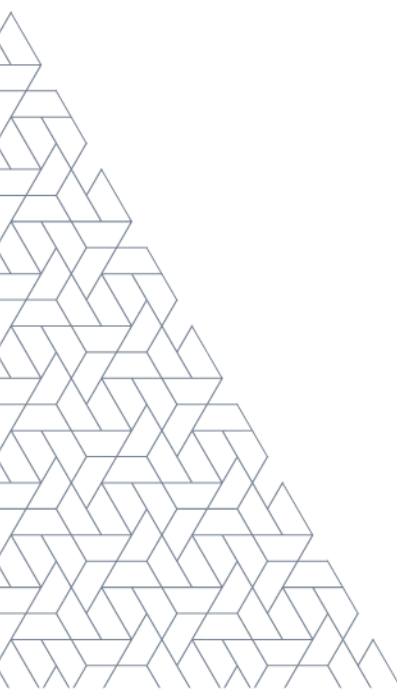


TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Senior Subject Matter Expert on Transnational Organised Crime
(TOC) & Security Sector Governance (SSG) / Research Lead**

*Addressing Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) Innovatively Through a Governance Fo-
cus | 01 July 2026 - 31 December 2027*





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Senior Subject Matter Expert on Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) & Security Sector Governance (SSG) / Research Lead

Addressing Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) Innovatively Through a Governance Focus | 01 July 2026 – 31 December 2027

Level of Effort / Station: Up to 40 consultant days | Remote / Home-based (with mission travel)

Contract period: November 2026 – December 2027, in line with the project implementation schedule.

1. Background

Existing tools for disrupting criminal networks frequently rely on generic legalistic principles or purely law enforcement approaches that fail when state institutions are themselves compromised. As a result, security sector institutions and oversight actors lack empirical, governance-focused guidance for TOC-affected settings. This operational gap is increasingly consequential, as transnational organised crime (TOC) now penetrates state institutions and the private sector worldwide.

To fill this critical gap, DCAF is implementing the project “Addressing TOC Innovatively Through a Governance Focus” (01 July 2026 – 31 December 2027) under the Phase III of its Enhancing SSG/R Policy & Practice Programme.

The objective of the project is to formulate a Practical Framework for Programming that enables practitioners to identify governance-focused entry points in TOC responses. The framework will also serve to define DCAF’s institutional position on security sector governance in TOC-affected environments. The project comprises two components: a research component, grounded in DCAF’s experience across Latin America, West Africa, and the Western Balkans, which combines cross-regional case study research and a global expert validation workshop in Geneva; and a knowledge-sharing component, consisting of workshops with bilateral and multilateral partners.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Assignment

The Senior Subject Matter Expert / Research Lead will serve as the principal technical authority for the research component of the project. Working under the direct supervision of DCAF’s Senior Manager for LAC, the expert will develop the core project methodology, undertake the documentation of the Latin America and the Caribbean case studies, guide regional research teams and local consultants in the documentation of the remaining cases, provide, upon request and depending on contexts, expert technical inputs for knowledge-sharing workshops, and synthesise empirical findings into the final Practical Framework for Programming.





3. Key Duties and Responsibilities

Workstream A: Methodological Design, Supervision, and Framework Development

Led by DCAF's Africa Americas entity (LAC team).

Develop Case Selection Framework: Design an outcome-driven strategy to screen 12–15 candidate cases using three core analytical lenses: Outcome Identification (empirical evidence of TOC reduction or institutional resilience), Governance Attribution (accountability, oversight, transparency), and the Criminal Justice Chain (covering Prevention → Detection → Prosecution → Adjudication → Asset Recovery/Corrections).

Formulate Case Documentation Methodology: Establish standardised research guidelines, desk review protocols, and remote and in-person Key Informant Interview (KII) guides (10–15 KIIs per case) to extract governance-enabling factors. The methodology shall incorporate a research ethics and risk protocol appropriate to TOC-affected environments, and systematic gender and intersectional analysis consistent with DCAF's Gender Equality Policy.

Document LAC Case Studies: Undertake the documentation of 3 case studies in Latin America and the Caribbean, including desk review, field visits and key informant interviews, applying the case documentation methodology.

