



Call for Proposals Notice – Grants to Iraqi NGOs

Provision of Legal Assistance services in Basrah Justice Palace, Basrah, Iraq

UNDP is pleased to announce a call for proposals for Iraqi Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the project “Request for proposals for provision of Legal Assistance services in Basrah Justice Palace, Basrah, Iraq”.

Background:

UNDP Iraq is seeking an implementing partner or a consortium of national organizations to develop and implement a legal assistance scheme in Basrah Justice Palace, Basrah, Iraq. The scheme will be funded under UNDP Support to Legal Aid work in South and Center Iraq project, in partnership with the US Department of State Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement.

The Iraqi state’s capacity to exert legitimate authority and Rule of Law has been weakened by the cumulative effect of years of violence and general degradation of state institutions since 1991. Insecurity and reduced access to justice have severely impacted communities, especially women and the most vulnerable (including the aged, women, widows, female heads of household, children, persons with disabilities, minority communities and Internally Displaced People and returnees). The most vulnerable have limited access to the formal justice system and little confidence in its workings, often relying on traditional justice mechanisms, which play an important role in promoting social reconciliation but often are not compliant with national and international human rights standards.

The Judiciary, the Ministry of Justice and security sector institutions are critical actors in enforcing the Rule of Law, to reduce insecurity and to protect citizens’ rights. However, their capacity and authority have been affected by years of neglect and conflict, with other factors placing the systems under additional strain, such as significant levels of violence through intimidation, poor infrastructure, “brain drain”, and the high number of conflict-related disputes. To address some of these issues, UNDP-Iraq is, in partnership with the Government of Iraq justice institutions, undertaking a broad set of activities in the area of justice sector capacity-building and modernization. The primary purpose of the programme is to support the Iraqi judicial institutions to strengthen their capacity with the ultimate goal of improving the rule of law for all Iraqi people; the objective of the legal assistance services is to enhance the protection of citizens’ rights through better access to justice and advocacy and further reinforce the accountability and transparency of the judiciary.

The legal assistance scheme will operate from the Basrah Justice Palace,

The legal assistance scheme will operate a 'legal help desk' within the court premises, as one of the activities to promote accessibility of the courts. The scheme will provide legal information and advice on-site. The scheme will also provide legal representation in extenuating circumstances, particularly to support vulnerable and disadvantaged people who cannot afford to pay a private lawyer.

In implementing these activities, the successful bidder will work very closely with UNDP-Iraq, the Government of Iraq counterparts in the Higher Judicial Council, Basrah Justice Palaces, Ministry of Justice, Iraqi Bar Association, Family Protection Units and other legal assistance services including those funded by UN Agencies, and other implementing partners of UNDP Iraq.

1. Small grants' mechanism:

1.1 Eligibility for receiving grants:

Eligible NGOs are national NGOs legally registered and operate in Basrah governorate.

1.2 Project Duration: maximum 12 months (no extensions will be granted).

1.3 Geographic coverage: The grantee will work in Basrah governorate.

1.4 Grant size: 150,000 USD (One hundred fifty thousand US dollar).

Own contributions from the NGO consortia are not mandatory but will be considered positively.

1.5 Objective and Scope of work:

The objective of this activity is to enhance the protection of citizen's legal rights, through better access to justice and advocacy. This will be achieved by the operation of a legal assistance scheme, and the promotion of legal rights in Basrah by outreach activities. All activities will focus on providing assistance to vulnerable and disadvantaged community members.

The implementing partner will design and implement a legal assistance scheme (the 'legal help desk') to operate within Basrah Courts. The legal assistance scheme will provide free legal information and advice to defendants, their relatives and the general public. The scheme will also provide free legal representation to clients in extenuating circumstances.

The implementing partner will provide legal services relating to criminal and family status cases resulted from Domestic and Gender based violence. The targeted clients of the service will be people who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, particularly those clients who are unable to afford to pay a private lawyer. The scheme will prioritise providing legal assistance to clients who are victims of gender based violence GBV and domestic violence , and other vulnerable clients (due to factors such as physical or mental disabilities, juveniles, referrals from welfare services providing assistance to victims of torture and abuse, poverty, vulnerability due to belonging to an ethnic minority, etc). The scheme will develop and implement a referral process to refer clients to Iraqi Bar Association.

