

Terms of Reference for Individual Contractor (IC)

Requisition Number:

National or International consultants:

International

Description of the assignment (Title of consultancy):

Recruitment of an International Consultant Expert on Media Monitoring for the Supervisory Commission for Elections in Lebanon (SCE)
Lebanese Elections Assistance Project (LEAP)

Project Title:

Period of assignment/services:

4 months

1. Background

UNDP Lebanese Electoral Assistance Project (LEAP) has the main objective to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders for the conduct of transparent and inclusive elections in Lebanon. Through a multi-component approach, the project has the intended outcomes of providing technical assistance and support in the following key electoral areas: (1) management and administration of Elections (2) supervision of election campaigns (3) provision of voter education initiatives (4) resolution of electoral disputes, and (5) initiatives to improve election opportunities for women.

Relevance/purpose of the work required and how it is linked to the project context

On Friday 16 June, the Lebanese Parliament has passed a new electoral based on the proportional system, composed of 15 major districts subdivided into the administrative 26 minor districts of kada across the country. Among the main reforms, new official unified printed ballot papers will be introduced, establishment of a permanent Supervisory Commission on Elections (SCE) will be permanent and new automated systems for candidate registration and results management will be implemented.

As part of its second component, LEAP is providing electoral assistance and advisory support to the Supervisory Commission for Elections to carry out the tasks and duties assigned by the new electoral law 44/2017. In this context, the project will provide support to the SCE to establish the media monitoring unit which shall be in charge of monitoring the media outlets as per the provisions governing electoral advertising and information in the law.

In this regard, UNDP LEAP seeks to recruit an international expert to support and advise in the development and implementation of the SCE media monitoring unit.

2. Purpose and objective

Main objective of the media monitoring system

The proposed SCE media monitoring system should be able to collect data and analyze elections-related content of print, broadcast and online media, and present the results, in order to assess whether the media has been independent, transparent and professional in the context of free fair and credible elections.

Specific objectives of the media monitoring system

The envisaged SCE media monitoring system should be able to:

- Evaluate the extent to which elections were fair in terms of freedom of expression by the media, voters and candidates;
- Review whether political parties and candidates received fair access and coverage;

- Determine whether law and/or regulations on access to the media are being respected in the allocation and timing of free airtime, advertising slots and respect for regulations on content of advertising during the period of elections;
- Identify any emerging issues related to electoral management or the conduct of the electoral campaign that the SCE may have to address.

3. Scope of responsibilities and focus of the Consultancy

3.1 Key responsibilities

The consultant is expected to undergo the following tasks:

- Establishment and set up of a SCE Media Monitoring Unit including identification and development of terms of references for the unit's staff;
- Development and implementation of a media monitoring system methodology and design;
- Identification of technical specifications for the required monitoring equipment (media monitoring equipment, IT equipment, and up-to-date monitoring software);
- Training of over 30 SCE staff on the media monitoring methodology;
- Carry out daily monitoring (7 days a week) for quality and quantity aspects in the election coverage during the period of 5th February -30 May 2018;
- Produce weekly monitoring briefs including monitoring of the media election coverage from 5 February to 30th May;
- Carry out a debriefing meeting at the end of May to present the final report.

3.2 Focus of the Media monitoring

The media monitoring unit will analyze the conduct of individual, media organizations and journalists, within the context of the media system as a whole. Specific focus will be on voters' rights to receive information; candidates' rights to impart information; the conduct of journalists and the media's right to freedom of expression.

Voters: To determine whether voters have been given due access to information in the course of the election campaign, the media monitoring unit will examine the following issues:

- Did the media provide voters with sufficient information on the administration of the election and on voting procedures?
- Did state/public (and private) media comply with their obligations to inform the public on relevant issues regarding the electoral process?
- Were state/public (and private) media free to play an impartial, fair and objective role in covering all candidates and political parties, or was there a selective approach to providing information on events?
- Were topics chosen for their informational value or to portray a particular party in a positive or negative light?
- Were the provisions set out in the national legal framework respected by the media and political parties?
- Was there any prejudice in reporting based on political affiliation, religious, gender, disability or social status?

