Resource Directory for Solidarity Action Network (SANE)

Research Consultant - Terms of Reference

22 September 2021

1 Overview

The International Civil Society Centre (ICSCentre) is looking for a research consultant to support its Solidarity Action Network (SANE) in building a resource directory for its members. The directory will consist of strategies, tools and guidelines (e.g. on risk management or scenario planning) to respond to threats and clampdowns faced by international civil society organisations (ICSOs) and their local partners as well as expert contacts that can help with a swift and suitable response. It will include internal materials of ICSOs as well as publicly available resources on relevant civic space issues. The directory will be hosted at the SANE website and will provide an easy and secure access to relevant resources and contacts. The users of the directory will be representatives of ICSOs – mainly from the humanitarian and development sector – and their CSO partners.

2 Background information

The Solidarity Action Network (SANE), hosted by the International Civil Society Centre (ICSCentre), focuses on strengthening resilience of and solidarity among civil society actors when faced with civic space restrictions or changing operating conditions for civil society. It particularly connects humanitarian and development ICSOs and brings them into discussions on civic space challenges and opportunities.

 The network holds these functions:
- Capturing case studies and best practices on organisational resilience mechanisms and coalition responses to undue scrutiny, threats and civic space restrictions (Solidarity Playbook).
- Exchanging information, sharing lessons learned and existing mechanisms.
- Exploring non-public forms of solidarity and encouraging joint actions.
- Connecting humanitarian/development organisations with human rights organisations, initiating cross-sector solidarity and building possible bridges to other networks and initiatives.

To respond to threats and clampdowns, many ICSOs and CSOs have developed strategies, tools and guidelines, however, they often stay within an individual organisation and are not

shared with partners. Additionally, a variety of actors in the field and a fast pace of materials being produced make it difficult for ICSOs and CSOs to keep track and identify which of them are relevant and useful. Also, if there is an immediate threat or challenge, it is necessary to know quickly who to reach out to. Involving the right external experts can help with a swift and suitable response whereas peers and partners can be brought on board for additional support and solidarity. Establishing a resource directory on relevant civic space issues (e.g. managing external risks, preventing and mitigating cyberattacks, dealing with mis- and disinformation) will address these challenges so that SANE members can quickly and easily access useful resources and contacts and build further efforts on already existing work, contacts and materials.

The work on directory will be supported by the SANE task force consisting of ICSOs and CSOs representatives. The task force will provide guidance on the focus and topics of interest as well as feedback on selected materials and usability of the platform.

3 Scope of work and key tasks

1. Develop a framework for presenting resources and contacts in a digestible and easy-to-use way.
2. Map and pick relevant publicly available resources based on suggested topics (desk research).
3. Reach out to or follow up with ICSOs and CSOs on their materials.
4. Prepare resources for the website with a short and easy-to-follow overview (e.g. a short description, main highlights, tags) and upload them to the website.
5. Map and pick relevant expert organisations and individual experts on selected topics.
6. Prepare expert information for the directory and upload them to the website.
7. Consult topics and structure of the directory with the ICSCentre and the SANE task force.
8. Think proactively about technical aspects (especially usability) of the directory and consult them with the ICSCentre and the web developer.

4 Timeline

- Start of work: 1 November 2021
- Mapping and preparation of materials: 1 November – 17 December 2021
- Uploading of materials to the website: 1 December – 17 December 2021

We expect the overall consultancy to encompass 10–15 working days in 2021. Upon successful collaboration in 2021, we are planning to continue this work in 2022.

5 Experience and skills/competencies

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- At least a bachelor's degree in a relevant field (political science, social sciences, international relations or similar)
- At least 3 years proven experience conducting research and analysis (political or social science), preferably on civil society space (more specifically civil society's freedom to act independently, unrestricted and effectively)
- Experience working with civil society actors (ICSOs, CSOs) and very good knowledge of the civil society sector
- Very good understanding of a gradual shrinking of the operating environment for civil society and restrictions faced by ICSOs and CSOs
- Excellent spoken and written English
- Ability to self-manage and meet project deadlines

6 Application

To apply, please send:
1. **Cover letter (no more than 3 pages)**, including:
   - A brief **description of your experience and expertise** in the field that illustrates your overall qualifications and capabilities for this scope of work
   - Your **consultancy rate** (amount in EUR/day)
2. Your **CV**
3. **Two references** that can be contacted should you be shortlisted

to Eva Gondorová (egondorova@icscentre.org) by **13 October 2021 COB**. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a brief initial interview in the second half of October.

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