

Terms of Reference

Senior Community Engagement and Mediation Consultant

1. Background

1.1 About Madarat

Madarat Al-Salam for Sustainable Development (Madarat) is an Iraqi non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to implementing programmes that promote locally owned peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and sustainable development. Madarat works closely with communities, civil society organizations, local authorities, and development partners to strengthen dialogue, encourage inclusive participation, and support collaborative solutions to local challenges in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Through its work, Madarat seeks to strengthen the capacity of local actors and institutions to prevent conflict, manage disputes constructively, and contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. The organization places strong emphasis on community ownership, partnership, accountability, and conflict-sensitive programming to ensure that interventions respond to local priorities and contribute to long-term stability.

1.2 About the Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) Project

The *Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) project*, implemented by Berghof Foundation Operations gGmbH in partnership with Madarat Al Salam for Sustainable Development (Madarat) and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, aims to strengthen social cohesion and local conflict management capacities in Iraq.

The project is grounded in the premise that structured, inclusive dialogue processes can reduce social fragmentation, build trust among stakeholders, and enable collaborative problem-solving. By creating safe and facilitated spaces for interaction between communities and authorities, the project supports the emergence of locally owned mechanisms capable of addressing conflict drivers and managing disputes in a sustainable manner.

Within this broader framework, the project adopts a **multi-track approach** that combines local-level mechanism development, targeted monitoring of existing agreements, and engagement with policy-level dialogue processes. These tracks are interrelated and designed to reinforce each other through evidence generation, iterative learning, and feedback loops between local practice and policy engagement.

The primary operational focus of the project is the **establishment and operationalization of a Water User Association (WUA)**—or strengthening an existing one—at district or sub-district level. The WUA functions as a legally recognized mechanism under Iraqi law, managed by the Ministry of Water Resources, and serves as a platform for addressing water-related tensions,

disputes, and resource management challenges through structured, multi-stakeholder engagement. This track represents the core entry point for building a functional, locally owned infrastructure for peace anchored in water resource management/governance.

In parallel, the project includes a **targeted monitoring and exploratory engagement track in Midaina district, Basrah governorate**, building on a previously facilitated agricultural equipment use agreement concluded in 2025. This track does not aim to directly support the establishment or institutionalization of a formal conflict resolution mechanism at this stage. Instead, it focuses on light-touch monitoring of progress related to the agreement, assessing political and social dynamics, and identifying potential entry points for future engagement. This approach reflects the current context in Midaina, characterized by complex political and social dynamics, limited trust between communities and authorities, and a scale of conflict that exceeds the immediate scope and resources of the project. As such, a cautious, analytical, and adaptive approach is adopted to avoid unintended tensions while maintaining strategic engagement.

In addition, the project contributes to a **policy dialogue track led by Berghof Foundation**, which seeks to connect local-level experiences with broader policy discussions related to the intersection between climate-security, adaptation, and conflict dynamics. Within this track, Madarat—supported technically by PPO—will contribute evidence, lessons learned, and insights generated from field-level implementation to inform the design and content of policy dialogues. Furthermore, Madarat and PPO may support the facilitation of these dialogues when scheduled by Berghof, ensuring that local perspectives are meaningfully integrated into higher-level discussions.

Together, these three tracks—WUA establishment, Midaina monitoring, and policy dialogue engagement—form a coherent intervention logic that links local practice with adaptive learning and policy influence. This integrated approach ensures that the project remains responsive to context, grounded in local realities, and strategically positioned to contribute to both immediate climate-induced conflict management needs and longer-term institutional development.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide senior-level technical support for the design, facilitation, and accompaniment of community engagement, mediation, and stakeholder dialogue processes implemented under the I4P project.

The consultant will support Madarat in facilitating inclusive dialogue among local stakeholders, strengthening collaborative approaches to water governance, accompanying the establishment and operationalization of the Water User Association in Anbar, Saqlawiyah, supporting monitoring of locally facilitated agreement in Basra, Midaina, and contributing technical expertise to policy dialogue processes. Throughout the assignment, the consultant is expected to apply conflict-sensitive approaches that strengthen trust, promote constructive engagement, and contribute to sustainable locally owned solutions.

