

## Request for proposals Local Public Finance Expert

### SALAR Project in Armenia 2022-2026: Support to decentralisation and local self-government reforms (DeaLoG)

**Location:** Yerevan

**Duration:** 5,5 months. Part-time consultancy engagement (75%)

*SALAR International is looking for a Local Public Finance Expert to SALAR's Project in Armenia "Support to decentralisation and local self-government reforms (DeaLoG)". The positions shall be a consultancy contract for a period of 5,5 months with possibility of prolongation.*

*The Local Public Finance Expert should be experienced, professional, self-motivated person with high proficiency in both English and Armenian, who can work effectively in a dynamic and changing environment, support Project partners (especially Ministry of Finance of Armenia) in development of relevant knowledge and capacities in the field of public finances and fiscal aspects of local self-governance and decentralisation in order to reach the targeted results within a limited timeframe. The position requires integrity, innovation, problem-solving skills, professionalism, strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work as an effective team member.*

#### *About SALAR International*

SALAR International is a subsidiary to the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), representing all 290 municipalities and 20 county councils in Sweden. We are a leading consultancy company supporting local democracy and good governance in developing and transition countries. Our expertise covers areas such as capacity building on municipal management and service delivery; local and regional development; decentralisation policies; support to local government associations; and European Integration. Geographically, SALAR International's projects covers countries in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Africa, Asia and Latin America.

#### *Description of the assignment context*

The DeaLoG Project of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) is implemented by SALAR International and funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The Project aims to support the government of the Republic of Armenia with decentralisation reforms and strengthening of local self-governments building on a longstanding history of local self-governments in Sweden and on the global cooperation experience, expertise and networks of SALAR International.

The Project is developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (MTAI) and other government bodies, as well as in consultations with local actors and relevant representative organisations in Armenia.

**The overall objective of the Project** is to increase political and institutional awareness, commitment, competence and trust among national and local stakeholders to advance

decentralisation, manage the change processes and expand local self-government autonomy, responsibilities, capacities and accountability vis-a-vis citizens (women, girls, men and boys).

SALAR International's work in Armenia consists of two areas of support:

- 1) **Institutional framework** for decentralisation with focus on political dialogue, advocacy and reform communication to advance evidence-based decentralisation reform
- 2) **Fiscal decentralisation** focusing on establishing a consensus about key concepts of fiscal decentralisation among all reform stakeholders, strengthening capacities of the actors at central and local levels on different aspects of management of public finances and fiscal decentralisation, developing models and tools for financing of decentralised functions

The following strategies are used:

- strengthening political leadership of local governance reform by providing policy advice and advocacy support to the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
- awareness raising about the decentralisation, its benefits, the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and their meaning, providing mentoring, analytical and advisory support to improve capacities of actors at central, regional and local levels. Support to the design and implementation of a more decentralised democratic governance system.
- supporting development of horizontal and vertical cooperation and consultation mechanisms and frameworks between relevant actors in the targeted local government competence areas.

The Project is implemented in phases and its first implementation phase runs from September 2022 till end of February 2024.

#### *Organisational set up*

The Project Team includes 3 full-time consultants in Armenia and a management unit in Sweden. The Local Public Finance Expert will work closely with the Project Team in Yerevan and Project Management in Stockholm, as well as in close cooperation with the Project partners, especially the Ministry of Finance and report to the Project management in both Yerevan and Stockholm. The main place of duty of the Local Public Finance Expert will be the Ministry of Finance of Armenia. The latter, in accordance with agreement with the Project, will provide an adequate workspace and ensure access to it.

#### *The role of the Local Public Finance Expert*

The Local Public Finance Expert will support developing and steering approaches and activities within the Fiscal decentralisation Component of the Project. The Expert will provide technical backstopping to research, analyses and reports drafting as well as support the Ministry of Finance of Armenia with capacity development.

