

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Final External Evaluation of a
Multi-Year Project on Advancing Rule of Law and Judicial Independence in Tunisia

Type of contract: Consultancy

Location: Home-based, preferably in the MENA region (the evaluation is conducted remotely; no international travel is foreseen)

Duration of contract: up to 25 working days

Start Date: by 28 September 2026 (contract signature and kick-off); final deliverables due by 15 December 2026

Summary

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) is seeking a qualified consultant to conduct the final external evaluation of a multi-year project on advancing rule of law and judicial independence in Tunisia (September 2022 to September 2026), implemented in a high-risk operating context and supported by an institutional donor grant.

Stakeholders include Tunisian civil society organisations, justice-sector actors and ICJ's local implementing partner organizations.

Overview of the ICJ

Composed of 60 eminent judges and lawyers from all regions of the world, the ICJ promotes and protects human rights through the rule of law, by using its unique legal expertise to develop and strengthen national and international justice systems. Established in 1952 and active on the five continents, the ICJ aims to ensure the progressive development and effective implementation of international human rights and international humanitarian law; secure the realization of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights; safeguard the separation of powers; and guarantee the independence of the judiciary and legal profession.

Evaluation Overview

The primary users of the evaluation report will be the funding agency and the ICJ MENA Programme, which will use the findings and recommendations to account for the results achieved under the award, to inform the design of the next phase of the ICJ's work on the rule of law and judicial independence in Tunisia. The secondary users will be the national partner organisations, ICJ Legal and Policy Office and the ICJ Programme Management and Donor Relations team, which may refer to the conclusions and recommendations to inform the ICJ's approach to programme management in general (from design to monitoring and closure).

Objectives and criteria

The general objective is to assess, in an independent manner, the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project against its stated objectives and its approved M&E plan, and to draw lessons for future programming. The evaluation should assess the achievements of the project against its expected results and indicators over the full 48-month period, including a re-examination of the relevance of the expected results and of the project design in a rapidly deteriorating operating environment. It shall identify the significant factors that facilitated or impeded the delivery of outcomes, including the security and legal constraints faced by the ICJ and its partners. The evaluation should have a strong learning objective and lead to concrete, specific and prioritised recommendations. Below are sample evaluative questions for each criterion; the evaluator is expected to refine them in the inception report.

Relevance and coherence

- To what extent were the project design, objectives and theory of change appropriate to the rule-of-law crisis in Tunisia, and did the project adapt adequately when the context changed?
- To what extent did the project respond to the needs and priorities of its target groups (judges, lawyers, civil society organisations, journalists, victims of arbitrary proceedings), including from a gender perspective?
- How coherent was the project with the other interventions of the ICJ in Tunisia and partners to find synergies and avoid duplication of efforts?

Efficiency

- Were the human, financial and time resources used efficiently to deliver the outputs, and was the balance between ICJ-implemented activities and activities delegated to partners under fixed-amount sub-awards appropriate?
- Did the project management, monitoring and reporting arrangements support efficient and timely implementation?
- Were the project management and financial capacities of the ICJ and its partners sufficient to ensure efficient delivery, and how were delays and constraints, including relevant security constraints?

Effectiveness

- To what extent were the expected outputs and outcomes achieved against the targets of the approved M&E plan?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives, including the legal, political and security environment?
- How well have the partnerships with the national partner organisations worked?
- To what extent did the documentation, trial monitoring, communication products and international advocacy inform national and international stakeholders and influence their positions on the rule of law and judicial independence in Tunisia?

Impact and sustainability

- Is there evidence that the support provided to dismissed judges and prosecutors (support fund and defence committee), the expert dialogues, the international interventions and the legal aid to victims of arbitrary prosecution produced concrete results for the individuals concerned and for the wider legal community?
- To what extent are the results likely to be sustained after the end of the project?
- What unintended results, positive or negative, did the project produce, and what lessons and recommendations can be drawn for a next phase of ICJ engagement in Tunisia?

The ICJ MENA Director, the MENA Programme Manager and the ICJ MEL Officer will review the methodology proposed by the evaluator. Ideally, it will include (i) a desk review of pertinent project documents and records (the approved proposal and its cost amendment, the logical framework and M&E plan, quarterly performance reports to the donor, the indicator tracking tables, the internal review conducted at month 24, most significant change stories, partner reports and project outputs); and (ii) primary data collection, which, given the security and political context, will rely primarily on remote methods. Primary data should combine qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews with ICJ staff, partner organisations, judges, lawyers, journalists and other participants and beneficiaries, and a short online survey of participants in project activities. All data collection must respect informed consent, confidentiality and the safety of respondents, some of whom are at risk of reprisals; the evaluator will propose a data-protection protocol in the inception report.

Evaluation Implementation

The evaluation should start by 28 September 2026 (contract signature and kick-off meeting), with the final deliverables due and the contract concluded by 15 December 2026. Any working day proposed after 30 September 2026 must be identified as such in the financial offer.