3. Scope of the Assignment

Working under the overall supervision of Madarat and in close coordination with the Executive Director (or designated Project Manager) and Berghof Foundation technical counterparts, the consultant will provide specialized facilitation, mediation, and stakeholder engagement services throughout the implementation of the assignment.

The consultancy will involve planning and facilitating dialogue processes, accompanying community consultations, supporting the establishment and strengthening of the Water User Association in the targeted location, mentoring local stakeholders where appropriate, monitoring implementation of selected local initiatives or agreements, identifying emerging implementation challenges, and providing technical inputs that contribute to adaptive project implementation.

The consultant shall undertake assignments in accordance with approved workplans while maintaining close coordination with Madarat's technical and operational teams and ensuring that all activities are conducted in accordance with conflict-sensitive, inclusive, and participatory principles.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The consultant shall be responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

A. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Coordination

- Facilitate consultations with community representatives, local authorities, technical institutions, farmers, tribal representatives, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Promote inclusive participation and constructive engagement among stakeholders throughout project implementation.
- Support relationship-building and trust among local actors participating in dialogue processes.

B. Facilitation and Mediation

- Design and facilitate dialogue sessions, community meetings, stakeholder consultations, and mediation processes as required.
- Apply conflict-sensitive facilitation techniques that encourage constructive participation and consensus-building.
- Support peaceful resolution of emerging disputes affecting project implementation where appropriate.

C. Water User Association Support

- Facilitate community awareness sessions supporting the establishment and operationalization of the Water User Association in the targeted location.
- Support governance discussions, participatory decision-making processes, and orientation of newly established WUA leadership structures.

- Provide mentoring and technical accompaniment to WUA representatives throughout implementation.

D. Monitoring and Adaptive Implementation Support

- Conduct field consultations and monitoring visits to assess implementation progress and identify emerging risks, challenges, and opportunities.
- Provide practical recommendations to strengthen implementation and improve stakeholder engagement.
- Contribute to adaptive management through continuous feedback from the field.

E. Policy Dialogue Support

- Facilitate policy dialogue sessions as requested.
- Provide technical inputs into the design and implementation of policy dialogue activities.
- Contribute lessons learned and field observations that inform broader policy discussions.

F. Coordination and Reporting

- Participate in coordination meetings with Madarat and the Berghof Foundation.
- Maintain regular communication with the Executive Director (or designated Project Manager) regarding implementation progress.
- Submit required deliverables in accordance with agreed timelines.
- Immediately report significant implementation risks, stakeholder concerns, or emerging conflict dynamics that may affect project implementation.

5. Deliverables and Level of Effort

The total Level of Effort for this assignment is **25 working days** over a period of 5 months.

#	Deliverable	Description	Delivery Date	LoE (Days)
1	Community Engagement Sessions	Facilitation of up to ten community engagement and awareness sessions supporting inclusive participation and establishment of WUA in the targeted location.	Mid- August	5
2	WUA Kick-off & Orientation	Facilitation of participatory workshop for board election and bylaws agreement, Design and facilitation of orientation session for newly established WUA leadership on governance arrangements and operational responsibilities	August - September	2

#	Deliverable	Description	Delivery Date	LoE (Days)
3	Capacity Building	Design and facilitation of a two-day capacity-building workshop focusing on conflict resolution, collaborative governance, and inclusive participation.	Early September	2
4	Mentoring Support	Ongoing mentoring and technical accompaniment for WUA representatives addressing governance and water-related conflict management challenges.	November	5
5	Monitoring Consultations	Field consultations and monitoring visits in Midaina, to assess implementation progress and identify adaptive management recommendations.	October	4
6	Policy Dialogue Facilitation	Facilitation of policy dialogue sessions involving relevant institutional and community stakeholders.	As scheduled with Madarat and BF	5
7	Policy Dialogue Input	Technical contribution to the preparation and design of policy dialogue processes and related documentation.	As scheduled with Madarat and BF	2
Total				25

6. Duration & Duty Station

The consultancy is expected to be implemented over a period of **five (5) months**, commencing in **August 2026** and concluding in **December 2026**.