The implementing partner will also undertake legal outreach activities in Basrah and adjacent districts, to promote the legal assistance scheme and also promote legal rights.

All policies and procedures, documents and manuals produced by the implementing partner will be reviewed and endorsed by UNDP Iraq prior to finalization.

The scheme will operate for an initial period of one year, with a possibility of extension.

In close coordination with the HJC, the Basrah Court Complex management, Iraqi Bar Association, Family Protection Units and any other relevant stakeholders, the implementing partner will:

a) ***Develop an inception report***, setting out in detail the activities to be undertaken under this contract and the actions required to implement the activities. The inception report will include an action plan with time-bound activities, resource (financial and staffing) plan, monitoring and evaluation system for quality assurance, and identification of risks and the mitigation strategy for such risks.

b) ***Establish and manage document systems, policies and procedures required to operate the legal assistance service***, including intake procedures, clients records systems, conflict of interest policies (particularly in relation to GBV cases, where the scheme may be assisting the victim as well as requested to assist the defendant), case file structures and a client referral manual.

The policies and procedures established will include a monitoring and evaluation system, with a system designed to provide quality assurance for the work performed by the implementing partner under the contract, and to measure progress towards achieving the project targets. The policies and procedures will also identify measures to ensure the sustainability of the legal assistance scheme beyond the project lifespan.

The legal assistance scheme will provide assistance in criminal and family status cases resulted from DGBV. The types of assistance which will be provided, and eligibility criteria for assistance, will be included in the intake manual developed by the implementing partner.

The policies and procedures will include a referral process to refer clients who require other assistance to suitable organisations (such as for counselling, psycho-social support, medical treatment etc). The referral process will also refer clients to do not meet the selection criteria (such as those clients who have the necessary financial means to afford the services of a lawyer) to the private lawyer, in conjunction with the Iraqi Bar Association.

c) ***Establish and operate a legal assistance scheme at Basrah Justice Palace, Basrah, Iraq.***

The legal assistance scheme will provide legal information and advice to accused, their relatives and members of the public.

The scheme will operate with at least four qualified and experienced lawyers at Basrah and Justice Palace, two qualified and experienced lawyers available at the Court to provide assistance each day during the normal operating hours of the courts. Two social workers will also be recruited for determining what non-legal services might be needed, as well as performing other tasks, including informal mediation, referrals and related matters. A social worker will be available each day at the courts during the normal operating hours.

The additional lawyers are necessary to ensure that at least two lawyers are available at the court during absences of the principal lawyers. These absences could include periods of leave for the principal lawyers, training, participation in meetings, representation of clients away from the Basrah Justice Palace, outreach activities, providing advice and assistance outside the court, development of manuals and resources or other activities which would prevent the legal assistance scheme lawyers from providing advice to clients at the court.

Implementing partners may propose more than four lawyers if they consider it necessary for the service. Implementing partners may also propose additional staff (such as social workers, paralegals, communications and outreach staff, law students etc) to assist with the scheme. However, legal advice and legal representation will only be given by qualified lawyers

The scheme will establish a referral network, to receive case referrals from sources such as Family Protection Units, community welfare agencies, NGOs, police, lawyers and Government departments. The scheme will also establish a referral network to refer clients to professional service providers, including lawyers, psycho-social services, medical services and welfare organisations. The scheme must refer clients to other lawyers in an impartial and objective way, and will collaborate with the Iraqi Bar Association to develop this process.

In the event of limited caseloads and referrals to the scheme, the implementing partner will proactively undertake initiatives to increase referrals, such as mobile legal services to deliver legal assistance at the locations of vulnerable people (including police stations and detention centres), or co-locating lawyers with other service providers to provide legal assistance as part of an integrated service (i.e. decentralised service delivery).

d) ***Provide legal representation to clients in exceptional circumstances.*** Such circumstances would include providing assistance to poor who cannot afford private lawyers victims of gender based violence, and other particularly vulnerable clients (due to factors such as physical or mental disabilities, juveniles, referrals from welfare services providing assistance to victims of torture and abuse, poverty, vulnerability due to belonging to an ethnic minority, poor people in detention, etc).

