

Request for Proposals and Terms of Reference

External Expert/Consultant: Technical Assistance for Strengthening Local Government Associations' Committees

1. Summary of Requirements

The Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South East Europe (NALAS), within the project, Project "Institutional strengthening of RCDN+ partner associations for sustainable contribution to the water and sanitation sector", supported by GIZ, requests proposals from interested Consultants to provide technical assistance for strengthening Local Government Association Committees with special focus on the strengthening and operationalisation of Water and Sanitation Services (WSS) Committees.

2. Invitation

Consultants with proven experience and expertise in working with local governments on water and sanitation issues, as well as in the development, institutional building, and advocacy of local governments and their associations, are invited to respond to this Request for Proposals.

3. Request for Proposals Terminology

The following terms will apply to this Request for Proposals (RfP) and Terms of Reference (ToR) and to any subsequent Contract. Submission of a proposal in response to this Request for Proposals indicates acceptance of all the following terms:

Terminology

- a) "NALAS" means the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South East Europe;
- b) "Contract" means the written agreement resulting from the Request for Proposal executed by the NALAS Secretariat and the successful vendor;
- c) "Contractor" means the successful vendor selected from this Request for Proposal;
- d) "Must", "Mandatory" or "Required" means a requirement that must be met in order for a proposal to receive consideration;
- e) "Consultant" means an individual that submits, or intends to submit, a proposal in response to this Request for Proposal.

4. Closing Date and Location

To be considered, proposals must be received in electronic form not later than **9 September 2024 (Monday), 16:00 (CET)** at info@nalas.eu, with the Subject: Offer for technical assistance for strengthening local government associations' committees.

5. Enquiries

This Request for Proposal can be downloaded from the NALAS website at www.nalas.eu. For any questions about the content of this RfP, please contact NALAS Grant Manager, Ms. Vanja Starovlah, at starovlah@nalas.eu, or +38267271210.

6. Ownership of Proposals

All documents, including proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposals become the property of NALAS. However, only the submissions by the successful contractor will be used. Once a contract has been awarded, the name of the successful consultant will be available to the public upon request.

7. Project Overview

The project Institutional strengthening of RCDN+ partner associations for sustainable contribution to the water and sanitation sector aims at increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Associations of Public Utilities (APUCs) and of Local Government Associations (LGAs) in the six Western Balkan countries, which contributes to better service provision for and by their members, ultimately allowing to deliver equitable, safely managed drinking water and sanitation services to the population, in line with international standards.

The project is jointly financed by the Government of Switzerland – State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and development (BMZ), and it is administratively embedded in the GIZ Project “Open Regional Fund Modernisation of Municipal Services (ORF MMS)”, commissioned by BMZ.

Four key sets of activities will contribute to achieve the project outcomes:

Outcome 1: (Stronger associations). APUCs and LGAs are capable to perform their organisational functions in line with their mandate.

Outcome 2: (Adequate capacity development offer). APUCs and LGAs are capable of responding satisfactorily to the water sector-related capacity development needs and requests of their members.

Outcome 3: (Policy dialogue led by associations). APUCs and LGAs are recognised by competent national agencies, able to establish strategic collaborations, and to facilitate policy dialogue in order to advocate for the interests of their members

Outcome 4: (Regional services). Regional capacity development services address the needs and requests and add value to the capacity development offer of APUCs and LGAs.

RCDN+ partner LGAs have planned number of activities for establishing and strengthening committees dealing with WSS, as the key institutional mechanism for providing expertise in setting associations' WSS agenda, related to its CD and advocacy activities. Within this project, NALAS will provide support in all phases of establishment, operationalisation and work of the committees.

Therefore, NALAS is looking to engage a Consultant with relevant experience and expertise to submit proposal for providing technical assistance, mentoring and supporting the establishment and operationalisation of Water and Sanitation Services Committees.

8. The Aim of the Assignment

The aim of the assignment is to provide technical assistance, mentor and support the strengthening and operationalisation of WSS Committees within four partner LGAs from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania, ensuring they function effectively as institutional mechanisms for expertise, policy development, and advocacy in the WSS sector.

The Consultant shall be responsible for the following tasks:

- Familiarise with the existing structures, capacities, needs and plans of the four LGAs related to their WSS Committees and identify 3 main areas of technical assistance/support in each LGA.

- Establish a monitoring framework to track the progress and results of the WSS Committees.
- Follow the process of development of the WSS Committees, attend their meetings and provide inputs related to the agreed areas of support, such as: composition of the Committee, terms of reference, work plans, meeting organisation, work between meetings, communication, capacity development of members, etc.
- Provide reports on the establishment and operationalisation of the WSS Committees in partner LGAs, including challenges and recommendations for improvement.

All activities within this ToR shall be completed no later than 31 **October** 2025.

