



Council of Europe Programme

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title:	Assistance and guidance (coaching) to the local authorities in Armenia in the implementation of local pilot initiatives on ethical governance and transparency
Contract type	Consultant's Contract – national
Estimated duration:	March – October 2017; maximum 41 working days
Duty Station:	Armenia, with international travel

I. Background

The thematic programme “Strengthening institutional frameworks for local governance” is part of a regional programme to be implemented by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) under the CoE/EU Eastern Partnership Programmatic Co-operation Framework (PCF) during 2015 – 2017 in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus.

The purpose of the thematic programme is to support the on-going processes of local government reform and to promote ethical behaviour by local elected representatives in the respective countries. In particular, it aims to foster a more efficient, transparent and ethical governance at the local level, and increase citizen participation.

To this end, the Congress Secretariat launched a Call for proposals for ‘Local initiatives on ethical governance and transparency’ in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, on 10 November 2016. This resulted in 21 applications by local authorities for the implementation of initiatives which will lead to a higher level of citizen participation in local decision-making; reflecting knowledge acquired from the peer-to-peer work on transparency, accountability and integrity in local governance, carried out under the programme from 2015 - 2016. From these, 12 proposals (3 per country) were selected for funding and further support through coaching and peer exchange.

II. Purpose of the consultancy

The objective of the consultancy is to provide methodological support and guidance to three communities from Armenia (Aygepat, Kamir Aghek and Tashir) throughout the various stages in the implementation of their local initiatives, and facilitate the peer-reviews to be conducted at country level. The support is aimed both at strengthening municipalities’ project management capacities and at strengthening the mayors’ leadership skills. A peer-to-peer review, which will complement the implementation phase, will evaluate the results achieved by each municipality, whilst encouraging networking and exchange of good practices at country level.

III. Deliverables

The following tasks should be undertaken in the framework of the consultancy:

1. **First round of coaching visits to municipalities:**

- a. Conduct the first round of coaching visits together with international consultant(s) and provide expert support and guidance to the selected communities, with the aim to refine and develop the selected proposals into fully-fledged operational plans. The coacher shall work together with the programme team on fine-tuning activities with the goal and objectives of the project.
- b. Plan the visit so as to coincide with other practical/participatory instruments, beneficial to enhancing the quality and impact of planned activities.

2. **Second round of coaching visits to municipalities**

- a. Conduct the second round of coaching visits together with international consultant(s), with the aim to provide expert guidance in, and assessment of, the various stages of implementation and the potential revision of Action Plans, and to assess indicators of change;
- b. Plan the visit so as to coincide with a local council meeting open to the public / or public hearing organised by municipality, where the project and its preliminary results will be discussed. If possible, the coacher shall co-moderate the public meeting;
- c. Provide advice to local authorities in preparing their final narrative reports and propose the revision if necessary.

Note: *The team of coaches from all participating countries is encouraged to develop a common methodology for preparing this round of visits, together with the local authorities in respective countries.*

3. **Permanent consultation/advice from coaches**

- a. Remain available for consultation by phone / email / Skype or other means for the whole duration of initiatives, when the project leaders need help or advice.

Note: *This time shall be managed individually by each coacher, in agreement with the grantee, but clearly reflected in the consultant's reporting.*

4. **Community of Practice meeting**

- a. Participate in the Community of Practice meeting, organised within the programme, in Strasbourg, France, to share experience on the progress and achievements within each project and methodology applied in coaching and implementation.

5. **Exchange on peer reviews**

- a. Participate in and provide substantive input, as requested by the programme team.

Note: *A peer review tour will be organised in each country towards the end of the project timeframe, in which the three implementing municipalities will visit each other and discuss the impact of their projects, sharing experiences, lessons learned and possible follow ups. The programme team will facilitate the organisation of peer reviews in each country.*

6. **Final report**

- a. Draft a final report (in English) assessing the process of implementation of local initiatives in each municipality, the challenges faced by grantees; lessons learned, whilst evaluating the sustainability of implemented initiatives and providing recommendations for future similar initiatives in the region.

7. Regional seminar on good practices

- a. Participate in and facilitate, as needed, a regional seminar on good practices organised by the Congress, after the projects are completed (October 2017, location TBD), to discuss the outcomes of the local initiatives implemented in participating countries.

The programme team will provide the needed support to coaches and will facilitate communication. The format and structure of all deliverables should be further discussed with the programme team.

IV. Qualifications

The Call is open to individual consultants only. The consultants hired through these Terms of Reference will conduct their tasks in close co-operation with the programme team in Chisinau and in Headquarters (Strasbourg, France).

- Proven experience in conducting instructional and participatory trainings for local public authorities;
- Extensive experience (at least 5 years) in working in the area of strengthening capacities of local authorities;
- Knowledge of recent developments in key areas of local governance in Armenia and understanding of the developments in European Union-Eastern Partnership countries with local authorities in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine;
- Awareness of the Council of Europe principles and standards for local democracy;
- Capability and proven experience in facilitating discussions;
- Excellent oral and drafting skills; the ability to translate complex ideas and concepts into clear and concrete language;
- Proven experience in working with international organisations (successful experience in working with the Council of Europe is an asset);
- Knowledge of Russian and English.

V. Timeframe

Expected start date: 23 March 2017

The tasks shall be undertaken as per an agreed work-plan between the service provider and the programme team, and finished no later than 31 November 2017.

Tasks & expected deliverables	Working time	Indicative schedule
First round of coaching visits to municipalities	2 days per municipality	27 March 2017
Permanent consultation / advice from coaches	No more than 9 days	30 August 2017
Progress reporting	1 day	7 April 2017
Community of practice meeting	2 days	Mid-June 2017
Second round of coaching visits to municipalities	2 days per municipality	15 July 2017
Peer reviews	6 days	15 September 2017
Final report	2 days	30 September 2017
Regional seminar on good practices	3 days	30 October 2017 (dates and location TBD)

Note: The format and structure of all deliverables should be further discussed with the programme team. Deliverables are subject to amendment during the assignment, if needed and agreed between the consultants and the Council of Europe programme team.

VI. Procedures for submission of applications

Incomplete submissions will not be considered. Applications must be submitted in English and include:

- Letter of interest highlighting the experience of the applicant in conducting similar tasks with a clear mention of the all-inclusive maximum fee of 5,800 EUR. This fee would include remuneration for all deliverables and cost for subsistence expenses related to the fulfilment of the assignment in Armenia. For this, the consultant shall not be covered by any travel or personal insurance policy maintained by the Council of Europe. All international travel will be organised separately with the Council of Europe, according to the respective travelling and insurance rules and procedures.
- A document outlining the plan of action, briefly describing the approach to coaching in accordance with the tasks described and the timeframe provided within the Terms of Reference (ToR);
- CV highlighting experience in conducting similar tasks.

Deadline for applications: 15 March 2017 (by midnight, CET, GMT + 1). Applications will be reviewed as received.

The applications should be submitted in electronic format (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: congress.cooperation@coe.int.

Emails should contain the following reference in subject: ***COACHING - Local initiatives on ethical governance and transparency.***