Guide Regional Research Teams: Provide ongoing technical direction, quality control, and methodological support to local consultants and DCAF regional staff conducting field research across Latin America, West Africa, and the Western Balkans.

Synthesise Regional Case Briefs: Review, edit, and consolidate analytical findings across 6–8 detailed regional case briefs to ensure rigorous cross-regional comparative synthesis.

Draft Practical Framework for Programming: Synthesise empirical evidence from case briefs and internal DCAF operational knowledge into a practical, action-oriented decision-support guide for SSG/R practitioners.

Workstream B: Technical Inputs for Knowledge-Sharing Workshops

Led by DCAF's Research & Training (RT) entity.

Netherlands Inter-Institutional Workshop: contribute to thematic framing and technical briefing materials for a knowledge-sharing workshop in The Hague, engaging officials from different state institutions.

EUAM Iraq Advisory Workshop: contribute with technical inputs and thematic framing examining the linkages between TOC and security sector governance to support a knowledge-sharing workshop with EUAM Iraq.

Attendance at one or both workshops may be requested, subject to arrangements agreed with DCAF RT training team. In-person participation may entail an adjustment to the number of consultant days foreseen.





Workstream C: Global Validation and Finalisation

Co-Led by DCAF's Africa Americas entity (LAC team) and Research & Training.

Global Expert Validation Workshop: Provide technical facilitation and thematic leadership for a global expert validation workshop in Geneva (TBC) convening approximately 20 regional/international experts and partner institutions.

Finalise Practical Framework & Guidance Note: Building on the draft Practical Framework developed under Workstream A and integrating practitioner feedback from the global expert validation workshop, produce the final SSG/R-TOC Practical Framework for Programming and the accompanying synthesis guidance note. The deliverable consolidates the evidence and inputs generated across all three workstreams.

4. Key Deliverables and Timeline

The consultant shall submit the following key deliverables in accordance with the project implementation schedule:

Workstream A: Methodological Design, Supervision, and Framework Development

Deliverable	Target Timeline
Case Selection Framework and Case Documentation Methodology	Q4 2026
Longlist of 12-15 Screened Candidate Cases	Q1 2027
3-4 Documented LAC Case Studies	Q2 2027
6-8 Finalise Regional Case Briefs	Q3 2027
Draft Practical Framework for Programming	Q3 2027

Workstream B: Technical Inputs for Knowledge-Sharing Workshops

Deliverable	Target Timeline
Technical Inputs for Netherlands Inter-Institutional Workshop	Q1 2027
Technical Inputs for EUAM Iraq Advisory Workshop	Q1-Q2 2027

Workstream C: Global Validation and Finalisation

Deliverable	Target Timeline
Technical Facilitation of the Global Expert Validation Workshop (Geneva)	Q4 2027
Final SSG/R-TOC Practical Framework and Synthesis Guidance Note	Q4 2027





5. Required Qualifications and Experience

Academic Background: Advanced university degree (Master's or PhD) in Political Science, International Relations, Law, Criminology, Security Studies, or related social science discipline.

Subject Matter Expertise: Demonstrated technical authority at the intersection of Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) and Security Sector Governance and Reform (SSG/R).

Professional Experience: Minimum 10 years of professional experience in security policy advisory, empirical research, and comparative strategy development in SSG/R and TOC settings.

Methodological Expertise: Proven track record in designing comparative case study methodologies, analytical research tools, and practical operational guides for practitioners.

Regional Context: In-depth familiarity with security governance and criminal network dynamics in Latin America is required, together with familiarity with West Africa and/or the Western Balkans.

Institutional Partner Engagement: Experience engaging with donor inter-agency mechanisms and multilateral security advisory missions.

Facilitation Skills: Demonstrated experience facilitating expert workshops and multi-stakeholder dialogues is an asset.

Language Skills: Professional fluency in Spanish and English is required; working knowledge of French is highly desirable.

6. Reporting lines and Supervision

Direct Reporting Line: The consultant reports to DCAF's Senior Manager for LAC (Africa Americas), who holds overall responsibility for this consultancy. The consultant is a standing participant in the project's Operational Coordination Committee, which coordinates delivery across DCAF entities and does not constitute a reporting line.

Research Supervision: The consultant will provide technical guidance to and mentor local support consultants providing contextual expertise, and access to local networks.

