Terms of Reference

Project:	Decentralised Cooperation Handbook – DC Handbook
Project ref:	SGA2+ extension period
Purpose of the contract:	Preparation, set-up and compilation of DC Handbook
Contract duration:	June 7th - 18th August 2021
Contractor:	NALAS

1. Background information of the overall project

Within the frame of the current Strategic Grant Agreement phase II (2018-2020) signed between the EU Commission and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) on behalf of PLATFORMA and its actual extension period SGA2+ from March to August 2021, additional activities have been approved for implementation.

The general objectives of the present SGA2 are as follows:
- Empowered local governments and associations engaged in decentralised cooperation in partner countries
- Increased number of European LRGs engaged in decentralised cooperation
- Improved enabling environment for local and regional governments in partner countries
- More relevant EU development policies

The specific objectives are defined to:
- Strengthen EU LRGs' contribution to the European Development Policy and global development agenda
- Increase the efficiency of decentralised cooperation through intensified exchanges and peer-learning of EU local and regional government cooperation actors with European and partner local and regional governments and associations
- Increasing the awareness of European citizens and local and regional governments, about the concrete contribution of local and regional governments to development cooperation
- Strengthening the internal governance and capacities of PLATFORMA coalition

Within the scope of the objectives mentioned above, PLATFORMA approved via its Steering Committee and Political Council to elaborate a handbook on decentralized cooperation compiling a selected number of best practices gathered by PLATFORMA's members. The coordination of this additional activity has been conferred to NALAS, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe. The activity is being carried out in collaboration with PLATFORMA members FONS Mallorqui, Generalitat de Catalunya, United Cities and Local Governments UCLG and the PLATFORMA Secretariat.

What is PLATFORMA?

- PLATFORMA is a pan-European coalition of LRGs and their associations active in development cooperation which streamline the global and EU development agendas in sustainable local public policies both in partner countries and in EU countries (abroad and at home).
- PLATFORMA takes into account the spectrum of global and EU development agendas and the strategies tackling them in a wider context.
- PLATFORMA considers decentralised cooperation as one of the most suitable tools to involve Local and Regional Governments (LRG) in these agendas internationally, and keeps looking for upgrading practices and for innovative instruments. Decentralised cooperation for PLATFORMA implies engaging in policy dialogue, decentralisation reforms, local governance, balanced territorial development, development cooperation efficiency and effectiveness, horizontal/reciprocal relations among peers, and others.

What is NALAS?

- NALAS is a network of associations of local authorities of South East Europe. The Network brings together 14 Associations which represent roughly 7000 local authorities, directly elected by more than 80 million citizens of this region.
- NALAS responds to its members' needs in strengthening their capacities and provide them with the regional know-how and policy argumentation, supporting their efforts to become viable representatives of local authorities who are up to negotiate with their national government and international organizations for the benefit of the local governments, utility companies and institutions and for the benefit of the ultimate beneficiaries, the citizens in the region of South-East Europe (SEE).
- NALAS joined PLATFORMA in 2019 as a core partner and implements a number of activities within the frame of SGA2. The network contributes to the present additional activity amongst others via its outreach, dissemination and multiplier effect of its knowledge and information system.

2. Specific situation (relevant to the task of the consultant)

The DC Handbook is perceived to be an effective advocacy, communication, information and awareness raising tool and should make the case for decentralised cooperation within the context of EU and global development policy.

How do we understand decentralised cooperation?

"Decentralised cooperation" refers essentially to development cooperation financed by sub-national (local or regional) authorities. Starting as bilateral municipal twinning, decentralised cooperation has evolved into more complex and multi-stakeholder partnerships, and from a North-South and donor-recipient approach to a partnership approach with reciprocal learning elements as core value. In the last years, decentralised cooperation has also progressively shifted from development aid to supporting governance and capacity building, in order to make

more resilient local governments and therefore more resilient local communities, economies and environment.

Decentralised cooperation now has a wide-ranging meaning, scoping different types of collaboration, each with its modalities, flows and types of interventions. Most common modalities are:

- Direct cooperation, where partner LRGs engage in development exchanges (capacity building, transfer of know-how…) through either city-to-city arrangements, or specialised LRGs networks –such as local solidarity funds–.
- Indirect cooperation, where partner LRGs channel public resources through other development agents, such as NGOs, universities and research organisations, etc.
- Development education and awareness-raising initiatives in partner LRGs.
- Lastly, LRGs increasingly participate in multilateral arrangements, partnering with UN agencies and other international bodies; and in EU and programmes and projects, such as PLATFORMA.

With the 2030 Agenda, LRGs are at the centre of the localisation of the SDGs: it is a transformative agenda that strives to improve the delivery of public services for citizens, to improve the multilevel governance systems and enhance people engagement in public policy-making by breaking silos and connecting stakeholders. LRGs are thus confronted and have to deal with a vast majority of today's constraints.

What is the DC Handbook for?

