

CALL FOR PROPOSALS / TERMS OF REFERENCE

Legal Help-desk consultant

Contracting authority: Cordaid Iraq, Erbil

Service: Flexible legal and regulatory support service for civil society organisations (CSOs), delivered by an individual legal professional, law firm, legal-aid organisation, consultancy or consortium.

Coverage: Baghdad, Erbil, Basra and Nineveh/Mosul, through in-person and/or remote channels. Applicants may propose coverage for one or more locations or service areas.

Indicative duration: October 2026 – April 2028 (subject to contracting)

Submission Link: [Application Form](#)

1. Purpose

Cordaid seeks qualified and independent legal service providers to support Iraqi CSOs with practical legal, regulatory, governance and compliance advice throughout their organisational life cycle.

To ensure broad access to qualified practitioners and an efficient service model, this assignment is intentionally open to individual lawyers/legal professionals, small or large law firms, legal-aid organisations, specialised consultancies and consortia. Cordaid may select one or more providers according to geographic coverage, expertise, availability, quality and value for money.

The service is intended to provide timely, practical and confidential first-line legal support. It does not replace the responsibility of CSOs to meet their own legal obligations and does not include litigation or court representation.

2. Duties and Responsibilities

A. Individual legal advice and legal clinics

- Receive and respond to enquiries through agreed channels such as WhatsApp/telephone, email, online consultations and scheduled in-person sessions.
- Provide concise, legally referenced advice appropriate to the complexity of the case.
- Acknowledge enquiries within one working day where practicable; simple enquiries should normally be addressed within three working days and complex cases within ten working days.
- Triage cases as Level 1 (information/general guidance), Level 2 (document review and consultation) or Level 3 (complex matter requiring specialist advice/referral).
- Maintain confidentiality and use only the minimum information required to provide the service.

B. Registration and establishment guidance

- Explain registration procedures with the federal NGO Directorate and the NGO Department of the Kurdistan Regional Government, including relevant electronic procedures.
- Review by-laws, founding statements, election/appointment minutes and administrative documents prepared by the CSO and provide comments.
- Identify reasons for stalled applications and advise on practical next steps.
- Support CSOs to understand, rather than outsource, their registration responsibilities.

C. Post-registration compliance and amendments

- Advise on annual compliance requirements, including licence renewal, annual reporting, registers and notifications.
- Provide guidance on warnings, suspension-related matters and formal responses.
- Advise on amendments involving board members/founders, address, branches, scope of work, by-laws and organisational structure.
- Advise on relevant secondary approvals and sectoral requirements.
- Where requested, conduct a focused compliance review and provide a concise action plan.

D. Tax and legal-financial framework

- Explain applicable tax instructions affecting NGOs/CSOs, including withholding tax and the treatment of grants, donations and gifts.
- Refer complex tax matters to appropriately qualified specialists where required.
- The service does not include bookkeeping or accounting services.

E. Employment, contracts and governance

- Advise on employment, volunteer, intern and consultancy agreements, social security registration, disciplinary processes and termination.
- Review, before signature, grant, sub-grant, partnership, consultancy, service, lease, cooperation and non-disclosure agreements.
- Advise on board disputes, general assembly powers and lawful procedures for changing members or officers.
- Provide or adapt practical templates and governance tools where appropriate.

F. Legal protection and referral

- Provide first-line guidance in cases involving summonses, investigations, inspections, document requests, administrative pressure or internal governance disputes.
- Maintain or access an appropriate referral network for matters requiring specialist counsel or litigation.
- Court representation and litigation are outside this assignment.
- Coordinate, where relevant, with the digital security and psychosocial help desks under agreed referral procedures.

G. Awareness, legal alerts and resources

- Where included in the agreed service package, prepare short legal alerts in Arabic and/or Kurdish on significant legal or regulatory developments affecting CSOs.
- Contribute to practical FAQs, checklists, templates and step-by-step guidance.
- Participate in selected group information sessions or legal clinics when requested and agreed.

H. Case management, reporting and learning

- Maintain a confidential and proportionate case-management record.
- Provide anonymised case information and brief periodic reporting in the format agreed with Cordaid.
- Highlight recurring legal barriers and emerging issues affecting CSOs.
- Coordinate with SOUTNA trainers and hub facilitators where this improves consistency of support.