Care should be taken to mitigate potential conflicts of interest, particularly where the scheme is providing representation to clients.

e) ***Develop a legal outreach programme and undertake local level legal outreach and awareness raising activities to promote legal rights and awareness of the legal assistance scheme.*** The legal outreach services will target vulnerable groups with limited knowledge of legal rights, and groups in frequent contact with the justice system (such as young people, minority groups over-represented in detention centres etc). Legal outreach will promote legal rights, particularly those relevant to the criminal justice system, such as the right to a lawyer and the right to avoid self-incrimination. Legal outreach will also promote mechanisms for the accused or their family members to contact a lawyer to seek legal assistance.

Legal outreach campaigns should be based on relatively low cost initiatives, including mobile workshops, radio appearances, newspaper interviews and articles, and printing publications, posters, brochures, banners etc. Outreach involving creative arts, such as recording music, art displays, photo competitions etc could also be proposed. Other legal outreach campaign approaches may also be proposed. Sufficient allowances for these activities must be made in the proposal budget.

f) ***Provision of training on legal aid and legal rights.*** A training plan will be developed and implemented with a view to increase the awareness and capacity of relevant actors (inc. Family Protection Units, Bar Association, NGOs, legal professional, law students, etc.) on legal aid, access to justice and legal rights. The training will target in priorities those institutions whose role in the provision of legal aid is deemed critical in order to increase coordination and enhance referral processes.

2. Selection process

A selection panel comprised of UNDP-Iraq staff will review the applications.

Step 1: Incomplete and late applications will be excluded (please refer to the list of documents to be submitted in the Submission Details section below).

Step 2: The selection panel will evaluate the proposals and budgets against the attached grid (Annex 1).

Step 3: The selection panel will select the top scoring NGOs for granting.

NGOs will be informed of the selection results approximately 1-2 weeks after the application deadline.

3. Submission Details:

Interested NGOs should send an email containing:

1. Form A: Project Proposal form completed
2. Form B: Project Budget form completed
3. Copy of original valid certification of legal NGO registration
4. Recommendation letters of international donors (optional)
5. Support letters from government or parliament institutions in case the project requires such cooperation (optional)

Language of submission: English

Address:

bids.iraq@undp.org

nahid.hussein@undp.org

shabaz.jamal@undp.org

Email subject: Submission Provision of Legal Assistance services in Basrah.

Deadline: no later than **5:00pm (Iraq time) 1 November. 2014**

Annexes

- Annex 1 – Project proposal evaluation grid
- Form A – Project Proposal form
- Form B – Project Budget form

Disclaimer

UNDP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received without incurring any obligation to inform the affected applicants.

ANNEX 1

Project Proposal Evaluation Grid

Project Proposal for legal aid grant	Score	
1. Relevance	Sub-score	100
1.1 Relevance of the proposal to the thematic area of the call for proposals.	50	
1.2 Relevance of the proposed beneficiary/ target groups? Are they and their differentiated needs clearly identified?	50	
2. Methodology and Approach	Sub-score	400
2.1 Is the overall methodology and approach relevant to the objectives of the project proposal?	100	
2.2 Do the activities provide for a clear and structured way to achieve the project proposal objectives?	100	
2.3 Is the results framework well structured, following a logical hierarchy of results that provide specific ways of assessing progress and performance?	50	
2.4 Is the work plan consistent with the proposal and realistically achievable within the given timeframe?	100	
2.5 Does the project proposal approach reflect gender differential issues? Does it take into account specific needs and opportunities for men and women?	50	
3. Sustainability	Sub-score	200
3.1 Is the proposal likely to have an immediate		

impact on the target groups throughout the project's duration?	100	
3.2 To what extent does the project proposal plan working closely with government institutions and other relevant actors are there any mechanisms to promote a structured relationship with these institutions?	100	
4. Cost effectiveness	Sub-score	100
4.1 Is the proposed budget presenting a reasonable value for money ratio? Is the ratio between the planned resources and expected impact satisfactory?	50	
4.2 Is the proposed budget displaying necessary and relevant costs for the achievement of the project's objectives?	50	
5. Applicant experience	Sub-score	200
5.1 Is the applicant NGO mandate relevant to the thematic areas of the call for proposal?	50	
5.2 Do the past activities of the applicant NGO reflect relevance visa-vie the interventions described in the Call for Proposals.	100	
5.3 Does the applicant NGO have previous international funding experience?	50	
Total score		1000