Within the actual a context there is a need for fostering innovation in Decentralised Cooperation (DC), taking into account the different contexts each local and regional authority has to face. Furthermore, DC agents, and PLATFORMA in particular, need to make their case in front of governments at all levels, global actors, donors and others.

First and foremost, the DC Handbook will serve as an evidence-based, robust tool for advocacy before high level decision makers at European, national, regional and local level.

The DC Handbook will set off two dynamics:

- DC practitioners will have an insightful tool for improving and innovating the way they understand and implement their projects, stemming from different contexts and DC models.

- Future DC practitioners will find an inestimable guide to understand the practical nature of DC, bringing the topic down and making it actionable in accordance with their specific political agendas.

The DC Handbook will be a 'living' object, in the sense that new cases can be added to the digital format and the database.

The Handbook should comprise a number of best/good practises in decentralised cooperation among city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. Examples should demonstrate the relevance and crucial role of DC as an effective and efficient contribution of subnational level to overall EU development cooperation. Examples should stress **DC as a strategic tool** to build ownership on the principles of inclusive partnership for sustainable development for citizen and with citizen, leaving no place and no one behind (bottom-up approach).

Best practices can be sector or topic centred. In order to present an overall picture of DC, examples should display the diversity of the subnational level (small, medium and big territorial entities), rural and urban. **Best practices** should also showcase the capacity of the subnational level to generate changes which assist in solving real life issues encountered where they are most pressing and present for citizen: at local and regional level.

Examples (**story telling testimony**) should make the case for DC as a strategic component of EU development cooperation.

What is the expected output?

The DC Handbook is a structured guide to assess activities as best practices following the criteria of effectiveness, coherence, new innovative mechanisms and results obtained.

What is the expected outcome?

A reference point for practitioners to understand what makes a decentralised cooperation activity an activity good or very good as opposed to regular or standard ones and compare different forms of DC between each other.

A solid base from where to create a general DC project database and an array of best practice cases as a subset of those.

Generating a common reference for all actors to understand DC projects as well as providing the deserved visibility to past project sponsors.

Action objectives and its contribution to PLATFORMA goals

To Specific objective 1. Strengthen the contribution by European local and regional governments to European development policy and global development agenda

The DC Handbook will help EU MEPs, policy makers and officers to have a much better understanding of what DC really means from a practical perspective, with an emphasis on the role of European LRGs, as a crucial and strategic component of EU development policy.

To Specific objective 2. Increase the efficiency of decentralised cooperation through supporting exchange and peer-learning among EU local and regional government cooperation actors, and with their peers in partner countries

By presenting an array of real cases of very different natures in terms of scope, goal, players, dimension, etc. the DC Handbook will facilitate learning and promote specific actions by local and regional governments beyond the merely declarative and theoretical standpoints.

To Specific objective 3. Increase awareness of European citizens and local and regional governments on concrete contribution of local and regional governments to development cooperation.

The Handbook will help strengthen PLATFORMA's positioning as a key player in the field of DC in the European context and beyond. Internally, it will also help establish a common understanding on what the practice of DC is and should be.

Follow up activity #1 (Templates)
For the pre-selection process of best practice examples, a template has been elaborated and forwarded to PLATFORMA members for their consideration.
The templates gathered need to be revised and a selection of best practice examples be proposed to the core team (PLATFORMA Secretariat, FONS Mallorqui, Generalitat de Catalunya, UCLG and NALAS) for further elaboration. Partners of pre-selected best practice examples need to be notified.

Follow up activity #2 (structure of final lay out)
A draft lay out has been elaborated. This lay out needs to be verified and completed and approved by core team. Lay out has to forwarded to partners of pre-selected best practice examples for further elaboration for compiling the DC Handbook.

3. Scope of the assignment – tasks

In close consultation and cooperation with NALAS and the core team and in accordance with the present Terms of Reference, the consultant shall:

Draft the Handbook on Decentralised Handbook

1) Pre-selection of best practise out of submitted templates and presentation to core team for approval
2) Finalise lay-out of DC Handbook in coordination with core team
3) Communication and collection of approved best practice examples according to lay-out from PLATFORMA partners
4) Online interviews with partners from approved best practices to gather data/input for storytelling testimonials
5) Drafting of first proposal text of DC Handbook to be submitted for revision of core team
6) Updating of 1st draft text including comments/observations from core team
7) Presentation of updated draft text for approval by core team
8) Translation of approved text version in Spanish and French
9) Proofreading of final draft text in English, Spanish and French
10) Proposal of design and lay out for approval by core team

Please note: The DC Handbook is expected to contain approximately 10-12 best practises with a total volume of 60 pages.

