inequality. Inter alia, examples could include the capability approach or derivatives of it, rights- or power-based approaches, SDG-linked approaches, systems change approaches, asset-based approaches, redistributive approaches, narrative change approaches, or any other kind of approaches that are linked to the core tenets of a systemic perspective as mentioned above.

2. A **mapping of exemplary projects and initiatives** addressing systemic inequalities, undertaken by philanthropic or other civil society actors, multilateral organizations, development agencies or collaboratives thereof. Again, the mapping is not intended to be exhaustive, but should be illustrative of promising and scalable examples of implementation/practical application of systemic approaches as identified in the overview or closely linked to these approaches.

The mapping should cover the following aspects/questions:

- What criteria are used by these projects/initiatives to capture the systemic and multidimensional nature of inequality?
- What drivers of inequality have been identified by these projects/initiatives as best suited to address when it comes to reducing inequality from a systemic perspective?
- What methods are used to address the multidimensionality of inequality, the intersecting nature of different dimensions of inequality, and the root causes of inequality (e.g. cross-sectoral collaboration and networking, policy engagement, changing narratives, knowledge production and awareness raising, participation and empowerment)?
- In what way/to what extent do these projects/initiatives take into account the interconnectedness of inequality with the other global challenges that will guide the foundation's future work in the focus area International Understanding and Cooperation, i.e. peace, climate change and migration?
- What direct interventions or funding practices are put in place to address inequality from a systemic perspective?

The mapping serves internal purposes of the foundation only. It will be treated confidentially and will not be quoted or shared with third parties.

Methodology & Deliverables

The methodology will be finalized with the involvement of the consultant(s)/researcher(s) when selected. However, the methodology should include the following stages:

- Desk review of key approaches, concepts, frameworks and analytical tools used to conceptualize and address inequality from a systemic perspective.
- If necessary, collection of supplementary primary data through interviews with relevant actors.
- Compilation of mapping of exemplary projects and initiatives addressing systemic inequalities, undertaken by philanthropic or other civil society actors, multilateral organizations, development agencies or collaboratives thereof.
- Mid-term call with Robert Bosch Stiftung to update on the progress of research (latest on 15th November).
- Presentation of results to the Foundation by video-conference (latest by 10th December).
- Potential adjustments/additions and final submission of the complete mapping by 15th December.

The consultant(s)/researcher(s) is expected to produce the following:

- Outline and brief analysis of selected key approaches, concepts, frameworks and analytical tools used to conceptualize and address inequality from a systemic perspective (approx. 20 pages).
- A mapping of exemplary projects and initiatives as outlined above addressing the aspects/questions listed (format to be decided in mutual consultation).
- Reference list.
- Annexes: Supporting documentation.

Time frame

The consultant(s)/researcher(s) will carry out the work between mid-October and mid-December 2020. We estimate the assignment to comprise 20 working days. Deadline for the final mapping is CoB, **15th December 2020**. The contract will end with the acceptance of the mapping by the Foundation.

Qualifications

The consultant(s)/researcher(s) shall possess the following minimum qualifications:

- Proven track record of academic engagement with/research on inequality from a systemic perspective.
- In-depth knowledge of philanthropic and civil society-based efforts to address systemic/structural inequalities.
- Minimum M.A. degree or equivalent.
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills.

Application Process

Consultant(s)/researcher(s) that meet the expected qualification and skills as well as requirements mentioned above are invited to submit an expression of interest (Eoi). Individual applicants or organizations can submit an Eoi, which should include the following:

- A brief outline of the proposed methodology including a timetable and the estimated number of days required to carry out the tasks.
- Short cover letter detailing the expert's suitability for the assignment and current contact information.
- CV showing relevant academic/research experience and familiarity with philanthropic/civil society-based interventions in the field (credentials from past assignments).
- Financial offer (incl. fees, communication costs, etc.)
- Written sample of previous work.

Please send your Eoi or any questions you may have to Mr Clemens Spiess at clemens.spiess@bosch-stiftung.de. Deadline for submission of your Eoi is **30th September 2020**.