Lebanese Pluralism Monitor: Fostering Pluralism, Diversity & Accepting the Other

Terms of Reference

Senior Research Expert to conduct a mapping and assessment of existing resources and efforts to promote Religious Diversity, Racial and Ethnic Equity in the Media Industry in Lebanon.

I.   Reference Organization:

Lebanese Foundation for Permanent Civil Peace (LFPCP)

II.   PROJECT SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

Lebanese Pluralism Monitor Project is implemented by The Lebanese Foundation for Permanent Civil Peace (LFPCP) and funded by Management Systems International (MSI) - USAID.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the development of the freedoms of Pluralism, diversity and religious equity by assessing the existing situation and promote racial and religious equity initiatives in Lebanon.

LFPCP will conduct a mapping and assessment of existing resources and efforts to promote racial equity. The mapping and assessment will be oriented into three directions/sectors:

1. Education
2. Laws and Policies
3. Media

These three directions were chosen because they fall under the Governance Integration for Stabilization and Resilience (GISR) mechanism, specifically under the "Religious and Ethnic Minorities Program Support" task that aims to advance racial equity across Middle East and North Africa. They were also selected due to their critical importance of promoting religious pluralism and racial equity in Lebanon.

Lebanon is well-known for his heterogenous society composed of several ethnic and religious groups. The social and cultural ties between these numerous entities are the essence of Lebanon's model of conviviality. Despite the unfortunate and turbulent series of historical events, the acceptance of others has survived and has been promoted regularly by a number of Lebanese socio-political figures, professors, religious leaders, journalists and media personalities, as well as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Since its establishment in 1986, the Lebanese Foundation for Permanent Civil Peace (LFPCP) has been, a leading CSO engaging in the promotion of pluralism, inter-religious and intercultural dialogue, through the identification of behavior standards and practices in a multi-community society and the promotion of the cultural heritage of Lebanon in the democratic management of pluralism.

III. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF WORK

The principle objective of the assignment is to conduct research through collecting data and information on Religious Pluralism, Racial and Ethnic Equity. This task will be conducted by a senior researcher assessing pluralism and diversity in one sector in particular: Media Industry in Lebanon. **The research process includes several tasks – listed in Section V - that will lead to a study identifying the existing resources and efforts in the Media Industry regarding specific ethnic groups: Druze, Assyrians, Syriac, and Kurds; and/or how these groups manifest their existence and presence through Media organizations.**

Mainly the researcher shall:

•   **Provides an overview of existing social, print, or visual media efforts that raise awareness of racial and ethnic diversity, and/or combats discrimination. Additionally, provides an analysis of how race and equity issues are portrayed in the media.**

•   **Provide an overview of the existing media channels on social, printing, and visual media related to the selected ethnic groups. And if there is any specifications related to these media institutions.**

•   **Provide a tailored action plan / list of recommendations per ethnic group to propose a print, social and visual media initiatives that raise awareness of racial and ethnic diversity and combat discrimination.**

The researcher will work hand-in-hand with LFPCP project team and under the supervision of the Team Lead/Project Director to conduct and draft the research. LFPCP will keep close follow up and support for the expert to finalize and come up with concrete and very good results.

IV.   METHODOLOGY

The researcher will apply the following methodology:

-   Conduct Desk Review/Literature Review of relevant documentation related to Religious Pluralism, Racial and Ethnic Equity on the Media level in Lebanon.
-   Conduct Key Informant Interviews, One-to-One Interviews, and consultations; with the ability to conduct multi- and cross-cultural communication, in order to assess the existing resources and efforts in the Media Industry regarding specific ethnic groups: Druze, Assyrians, Syriac, and Kurds and identify their existence and presence through media organizations.
-   Conduct Data analysis on Religious Pluralism, Racial and Ethnic equity and how they are being promoted through traditional and social media in Lebanon.
-   Map the existing media efforts through the traditional or social media that raise awareness of racial and ethnic diversity, and/or combats discrimination. Additionally, provides an analysis of how race and equity issues are portrayed in the media**.**

- Map the existing media institutions that are related to the selected ethnic groups, and present any specifications related to these institutions.
- Develop a research report that clearly exposes the findings and give conclusions with recommendations based on available evidence.

The selected researcher will work with the project team on the details of the final research report.

V. TASKS TO BE PERFORMED

Task 1: Conduct Desk Review/Literature Review of relevant documentation (reports, documents, studies, published articles or interviews, videos, documentaries and any other visuals) related to:

A. Provides an overview of existing social, print, or visual media efforts that raise awareness of racial and ethnic diversity, and/or combats discrimination; in particularly those related to these specific ethnic groups: Druze, Assyrians, Syriac, and Kurds.
B. Provides an analysis of how race and equity issues are portrayed in the Media.
C. Existing traditional and social Media organizations owned/managed by members of one of these specific ethnic groups: Druze, Assyrians, Syriac, and Kurds; and/or has the religious mission of spreading the beliefs of one of these groups.

