

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)**

### **Advocacy Consultant**

#### **1. Position Title**

### **Advocacy Consultant**

### **LACU – Local Awareness and Community Unity**

#### **2. Duty Station**

Syria, with regular travel to project target locations, including **Aleppo, Damascus and Homs**, as required.

#### **3. Reporting To**

The Advocacy Consultant will report to the **Project Manager/Programs Manager** and work closely with the LACU project team, Capacity Development Expert, municipal councils, CSOs/CBOs, MEAL staff, relevant technical experts, and other project consultants.

#### **4. Background**

Since 2013, LACU has supported local governance reform in Syria through assessments, capacity building, and civic engagement. This work highlights persistent challenges faced by municipalities operating in fragmented environments.

#### **5. Purpose of the Assignment**

The purpose of this consultancy is to strengthen the capacity of municipal councils and local civil society actors to **identify, formulate and pursue locally relevant advocacy priorities** that contribute to improved governance, service delivery, accountability, inclusion and local recovery.

The Advocacy Consultant will:

- Support municipal councils and CSOs/CBOs to identify advocacy priorities emerging from community needs, service delivery gaps and local recovery priorities.
- Strengthen the ability of councils and civil society actors to develop evidence-based advocacy strategies.

- Support constructive engagement between municipalities, communities, civil society, businesses, diaspora networks and relevant higher-level governance actors.
- Facilitate collective advocacy around shared municipal and community priorities.
- Strengthen the ability of CSOs/CBOs to use advocacy as part of their role as governance partners.
- Support inter-municipal coordination and collective advocacy platforms.
- Develop practical advocacy tools and mechanisms that can be institutionalised by LACU and participating municipalities.

## **6. Scope of Work and Key Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Advocacy Capacity and Needs Assessment**

In coordination with the Capacity Development Expert and LACU project team, the consultant will:

1. Review relevant project documents, OCA findings, Capacity Development Plans, community engagement findings and municipal priorities.
2. Identify existing advocacy capacities and gaps among target municipal councils and participating CSOs/CBOs.
3. Map existing advocacy practices, stakeholder relationships and engagement mechanisms.
4. Identify priority advocacy capacity needs at municipal and CSO/CBO levels.
5. Ensure advocacy support is aligned with the existing Capacity Development Plans rather than creating a parallel capacity-development system.

### **6.2 Development of Municipal Advocacy Priorities**

The consultant will support each target municipal council to identify and prioritise practical advocacy issues

### **6.3 Advocacy Strategy Development**

The consultant will support councils and relevant CSOs/CBOs to develop practical advocacy strategies for selected priorities.

#### **6.4 Stakeholder and Decision-Maker Engagement**

The consultant will strengthen the capacity of municipal councils and CSOs/CBOs to map and engage relevant stakeholders

#### **6.5 Evidence-Based Advocacy**

The consultant will support councils and CSOs/CBOs to use available evidence to strengthen advocacy.

#### **6.6 Community Engagement and Advocacy**

In coordination with the community engagement component, the consultant will support the development of mechanisms through which communities can contribute to advocacy priorities.

#### **6.7 Support to CSO/CBO Advocacy**

The consultant will contribute to the capacity development of CSOs/CBOs participating in the project's small-grant scheme.

#### **6.8 Public-Private and Diaspora Engagement**

the consultant will support appropriate advocacy and engagement mechanisms.

#### **6.9 Inter-Municipal Coordination and Collective Advocacy**

The consultant will support target municipalities to identify shared issues that could benefit from collective engagement.

#### **6.10 Digital Advocacy and Communication**

In coordination with the digital transformation component, the consultant will support municipalities and CSOs/CBOs to use appropriate digital channels for advocacy and citizen engagement.

#### **6.11 Advocacy Monitoring, Learning and Adaptation**

The consultant will work with the MEAL team to establish practical mechanisms for tracking advocacy progress.

## 7. Key Deliverables

The Advocacy Consultant will be responsible for the following deliverables:

| No. | Deliverable                                      | Description                                                                                   |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | <b>Inception Report and Advocacy Methodology</b> | Detailed methodology, workplan, approach and coordination arrangements                        |
| 2   | <b>Advocacy Capacity and Needs Assessment</b>    | Assessment of advocacy capacity and gaps among target councils and relevant CSOs/CBOs         |
| 3   | <b>Council Advocacy Priority Matrix</b>          | Council-specific advocacy issues linked to OCA/CDP, community and service delivery priorities |
| 4   | <b>Stakeholder and Decision-Maker Mapping</b>    | Mapping of relevant decision-makers, influencers, allies and stakeholders                     |
| 5   | <b>Advocacy Training Materials</b>               | Practical training materials, exercises, tools and templates                                  |
| 6   | <b>Advocacy Training and Coaching</b>            | Delivery of training, coaching and mentoring to councils and relevant CSOs/CBOs               |
| 7   | <b>Council Advocacy Action Plans</b>             | Practical advocacy plans for agreed priority issues                                           |
| 8   | <b>CSO/CBO Advocacy Support</b>                  | Advocacy tools and technical assistance for participating CSOs/CBOs                           |