Coordination with core team

1) Draft a timeline with milestones and deliverables and ensure that deliverables from PLATFORMA partners with pre-selected best practices are submitted in time and with the necessary quality
2) Coordinate meetings (f2f or online) of all stakeholders involved in the preparation of the drafting of the DC Handbook
3) Schedule meetings and ensure that all inputs and deliverables are provided in time and with the sufficient quality needed
4) Collect the written inputs from all partners and assemble them in the final draft of the DC Handbook

Please note: A gender sensitive approach should be applied throughout the drafting process. All aspects treated shall be socially differentiated (e.g., between sex, age, status, ethnicity, etc.).

4. Qualification requirements

- Excellent knowledge and experience in preparing handbooks, manuals, showcases, best practices
- Proven experience in coordination and implementation of drafting processes for publications (online, conventional)
- Good knowledge of EU development policy and peer-to-peer learning
- Excellent knowledge and experience in coordination of project tasks involving a group of stakeholders and institutions
- Sound knowledge on the 2030 agenda and localisation of SDGs and its relevance at municipal level
- Sound knowledge on innovative and interactive awareness raising and advocacy tools
- Knowledge on the recent trends of decentralised cooperation within the EU context
- Excellent knowledge of English language

5. Deliverables

- Pre-selected best practice cases from partners
- Lay-out for presentation of best practices
- Draft text version of DC Handbook with complemented input about storytelling derived from interviews for revision of core team
- Lay-out/design proposal for DC Handbook
- Final proofread version of DC Handbook in English
- Translation of final version of DC Handbook proofread in Spanish and French
- Video of 1.5 -2 minutes for YouTube

6. Duration of the assignment

07th of June - 18th of August 2021 - Up to 33 consultant days:

- ➢ Up to 20 days for collection of data (Desk research, f2f and/or online missions/interviews) lay-out and drafting of DC Handbook

- ➢ Up to 5 days for proofreading and translation into Spanish

- ➢ Up to 5 days for proofreading and translation into French

- ➢ Up to 3 days for production of video

7. Place(s) of Assignment

N/A

8. Reporting

The consultant shall report to NALAS Coordinator Joachim ROTH at roth@nalas.eu and PLATFORMA Secretariat Amandine SABOURIN at Amandine.Sabourin@ccre-cemr.org

9. Proposal

The Service Provider (Individual expert, Company or CSO) is asked to submit a proposal, by **01 June 2021, 16:00 (CET).** The proposal has to be submitted in English language by e-mail, at info@nalas.eu and shall contain the following sections:

1. Technical component
   1.1. Service provider Profile
   1.1.1. Portfolio and CV of the expert, along relevant references;
   1.1.2. Cover Letter that responds to the section "Qualification Requirements" of this TOR (please provide a concise description, one paragraph relating to the section "Sector competence and Professional Experience" that corresponds to the Expert Portfolio and its relevance for this assignment).
   1.1.3. Presentation of the Service Provider and its suitability for assignment with detailed description of understanding of assignment;
   1.1.4. Proposed operational plan (time line, milestones, meetings etc.) with proposed expert days for each activity

10. Financial component

The financial offer shall contain the gross amount (net amount plus all applicable taxes) per expert-day in euros, as well as the total amount expressed in euros.

11. Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

The selection of the Training Service Provider will be made in accordance with the quality-cost based selection method (70 % technical component and 30% financial component)

Varshavska 36 A, Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia Tel: +389 2 3090818. Web: www.nalas.eu. Email: info@nalas.eu

NALAS France at : Maison des Associations, 1a place des Orphelins, 67000 Strasbourg, France

12. Reference

The reference for this assignment is NALAS, Email address: info@nalas.eu

13. Modification of Terms

NALAS reserves the right to modify the terms of the ToR at any time at its sole discretion.

14. Acceptance and Rejection of Proposals

NALAS may not necessarily accept the lowest priced proposal or any proposal. At its sole discretion, NALAS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to accept any proposal which it considers advantageous, whether or not it is the lowest priced proposal. NALAS is not under any obligation to award a contract and reserves the right to terminate the request for proposal process at any time, and to withdraw from discussions with all or any of the training service providers who have responded. NALAS reserves the right to accept the proposed offer in total or in part, to reject any or all offers, to waive any minor informalities, irregularities, or technicalities, and to accept the offer deemed most favourable.

15. Contract Negotiation

NALAS reserves the right to negotiate specific terms of the contract with the short-listed proponents prior to the final award of the contract. NALAS also reserves the right to negotiate specific terms of the contract with the Contractor as the contract progresses.

16. Ownership

All materials, documents and information prepared, developed or adjusted by the service provider and used for the purposes of elaboration of the DC Handbook, remain the property of PLATFORMA. The Service Provider agrees that no part of the materials, documents and information may be reproduced or distributed in any form, or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, for any other purposes and objectives than those related to this ToR, without the prior permission of NALAS.

17. Terms and Payment

The service provider, will be engaged under Consultancy/Service Contract, signed by NALAS and will be paid in instalments upon submission and approval of the deliverables listed above.

18. Evaluation of work

The performance of the tasks will be assessed by NALAS in coordination with the core team.