

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

LACU – Local Awareness and Community Unity

1. Position Title

Capacity Development Expert

2. Duty Station

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

3. Reporting To

The Capacity Development Expert will report to the **Project Manager/Programs Manager** and work closely with the LACU project team, municipal councils, technical experts, MEAL staff, and relevant 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 design, implement, monitor, and adapt a comprehensive capacity-development approach for the target municipal councils.

The Expert will support municipal councils to:

- Identify institutional, organisational, technical, and individual capacity gaps.
- Develop and validate tailored Capacity Development Plans.
- Strengthen municipal knowledge, skills, systems, and practices.
- Deliver structured training combined with coaching and mentoring.
- Support municipal staff to apply acquired knowledge in their daily work.
- Strengthen operational systems in targeted municipal councils
- Support institutionalisation of learning and good practices within municipal structures.

- Establish mechanisms for measuring whether capacity development translates into improved municipal performance.

6. Key Responsibilities

6.1 Participatory Capacity and Institutional Assessments

The Expert will:

1. Review relevant project documents, existing municipal assessments, organisational structures, policies, procedures, and available municipal records.
2. Support the adaptation of participatory institutional and capacity assessment methodology and tools.
3. Support capacity assessments with targeted municipal councils.
4. Assess capacity at:
 - Institutional level;
 - Organisational/system level;
 - Department/team level; and
 - Individual staff level.
5. Identify key capacity gaps, strengths, priorities, and opportunities for improvement.
6. Assess existing municipal systems
7. Ensure meaningful participation of municipal leadership and relevant municipal staff throughout the assessment process.
8. Produce concise assessment findings and recommendations

6.2 Development of Municipal Capacity Development Plans

Based on the assessment findings, the Expert will:

1. Develop a tailored Capacity Development Plan (CDP)
2. Prioritise practical and achievable interventions according to each council's context and capacity level.
3. Ensure that CDPs are aligned with the project's overall results framework and municipal priorities.
4. Facilitate validation of CDP with the respective municipal council.
5. Establish a mechanism for periodically reviewing and updating CDPs based on implementation progress and emerging needs.

6.3 Institutional and System Strengthening

In coordination with relevant technical specialists, the Expert will support municipalities to strengthen institutional systems

6.4 Capacity Development of CSOs/CBOs

In coordination with the relevant project staff, the Expert will contribute to capacity development activities targeting local CSOs/CBOs participating in the project.

The Expert will ensure that CSO capacity-building activities complement the municipal capacity-development approach and strengthen CSOs' ability to act as constructive governance partners.

6.5 Inter-Municipal Learning and Knowledge Exchange

The Expert will contribute to peer learning and exchange between target municipalities

6.6 Monitoring, Follow-Up and Learning

The Expert will work closely with the MEAL team to monitor the effectiveness of capacity development.

7. Methodology

The Expert is expected to use a participatory, practical, and adaptive methodology based on the following principles:

8. Key Deliverables

The Capacity Development Expert will be responsible for producing the following deliverables:

No.	Deliverable	Description
1	Inception and Capacity Development Methodology	Detailed methodology, tools, workplan, and coordination arrangements
2	Capacity Development Plans for targeted municipal councils	Tailored and validated Capacity Development Plans for each target municipality
3	Training Framework and Materials	Training curriculum, session plans, practical exercises, presentations, tools, and handouts
4	Training Delivery Reports	Documentation of training delivered, participants, results, feedback, and recommendations
5	Coaching and Mentoring Plans	Municipality-specific coaching and mentoring schedules linked to CDP priorities
6	Coaching/Mentoring Reports	Regular documentation of coaching sessions, progress, challenges, and actions agreed
7	Institutional Systems Strengthening Recommendations	Practical recommendations/actions for HR, financial management, accountability, planning, and related systems
8	CSO/CBO Capacity-Building Contribution	Relevant training/support materials and delivery for CSO/CBO capacity strengthening
9	Follow-Up Capacity Assessment	Assessment of changes in capacity and application of acquired knowledge
10	Final Capacity Development Report	Overall progress, results against CDPs, lessons learned, good practices, challenges, and recommendations for sustainability

9. Expected Results of the Consultancy

By the end of the assignment, the Expert is expected to contribute to the achievement of the following project results:

- **Municipal Capacity Development Plans** have been developed, validated, and adopted.
- Municipal staff have received tailored capacity-development support in priority areas.
- Institutional systems are strengthened across the target municipalities.
- Municipal staff demonstrate improved capacity to engage communities in planning, service delivery, accountability, and local recovery.
- Municipalities increasingly use peer learning and internal knowledge-transfer mechanisms.
- Capacity-development approaches and tools are documented for potential replication in other municipalities.

10. Duration

The consultancy is expected to be implemented throughout the relevant project implementation period, with the exact number of working days and schedule agreed with LACU based on the approved project workplan.

The assignment will require a combination of:

- Remote preparation and reporting;
- In-person municipal assessments;
- Training delivery;
- On-site coaching and mentoring;
- Follow-up assessments; and
- Coordination and technical meetings.

11. Required Qualifications and Experience

The Expert should have:

Education

- Advanced university degree in Education, Capacity Development, Organisational Development, Public Administration, Governance, Development Studies, Management, or a related field.

Professional Experience

- At least **7 years of relevant professional experience** in institutional capacity development, organisational development, local governance, municipal strengthening, or a closely related field.
- Demonstrated experience conducting organisational/institutional capacity assessments.
- Demonstrated experience developing and implementing Capacity Development Plans.
- Strong experience designing and delivering adult-learning and professional training programmes.
- Proven experience in coaching and mentoring institutional staff.
- Experience strengthening organisational systems, policies, procedures, and internal mechanisms.
- Experience working with local authorities, municipalities, CSOs, or community-based organisations.
- Experience working in complex or conflict-affected environments, preferably Syria.

Technical Skills

- Strong understanding of local governance and municipal institutional development.
- Strong facilitation and adult-learning skills.
- Ability to translate technical concepts into practical tools and procedures.
- Strong analytical and report-writing skills.
- Ability to develop practical training materials and tools.
- Familiarity with digital governance and citizen participation mechanisms is desirable.
- Knowledge of MEAL and capacity-development measurement approaches is desirable.

Language

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

12. Safeguarding, Inclusion and Ethical Standards

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

13. Reporting

The Expert will report to the Project Manager/Programs Manager and will provide regular updates on:

- Activities completed;
- Progress against CDPs;
- Training and coaching delivered;
- Application of acquired skills;
- Institutional changes observed;
- Challenges and risks;
- Recommendations for adaptation; and
- Lessons learned.

All deliverables will be reviewed and approved by LACU in accordance with the project workplan.

14. Ownership of Materials

All training materials, assessment tools, CDPs, reports, templates, 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 Expert will ensure that all materials are provided in editable formats where applicable to facilitate future use and institutionalisation by LACU and municipal councils.

How to Apply:

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

[\[Application Link\]](#)