Candidate: The media monitoring unit will focus on the following issues to determine whether candidates had the necessary opportunity to communicate their information to voters:

- Were election contestants and political parties given equal opportunity to present their campaigns and platforms to the electorate through the media?
- Did election contestants and political parties have equal or equitable access on a nondiscriminatory basis to media?
- Did election contestants have unimpeded access to the media? Were there legal or administrative obstacles?

- Were election contestants and political parties treated fairly by media outlets including the state-controlled or public media?
- Were election contestants and political parties subject to the same conditions (rates, time, etc.) for paid advertising?
- Were the different kinds of relevant television programmes, such as news programmes and debates, unbiased?

Conduct of Journalism: The media monitoring unit will focus on the following questions to determine whether the journalist respected provisions of the law regulating the act of journalism:

- Were journalists responsible for any clearly biased information or coverage, instances of defamation, partisan declarations or untruthful news?
- Were any contestants or political parties benefitting from an excessive advantage due to extensive coverage of their official functions?
- What topics and stories are being covered by the main television news programmes? Is the public broadcaster covering stories favoring a specific party? Are private broadcasters setting an agenda favorable to a specific party?
- Was any relevant piece of news omitted by the media outlet observed?
- What contents is circulating through the social media, websites, e-mail list servers, text messages to mobile telephones, etc.
- Have any of the provisions regulating media during the electoral period violated?
- Are the activities of the election commission being covered? Are sensitive issues related to the administration of the election being covered? Is the coverage promoting confidence in the institutions and the electoral process, or is it undermining their legitimacy?
- Is there any specific voter-education campaign? If so, does it provide voters with correct and clear information on their right to vote and voting procedures?

Media freedom: The media monitoring unit will focus on the following questions to determine whether media's freedom of expression has been respected:

- Did the media face any kind of censorship or obstruction by the authorities, political parties or media association?
- Did journalists engage in self-censorship?
- Did media outlets face any kind of interference in their editorial policies from the authorities, political parties, or media owners?
- Did journalists adopt a certain point of view in return for financial or other benefit?

4. Implementation Principles

- The monitoring unit and its staff shall act in strict conformity with the Lebanese Laws and in particular those related to elections and the media.
- The monitoring unit and its staff shall refrain from any interference in the electoral process. The monitoring has to be carried out in strict neutrality and all staff has to refrain from any activities which could be interpreted as bias for or against any party or candidate.
- The monitoring unit is expected to coordinate with other national or international monitoring organizations.

5. Methodology for the Media Monitoring

The media monitoring in election will be conducted through both quantitative and qualitative content analysis methodology. Quantitative analysis will collect data about media content such as topics or issues, volume of mentions, 'messages' determined by key words in context, circulation of the media (audience reach) and frequency. It will also consider media form and impact. Qualitative content analysis will examine the relationship between the text and its likely audience meaning. The monitors will pay attention to audience,

media and contextual factors.

6. Time frame and deliverables

Time frame

Activity	Deliverable
Inception Meeting, Initial briefing Monitoring design, methodology and detailed work plan;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring system and methodology;• Work-plan;• Tools and means.
Media monitoring content analysis; Workshop to present findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weekly briefing• Workshop facilitated and conducted.
Draft of final report	Final report

Deliverables

The consultant will be required to deliver the following;

- Monitoring system and methodology;
- Work-plan/Tools and Means;
- Weekly briefs on the status of monitoring;
- Workshop with relevant stakeholders;
- Final report.

7. Duty Station

The duty station of the work is Beirut, Lebanon.

8. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

The consultant shall be paid the consultancy fee upon completion of the following milestones:

- 30% after adoption of the monitoring system and methodology and work-plan;
- 30% after the completion of the workshop with stakeholders;
- 40% after the approval of the final report.

The consultant fee will be paid as Lump Sum Amount (all inclusive of expenses related to the consultancy and tax obligations). The contract price will be fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.