9. Activities and Deliverables under the contract

Activity	To be completed by	Deliverables	Expert days
1. Situation analysis and identification of areas of technical assistance/support in each LGA	14 October 2024	Workplan, including a list of agreed areas of technical assistance/support in each LGA, methodology and timeframe	4
2. Developing a monitoring framework/tool to track the progress and results of WSS Committees	30 October 2024	Monitoring framework/ tool	2
3. Provision of the technical assistance	30 October 2025	3 months reports on the progress, challenges and recommendations for improvement Final report	14
		Total (maximum) number of expert days:	20

All deliverables under this ToR should be approved by NALAS Grant Manager.

10. Proposal submission

The complete proposals submitted by the consultant shall include the following elements:

Technical Offer:

- a) Cover Letter, explaining the consultant's suitability for the assignment, as specified in this RfP;
- b) Proposed approach
- c) Detailed CV of the consultant that clearly demonstrates how the consultant meets the criteria stated under Chapter 11;

Financial Offer:

- d) Financial offer, including the number of expert days for the assignment, fee per day and total amount, using the table below. The travel and accommodation costs for the execution of the assignment shall be covered by the consultant themselves and calculated as part of the proposed fee. The fees should be gross and stated in euros. The gross amount should include the personal income taxes and other taxes obligatory under the laws of the Republic of North Macedonia (at the moment 10% of the gross amount) and will be calculated and paid by NALAS. The Consultant will receive the amount reduced for the paid personal income tax.

Activity	Number of expert days	Fee per day	Total in EUR:
1. Situation analysis and identification of areas of technical assistance/support in each LGA			
2. Developing a monitoring framework/tool to track the progress and results of WSS Committees			
3. Provision of the technical assistance			
Total:			

11. Technical or professional ability of the Consultant

To qualify as capable of performing the contract in terms of its technical and professional qualifications, the consultant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- At least 10 years of experience in working with local governments.
- At least 7 years of experience in the development and institutional building of local governments and their associations.
- Strong understanding of the functioning of LGAs' committees, including those on communal services, or specifically water and sanitation services.
- Advocacy knowledge and experience.
- Strong understanding of the challenges and dynamics of the WSS sector in the South East Europe.
- At least 5 years of regional experience, working in South East Europe.
- Fluency in English.
- Knowledge of local languages is an asset.

12. Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

The evaluation of proposals will be undertaken by NALAS Evaluation Committee. The proposals will be evaluated and rated based on the criteria set out in this RfP. In order to do so:

- The proposal must be submitted in English;
- The proposal must be submitted by the stated deadline;
- The proposal must clearly list, in details, what services will be provided with the associated costs for each component;
- The proposal must be complete, containing all the elements listed in Chapter 10 of this RfP.

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate the proposals based on the following criteria:

- 40% Consultant's Capacity: relevance of Consultant's expertise and experience for fulfilling the tasks under this RfP. Previous experience with NALAS and familiarity with

NALAS and RCDN capacity development approach and quality standards will be considered as an asset;

- 30% Technical Offer: proposed approach;
- 30% Financial Offer.

13. Terms of Payment

The payment will be done in 2 instalments after receiving all specified documents:

1. First instalment after delivering and approval of the deliverables under the activities 1 and 2 and the first three-months report for activity 3, as listed in the Chapter 9 of this RfP, as well as submitted and approved timesheets;
2. Second and final instalment, after completing the assignment and approval of all other deliverables, as described in Chapters 8 and 9 of this RfP, as well as submitted and approved timesheets. *(to be submitted no later than 10 November 2025).*

14. Modification of Terms

NALAS reserves the right to modify the terms of the RfP at any time at its sole discretion.

15. Consultant Expenses

Consultants are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing a proposal and for subsequent negotiations with NALAS. Short-listed proposals may be asked to make a presentation to the Evaluation Committee, which will be solely at the Consultants own expense.

16. Acceptance and Rejection of Proposals

NALAS may not necessarily accept the lowest priced proposal or any proposal. At its sole discretion, NALAS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to accept any proposal which it considers advantageous, whether or not it is the lowest priced proposal. NALAS is not under any obligation to award a contract, and reserves the right to terminate the Request for Proposal process at any time, and to withdraw from discussions with all or any of the Consultants who have responded. NALAS reserves the right to accept the proposed offer in total or in part, to reject any or all offers, to waive any minor informalities, irregularities, or technicalities, and to accept the offer deemed most favourable to the Network.

17. Contract Negotiation

NALAS reserves the right to negotiate specific terms of the contract with the short-listed proponents prior to the final award of the contract. NALAS also reserves the right to negotiate specific terms of the contract with the Contractor as the contract progresses.

18. Ownership

All materials, documents and information prepared, developed or adjusted by the contractor for the purposes of realisation of the assignment under this ToR, remain the property of NALAS. The contractor agrees that no part of the training materials, documents and information may be reproduced or distributed in any form, or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, for any other purposes and objectives than those related to this ToR.

Thank you for your interest in submitting a proposal. It is hoped that the information provided is of value and should anything be unclear, please contact NALAS directly.