3. Out of Scope

- Preparing registration documents entirely on behalf of CSOs or processing their files at government offices.
- Court representation or litigation.
- Any transaction involving the sale, transfer or assignment of a registered organisation for consideration; such requests must be refused and, where appropriate, logged.
- Offering or promoting commercial registration, accreditation or foreign-licensing services to supported CSOs during the assignment, directly or through affiliates.
- Bookkeeping or accounting services.

4. Expected Outputs / Deliverables

Deliverables will be proportionate to the selected provider's scope and agreed service package. They may include:

- Individual legal consultations and written legal advice.
- Document reviews and compliance guidance.
- Referrals to specialist counsel where necessary.
- Legal clinics or group information sessions.
- Practical templates, checklists, FAQs and legal alerts, where included in the agreed scope.
- Anonymised case records and periodic activity summaries.
- A short final summary of recurring legal issues and recommendations, where applicable.

Cordaid may contract one or more providers and may allocate cases according to geographic area, subject matter, language, availability and workload.

5. Eligible Providers and Minimum Requirements

The call is open to:

- Individual lawyers or other legally qualified professionals authorised to provide the relevant legal services in Iraq and/or the Kurdistan Region.
- Law firms and legal practices.
- Legal-aid organisations and specialised legal service organisations.
- Registered consultancies or companies with qualified legal professionals, where legally permitted to provide the proposed services.
- Consortia or partnerships between eligible practitioners or organisations.

Minimum requirements:

- Appropriate professional licence/authorisation for the services and geographic area proposed.
- Demonstrated relevant experience in Iraqi NGO/CSO law, registration, governance, employment, contracts, compliance or related legal matters.
- Knowledge of the applicable federal Iraqi and/or Kurdistan Region legal and regulatory framework relevant to the proposed scope.
- Ability to provide services in Arabic; Kurdish is required for assignments serving Kurdish-speaking CSOs in the Kurdistan Region.
- Strong confidentiality, safeguarding, data-protection and conflict-of-interest practices.
- Individual applicants should submit their own CV and professional licence. Organisations should identify the qualified professionals who will actually deliver the services.

Applicants do not need to maintain a permanent office in all programme locations. Providers may propose remote delivery, periodic in-person availability, or a combination of both.

6. Proposal and Financial Offer

Applicants are encouraged to submit a concise proposal suited to their capacity. Individual applicants and small providers are not expected to submit the same level of documentation as a large institutional provider.

Technical proposal:

- Brief profile and relevant experience.
- Proposed geographic coverage and/or legal specialisations.
- Proposed service model, availability and response times.
- CV(s) and copies of relevant professional licences.
- At least two relevant references or examples of comparable work, where available.
- Confirmation of confidentiality and conflict-of-interest arrangements.

Financial proposal:

- Applicants should propose clear and competitive unit rates for the services they can provide, such as Level 1 advice, Level 2 consultation/document review, Level 3 complex case support and/or other clearly defined service packages.
- Applicants may also propose package or session rates where appropriate.
- Pricing will be applied per individual service delivered. Each service will be recorded separately, and the service provider will be paid after each service is completed, on this basis and at the agreed rates.
- Rates should state what is included and identify any exceptional costs separately.
- No fixed monthly retainer is required unless specifically proposed by the applicant.
- Cordaid does not guarantee a minimum number of cases, consultations or assignments. Services will be requested and paid against agreed rates and satisfactorily completed outputs/services.
- Cordaid may select different providers for different locations, specialisations or types of cases.

The objective is to establish an accessible pool of qualified providers and obtain practical legal services at competitive rates, while maintaining professional quality and safeguarding standards.

7. Selection

Offers will be assessed on a best-value basis, taking into account:

- Relevant legal expertise and experience.
- Professional licensing and suitability for the proposed geographic/service scope.
- Responsiveness and availability.
- Practicality of the proposed service model.
- Confidentiality, independence and safeguarding arrangements.
- References and demonstrated quality.
- Financial competitiveness and overall value for money.

Cordaid may request clarification, interview applicants where appropriate, negotiate service rates/scope with shortlisted providers, or select more than one provider. The call does not guarantee an award or a minimum volume of work.

8. Submission

Please submit the proposal and financial offer to the link: [Application Form](#)

Applicants may submit either as an individual professional or on behalf of an organisation/consortium. The submission should clearly indicate the locations and types of legal services the applicant is able to provide.

Selected providers must comply with Cordaid's confidentiality, safeguarding, data-protection, integrity and conflict-of-interest requirements.