ICJ staff will provide logistical and technical support as appropriate throughout the evaluation process (compilation of project documents, introduction to partners and stakeholders, scheduling of interviews and focus groups, translation of data-collection tools into Arabic and French where needed).

A total of up to 25 working days will be available for:

- *Evaluation preparation (including finalising the evaluation methodology and matrix, performing the initial desk review of project materials, creating and testing data-collection tools and drafting the inception report) – five working days;*
- *Remote data collection (interviews, focus groups and online survey) – 12 working days;*
- *Data analysis and synthesis (including data aggregation, triangulation and writing the draft report) – six working days;*
- *Validation workshop, presentation of findings to the ICJ and its partners and incorporation of feedback into the final report – two working days.*

The final deliverables for this evaluation will include:

- An inception report and evaluation plan, including the evaluation matrix, the final list of key informants, the data-collection tools and the detailed work plan, submitted to the ICJ for approval within five working days of the kick-off meeting and before any interview takes place;
- A draft evaluation report (maximum 30 pages excluding annexes) detailing key findings, supporting evidence, conclusions and pragmatic recommendations, structured by evaluation criterion and including an assessment of results against the approved indicators, due to the ICJ by 20 November 2026;
- A final evaluation report incorporating the feedback of the ICJ and its partners, following the ICJ evaluation report structure (executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings and conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations table with a maximum of 15 recommendations, lessons-learned table), together with a two-page summary that can be shared with the donor and other stakeholders, due by 15 December 2026;
- One online validation workshop presenting the preliminary findings to the ICJ team and partners after submission of the draft report, and one oral presentation of the final findings to relevant ICJ staff.

Application Guidelines

The selected consultant should have demonstrated expertise in results-based project evaluation. Previous experience of evaluating human rights or rule-of-law programmes, preferably in the legal field, is required. The following are additional requirements:

- Master's degree in law, political science, social sciences, international relations, human rights or a related field, or a Bachelor's degree combined with equivalent professional experience;
- Minimum six years of experience in designing, overseeing and implementing project monitoring and evaluation, including at least three final or mid-term evaluations as lead evaluator;
- Experience of evaluating rule of law, access to justice, judicial independence or human rights projects, preferably in the MENA region; knowledge of the Tunisian context is a strong asset;
- Experience with qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, including remote data collection, and familiarity with results frameworks and indicator-based reporting (experience with government-funded projects is an asset);

Additional desired qualifications:

- Experience working in politically sensitive or insecure contexts, with the ability to maintain security, data-protection and confidentiality considerations throughout the evaluation process and beyond;

- Excellent inter-cultural communication skills and the ability to build trust with judges, lawyers, civil society organisations and victims of human rights violations;
- Strong facilitation, presentation and communication skills, including the ability to run remote interviews and focus groups;
- Strong ability to communicate effectively in English, both verbally and in writing; working knowledge of Arabic is strongly desired and good command of French is an asset;
- Team player with the ability to collaborate closely with ICJ staff, local partners and project stakeholders, and to work under a tight timeline.

Interested applicants must send all materials outlined below to recruitment@icj.org, by 25 September 2026 (23:59 Geneva time), quoting "482 – Final Evaluation" in the subject line. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Interested applicants should provide (i) a current CV; (ii) a technical proposal of maximum three pages outlining the candidate's key skills and experience relevant to this evaluation, a concise description of the proposed evaluation approach, methods and key standards and principles that will inform the work, and the identification of possible data limitations and ways to mitigate them (recognising that the applicant is operating with only the limited information provided herein); (iii) a financial offer stating the daily rate, the number of working days proposed and the all-inclusive total in USD; (iv) one example of a previous evaluation report authored by the candidate; and (v) the names and contact details of two recent references. Applications from teams of two are accepted provided the lead evaluator is clearly identified and the total remains within the budget ceiling.

Budget Guidelines

The all-inclusive budget for this evaluation must not exceed USD 13,000. This figure includes the consultant's fees for all working days, local transport, communication, survey tools and any other cost necessary to deliver the assignment. No international travel is foreseen. Applications exceeding the ceiling will not be considered.

Conditions of the assignment

The consultant will be contracted by the ICJ under an ICJ consultancy agreement; payment will be made in USD against the approved deliverables (30 per cent on approval of the inception report, 70 per cent on approval of the final report). The consultant must not appear on any applicable sanctions or debarment list; the ICJ will carry out this screening before contracting. The consultant will keep all evaluation records and raw data available to the ICJ for the retention period required by the donor and will comply with the ICJ Code of Conduct, the ICJ policies on safeguarding and data protection, and the principles of the ICJ Evaluation Policy (utilisation, participation, impartiality, respect of participants, informed consent and anonymisation of data).

The ICJ reserves the right not to award the contract, to award it to a team rather than an individual, or to negotiate the number of days and the deliverables with the selected candidate within the budget ceiling.