The Local Public Finance Expert will be working closely together with SALAR International's key international and local experts in Public Finance by providing relevant inputs, such as (or based on) available data on sub-national (including local) finances, monitoring performance of sub-national budgets, as well as analysing and developing possible scenarios for changes to local self-government (LSG) finances and fiscal decentralization pillars such as assignment of expenditure responsibilities (i.e. distribution of functions among the different government

levels), allocation of revenue sources, inter-governmental transfers and sub-national borrowing/debt.

## Requested services

- Provide an ad hoc technical support/consultancy to the relevant staff of the Budget Department in the Ministry of Finance of Armenia, as well as upon request to the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and communities, based on changing needs of the Armenian Government in the policy and priority directions in the field of public finances at both local and central levels
- Support Ministry of Finance in elaboration and functioning (at a later stage) of the Participation platform to strengthen public participation in budgeting processes and policy discussions
- Support Ministry of Finance in establishment and continuous capacity development of the methodological unit of the Budget Department
- Assure constant communication with the key Project partners in the field of public finances, conduct periodical needs assessments and in consultation with project staff plan and develop necessary support measures, in line with Project priorities and goals within Fiscal Decentralisation Component.
- Contribute to other Project components on matters related to public finances and financial decentralisation, e.g. education financing.

## *Required Skills and Experience*

- At least Master Degree or equivalent in economics, public finances, public administration or other relevant fields;
- At least 7 years of profound experience in the field of public finance management, in-depth understanding of the fiscal system at both local and central levels in Armenia, familiarity with relevant international experience is an advantage;
- Familiarity and good understanding of public administration system and multi-level governance in Armenia, familiarity with different participation mechanisms and tools;
- Profound understanding of the concept of local democracy and the system of local self-governance, including local finance and budgeting;
- Experience in development and conduction of capacity development measures, including on-job trainings and coaching;
- High level of coordination skills, responsibility;
- Capable of working with strict deadlines in a multitasking position;
- Ability to work in a multicultural environment;
- Good experience in the usage of computers and office software packages (MS Office, etc);
- Fluency in Armenian and English (verbal & writing);
- Previous experience of work in International organisations or projects is an advantage.

## *Conditions & Logistics*

A short-term consultancy contract (from starting date until February 2024 with possibility for prolongation) will be signed between SALAR International and the Local Public Finance Expert, which will outline the conditions for the position in detail. The contract will be based on Sida's Standard Conditions for Short and Long-Term Consulting Services (2002). In line with Sida's Standard Conditions, SALAR/SALAR International's project covers all major costs relating to

services provided by the Local Public Finance Expert during the assignment, including consultancy fees and costs for participation in project activities. Please note, this position is not an employment position, meaning that applicants must be established as consultants and will be liable to pay all relevant taxes and insurances themselves.

A competitive consultancy fee will be offered to the successful candidate.

### *Evaluation of response & selection*

Interested applicants should send their proposal, comprising the following documents, to SALAR International no later than September 19, 2023, 18:00:

- A short explanation of the applicant's suitability for the assignment (maximum one A4-page)
- Up-to-date CV indicating relevant experience and qualifications

The Local Public Finance Expert will be selected based on their professional experience and competences matching the requirements described above.

Proposals and questions should be sent by email to: [armenia@salarinternational.se](mailto:armenia@salarinternational.se) .

Mark your email with Local Public Finance Expert DeaLoG in the subject.

No compensation is paid for costs incurred for writing the proposal and participating in interviews during the recruitment process.

Questions regarding the position can be sent to the same email [armenia@salarinternational.se](mailto:armenia@salarinternational.se), no later than 15 September 2023, 18:00. Responses to questions will be shared to applicants by email.

Interviews with shortlisted applicants are expected to be held in person or via Teams in the period between September 20-21, 2023. Only shortlisted applicants will receive a respond by email after final round of interviews.

### *Diversity and equal opportunities*

SALAR International embraces diversity and respects human rights in all areas of its work. SALAR International strives to create a gender-equal and diverse working environment. Consultants shall respect equal rights of individuals and strive to create an atmosphere where people's differences are accepted and valued.

SALAR International supports working arrangements that enable personnel to combine work with family commitments.