The consultant shall be **based in Erbil, Iraq**, and shall undertake regular travel to the project target locations as required for the implementation of the assignment. The primary field locations include:

- **Saqlawiyah District, Anbar Governorate** (Water User Association establishment and operationalization activities); and
- **Midaina District, Basra Governorate** (monitoring implementation of the existing local agreement, conducting monitoring consultations, and supporting local conflict resolution processes).

Additional travel to other project locations may be required subject to project needs and prior coordination with Madarat. Remote preparation, coordination, reporting, and documentation activities may be undertaken where appropriate.

7. Reporting and Coordination

The consultant will report to the **Executive Director of Madarat (or designated Project Manager)** and work in close coordination with the other designated technical and operational staff.

The consultant shall:

- participate in scheduled coordination and planning meetings;
- maintain regular communication regarding implementation progress;
- provide timely updates on emerging issues affecting implementation;
- submit deliverables according to agreed timelines and quality standards;
- coordinate closely with Berghof Foundation representatives during implementation where authorized by Madarat.

8. Required Qualifications and Competencies

Education

- Master's degree (or equivalent professional experience) in Peace and Conflict Studies, Political Science, Development Studies, Environmental Management, Public Administration, or another relevant discipline.

Professional Experience

- Minimum seven (7) years of progressively responsible professional experience in peacebuilding, mediation, stakeholder engagement, dialogue facilitation, natural resource governance, or related fields.
- Demonstrated experience facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue and consensus-building processes involving government institutions, civil society organizations, community representatives, and local leaders.
- Proven experience supporting community-based governance mechanisms, participatory decision-making processes, or similar institutional strengthening initiatives.
- Previous experience supporting the establishment, operationalization, or strengthening of Water User Associations (WUAs) or comparable water governance structures in Iraq.
- Demonstrated experience designing, facilitating, and supporting high-level policy dialogue processes involving national and sub-national government institutions, technical authorities, development partners, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Demonstrated experience supporting the implementation, monitoring, or institutionalization of locally negotiated agreements, charters, or collaborative governance mechanisms, preferably in the fields of climate governance, climate adaptation, climate security, natural resource management, or water governance.

- Previous experience working on projects funded by international development partners.

Technical Competencies

- Strong understanding of Iraq's water governance framework, including the institutional roles and mandates of relevant federal, governorate, and district-level authorities responsible for water resources management.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the legal, regulatory, and procedural framework governing the establishment and operation of Water User Associations in Iraq.
- Sound understanding of irrigation systems, water allocation challenges, agricultural water management, and the conflict dynamics associated with shared natural resources.
- Established professional networks and demonstrated ability to engage effectively with key decision-makers and technical officials within the Ministry of Water Resources and its affiliated Directorates at both federal and sub-national levels, as well as other relevant governmental institutions responsible for water resources management, irrigation, agriculture, and local governance.
- Strong understanding of conflict-sensitive approaches to natural resource governance, community engagement, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Experience integrating climate security, environmental resilience, or natural resource management considerations into peacebuilding or development programmes is desirable.

Skills and Languages

- Excellent facilitation, mediation, negotiation, and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Strong analytical, communication, and report-writing skills.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse stakeholders in politically and socially sensitive environments.
- Excellent written and spoken Arabic and English are required.

9. Performance Standards and Acceptance of Deliverables

All deliverables shall be completed professionally, submitted within the agreed timelines, and demonstrate technical quality consistent with the objectives of the assignment.

Deliverables will be assessed against:

- technical quality;
- completeness;
- responsiveness to the Terms of Reference;
- practical applicability;
- timeliness; and
- consistency with project objectives.

Acceptance shall be based on satisfactory completion of the agreed deliverables and compliance with the quality standards established in these Terms of Reference and the Consultancy Agreement.

10. Confidentiality, Intellectual Property and Professional Conduct

The consultant shall maintain strict confidentiality regarding all information obtained during the assignment and shall not disclose project-related information without prior written authorization from Madarat.

All reports, training materials, tools, datasets, presentations, and other outputs developed under this consultancy shall become the intellectual property of Madarat unless otherwise agreed in writing.

The consultant shall comply with Madarat's policies, including its Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest requirements, Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption standards, Safeguarding Policy, and all applicable donor requirements throughout the duration of the assignment.