|    |                                           |                   |                                                                                                              |
|----|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9  | <b>Inter-Municipal Advocacy Framework</b> |                   | Mechanism for identifying and pursuing shared municipal advocacy priorities                                  |
| 10 | <b>Advocacy Framework</b>                 | <b>Monitoring</b> | Indicators and tools for tracking advocacy actions and progress                                              |
| 11 | <b>Advocacy Reports</b>                   | <b>Progress</b>   | Periodic reporting on activities, progress, challenges and recommendations                                   |
| 12 | <b>Final Advocacy Report</b>              |                   | Consolidated results, lessons learned, good practices, remaining gaps and recommendations for sustainability |

## 8. Expected Results

By the end of the consultancy:

- Target municipal councils have increased practical capacity to undertake evidence-based advocacy.
- Council-specific advocacy action plans have been developed.
- Municipalities and communities have strengthened mechanisms for jointly identifying and communicating priorities.
- CSOs/CBOs demonstrate improved capacity to conduct constructive advocacy.
- Women- and youth-led groups have increased opportunities to participate in local advocacy and governance processes.
- Advocacy priorities are informed by community feedback, service delivery evidence and municipal data.
- Municipal councils have strengthened their engagement with relevant stakeholders and higher-level governance actors.
- Mechanisms for inter-municipal coordination and collective advocacy have been established or strengthened.
- Advocacy progress is monitored and documented through practical indicators and evidence.
- Advocacy tools and approaches are documented for potential replication.

## **9. Methodology**

The consultant is expected to use a **participatory, practical and learning-by-doing methodology**.

## **10. Coordination and Working Arrangements**

The consultant will:

- Report to the Project Manager/Programs Manager.
- Coordinate closely with the Capacity Development Expert.
- Work with the MEAL team on evidence and advocacy monitoring.
- Coordinate with municipal focal points.
- Coordinate with the LACU focal point assigned to each municipality.
- Coordinate with relevant technical experts.
- Participate in relevant project coordination meetings.

## **11. Duration and Level of Effort**

The consultancy will be implemented throughout the relevant project implementation period, with the exact number of working days agreed with LACU according to the approved workplan.

## **12. Required Qualifications and Experience**

### **Education**

Advanced university degree in:

- Public Policy.
- Political Science.
- Development Studies.
- Governance.
- International Relations.
- Communications.
- Law.
- Social Sciences.
- Public Administration.
- Or another relevant field.

### **Professional Experience**

The consultant should have:

- At least **7 years of relevant professional experience** in advocacy, policy engagement, governance, civil society strengthening, public policy or a related field.
- Demonstrated experience designing and implementing advocacy strategies.
- Demonstrated experience conducting stakeholder and power analysis.
- Strong experience in training and coaching civil society and/or local governance actors.
- Experience developing evidence-based advocacy campaigns and action plans.
- Experience facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue.
- Experience working with municipalities/local authorities is highly desirable.
- Experience working with CSOs/CBOs, women- and youth-led organisations is highly desirable.
- Experience in conflict-affected or transitional contexts, preferably Syria.
- Demonstrated ability to work sensitively with diverse and potentially conflicting stakeholders.

### **Technical Skills**

- Strong understanding of local governance and civic participation.
- Strong advocacy strategy development skills.
- Strong stakeholder mapping and engagement skills.
- Ability to translate evidence into clear advocacy messages.
- Strong facilitation and negotiation skills.
- Knowledge of inclusive governance and social accountability approaches.
- Familiarity with digital participation and communication tools is desirable.
- Understanding of MEAL and advocacy outcome measurement is desirable.
- Strong analytical and report-writing skills.

### **Language**

- Excellent Arabic communication and writing skills.
- Good English language skills for technical documentation and communication with LACU/project partners.

## **13. Safeguarding, Inclusion and Ethical Standards**

The consultant will comply with LACU's safeguarding, PSEA, code of conduct, confidentiality, data protection and other relevant organisational policies.

The consultant will apply conflict-sensitive and inclusive approaches throughout the assignment and ensure that advocacy activities do not expose participating individuals or groups to unnecessary risks.

Particular attention should be given to safe and meaningful participation of women, youth, IDPs, returnees, persons with disabilities, minorities and other marginalised groups.

#### **14. Ownership of Materials**

All advocacy strategies, training materials, stakeholder maps, advocacy tools, templates, reports, action plans, methodologies and other products developed under this assignment will be considered project deliverables and will remain the property of LACU and/or the project, subject to applicable contractual and donor requirements.

The consultant will provide materials in editable formats where applicable to facilitate future use and institutionalisation by LACU, municipal councils and relevant project partners.

How to Apply:

Interested candidates are invited to submit their application through the following link:

[\[Application Link\]](#)