Task 2: Develop Questionnaires and conduct Key Informant Interviews, One-to-One Interviews, and Consultations by:

∠ Identifying relevant potential interviewees
∠ Collecting background information on potential interviewees
∠ Defining the criteria of selection for the interviewees
∠ Drafting relevant open and closed questions
∠ Set-up a plan to conduct the data collection face-to-face or remotely

Task 3: Conduct Data analysis on Religious Pluralism, Racial and Ethnic Equity and how they are being promoted through traditional and social media in Lebanon.
The researcher, and based on the data collection conducted in Task 1 and Task 2, shall conduct a deep analysis of the findings.
This particular task includes

∠ Listing viewpoints of interviewees
∠ Assessing citizens awareness of Religious Pluralism, Racial and Ethnic Equity
∠ Listing necessary questions and main topics to be raised and discussed within round table meetings
∠ Listing challenges or any other aspect to be addressed in order to promote Religious Pluralism and Racial equity in Lebanon.
∠ Providing tools and introducing ways to raise more awareness on pluralism and diversity

Task 4: Develop and Finalize the research report and keep a record of all documents reviewed.
The researcher will come up with a list of findings, in addition to conclusions and

recommendations that will help on drafting an action plan that will include suggestions of printing, social and visual media initiatives that raise awareness of racial and ethnic diversity and combat discrimination.

Task 5: Action Plan

Based on the mapping and the research study, the researcher shall provide a tailored proposal / action plan and/or list of recommendations per ethnic group suggesting a print, social and visual media initiatives that raise awareness of racial and ethnic diversity and combat discrimination.

Each action plan shall include an executive summary.

Task 6: Submit and present the research report and the action plan.
At the end of the research phase, the selected researcher will present the report that includes the mapping and assessment study and the action plan/ recommendations to LFPCP and MSI.
The report shall include several annexes:
- ∠ List of the relevant documentation reviewed during the desk review process and used in the development of the content
- ∠ List of people interviewed during meetings/interviews and consultations
- ∠ A description of the mission, including challenges faced and recommendations for follow-up actions
- ∠ Methodology that was used to draft the research report
- ∠ In addition to any other relevant information.

Task 7: Conduct any additional relevant tasks as required by the job.

VI. DELIVERABLES

The outputs of this job mission are expected to be:

- ✓ Mission Report that includes an executive summary, a clear table of content, all the findings related to the mapping and assessment of existing resources and efforts to promote Religious Pluralism and Racial equity in Lebanon through traditional and social media. The report must also contain several annexes listed in the Task 6.
- ✓ A list of relevant conclusions with available evidence and recommendations that support the project's objective
- ✓ And an action plan / list of recommendations will be developed based on the findings of this mission and tailored per ethnic group.
- ✓ A clear PowerPoint presentation that exposes the assessment mission's process, findings, and list of recommendations to be used in the project activities.

VII.   TIMELINE

The assignment is expected to be achieved in 2 to 3 months period, starting mid of February 2022.

Due date for deliverables will be established with Team Lead/Project Director according to the established schedule and requirements of project partners.

VIII.   SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

Qualifications:

- ⇒ Master's Degree in Mass Communication, Radio/TV, Social Sciences, Law, Political Studies, Religious Studies or any equivalent subject relevant to the assignment.
- ⇒ Excellent writing and verbal communication skills in English and Arabic.
- ⇒ Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills, including in multi- and cross-cultural communication.
- ⇒ Advanced research skills including ability to write a detailed, readable and analytical study.
- ⇒ Ability to work within tight deadlines.

General Experience:

- ⇒ Minimum 8 years of working experience in implementing research methodologies including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods as Key Informant Interviews (KII), data analysis and report writing.

Specific Experience:

- ⇒ Minimum 5 years of working experience in fields related to journalism, social or religious studies, specifically associated with minorities and religious/cultural communities in the middle east region, and/ or university professor in law, political studies, religious studies, human rights and/or social rights.
- ⇒ Familiarity with the Lebanese context, notably related to confessionalism, cultural diversity, conviviality and power-sharing.
- ⇒ Good understanding of the social dynamics, plus the particularity and uniqueness of this multicultural experience throughout the Lebanese History and socio-political development.
- ⇒ Knowledge of the Media Industry in Lebanon

IX.   HOW TO APPLY:

Interested candidates shall send their: 1) updated CV, including list of previous working experience, 2) Motivation Letter, and 3) Sample of at least one work done in similar context (in English) 4) List of proposed expected deliverables/outputs to this email address: info@lfpcp.org

The deadline of submission of the application is January 24, 2022 at 5:00 pm.

Please insert on the subject domain: Researcher on Media.

LFPCP is committed to equal opportunities and diversity of perspective at the work, regardless of gender, social background or status. After ensuring that applicants meet the eligibility requirements, a technical review committee will score each proposal per criteria and only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.