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Terms of Reference (TOR)

Training Consultant on Psychologically Informed and Sensitive Communication for Project Staff

About Al-Amal

The Iraqi Al-Amal Association is a non-governmental, developmental, non-partisan, and non-profit organization founded in 1992 amidst the dire circumstances following the Gulf War. Its mission is to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and establish a just and democratic society in Iraq. The association began its work in the Kurdistan region and, in May 2003, opened its main office in Baghdad, expanding its activities and services throughout Iraq.

Currently, the association focuses on human rights, including advocacy on freedoms and fundamental rights, support for human rights defenders, women's rights—encompassing equality, empowerment, and addressing violence against women and domestic violence—and peacebuilding, which includes peace studies, dialogue, community participation, and reconciliation.

The association aims to encourage a civil society movement that partners in policymaking and implementation to achieve social justice. This is pursued through rehabilitation, raising social awareness, and ensuring peace, human rights, and sustainable development in Iraq. The association is committed to fostering a spirit of volunteerism among citizens, working with civil society organizations based on the principles of citizenship and equality. It implements its projects and activities while offering services to the community without discrimination. Simultaneously, it seeks to instill these principles in the foundation of the new Iraqi state. Al-Amal adheres to the principles of credibility, transparency, accountability, and responsibility in its activities and interactions, both internally and externally, while striving to apply these principles to state authorities and other civil society organizations.

About the Project

In 2021, the Iraqi Cabinet approved the Five-Year National Human Rights Action Plan, focusing on governmental reforms in human rights. This plan aims to align national legislation with international human rights standards, strengthen national policies to protect human rights, and build human rights capacity within governmental institutions. Developed by the Ministry of Justice's Human Rights Department, the plan identified the Iraqi Al-Amal Association as the representative of civil society during the joint implementation declaration in July 2021.

However, the plan presents core challenges, including its ambitious and broad nature, lack of clarity in certain aspects, and the need for a clear monitoring and evaluation mechanism. At the same time, the plan incorporates most international and civil society recommendations on human rights and calls for reforms in legal frameworks, policies, procedures, and governmental practices. It positions civil society as a strategic partner in implementation, presenting a unique opportunity to leverage governmental reforms and drive meaningful changes to enhance human rights in Iraq.

This project addresses the need for effective civil society participation in advancing human rights reforms in Iraq. It aims to overcome challenges hindering civil society engagement and foster sustainable partnerships between government officials and civil society organizations. Through capacity-building for 24 civil society organizations and 60 government officials, the project seeks to facilitate the joint implementation and monitoring of the National Human Rights Action Plan, contributing to sustainable and impactful reforms. The project will span 30 months, concluding on March 31, 2026.

Background

The Iraqi Al-Amal Association (IAA) is implementing a project under the Human Rights National Action Plan (HRANP), focusing on strengthening partnerships between government institutions and civil society organizations to advance human rights in Iraq.

Human rights work in Iraq often involves engagement with sensitive issues and vulnerable populations, placing significant emotional, ethical, and communication-related demands on staff. Operating in sensitive and fragile contexts requires staff to communicate responsibly, observe situations, and document experiences in a way that is accurate, ethical, and does not cause harm to individuals or communities. These realities highlight the importance of equipping staff with skills in **sensitive communication**, **context-aware observation**, and **psychological health awareness** to ensure safe and effective programming.

IAA recognizes staff well-being and duty of care as core organizational responsibilities. Given the stigma surrounding mental and psychological health in Iraq, staff require practical, non-clinical knowledge to understand psychological well-being, identify signs of stress or distress among colleagues and participants, maintain professional boundaries, and know when referral to specialized services is necessary. Strengthening staff capacity to observe and document cases in a psychologically informed manner further supports ethical engagement and responsible reporting.

Within this context, IAA seeks to engage a qualified consultant to deliver a **three-day capacity-building training in Sulaymania** for project staff and relevant IAA personnel on **sensitive communication in sensitive areas**, **basic psychological health awareness**, and **ethical observation and case study writing**, in line with international safeguarding and duty-of-care standards.

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this training is to strengthen participants' understanding and practical application of **sensitive communication** and **basic psychological health awareness** in the context of human rights programming, contributing to safer, more ethical, and effective project implementation in sensitive and fragile environments.

- Equip participants with foundational knowledge and practical skills in **sensitive and context-aware communication** when engaging with colleagues, communities, and project participants in sensitive areas.
- Enhance participants' capacity to **observe situations responsibly**, identify signs of psychological stress or distress among colleagues and participants, and respond appropriately while maintaining professional and ethical boundaries.
- Strengthen participants' understanding of **basic psychological well-being**, self-care practices, and burnout prevention in high-pressure human rights work environments.
- Build participants' ability to **document observations and develop ethical, psychologically informed case studies**, ensuring accuracy, confidentiality, and do-no-harm principles.

- Strengthen participants' ability to identify situations that require **referral to specialized psychological or counseling services**, in line with IAA's established referral mechanisms and duty-of-care standards.
- Promote a supportive and respectful organizational culture that integrates **sensitive communication**, psychological well-being, safeguarding, and ethical documentation practices into daily work.

TIMELINE

Early March

EXPERT PROFILE

- Advanced university degree in psychology, social sciences, gender studies, public health, social work, or a related field.
- Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional experience in gender mainstreaming, psychosocial support awareness, safeguarding, or staff well-being within civil society, humanitarian, or human rights programs.
- Proven experience in designing and delivering participatory training workshops for staff and adult learners, including the use of practical tools, case studies, and group-based methodologies.
- Strong understanding of workplace ethics and psychological well-being in high-stress environments, with experience working in Iraq or similar fragile and conflict-affected contexts, is considered a strong asset.
- Demonstrated knowledge of non-clinical psychosocial support approaches, professional boundaries, and referral mechanisms, with a clear ability to distinguish between awareness-raising and clinical or therapeutic services.
- Excellent facilitation, communication, and interpersonal skills, with the ability to create a safe and respectful learning environment.
- Fluency in Arabic is required; working knowledge of English is an asset.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**, highlighting relevant professional experience, training expertise, and previous assignments in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) or capacity-building programs.
- **A proposal** outlining the timeline, methodologies, and expected outcomes of the training program. The proposal should demonstrate the trainer's approach to achieving the objectives outlined in the TOR.
- A detailed **financial proposal**, including daily rates for the consultancy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please send the following documents via email to **Jobs@iraqi-alamal.org** & no later than **February 12**. A technical proposal (not exceeding two pages or approximately 600 words) that includes a description of the training material and a financial offer covering only the required working days—three days in total, including the workshop, preparation, writing, and follow-up. (**The association will provide all logistical requirements.**) An updated CV highlighting the applicant's experience relevant to the topics of this mission.

Application Deadline February 12, 2026