UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE/SCOPE OF WORK	
Title of Individual Consultant:	**National Water Resources Management Specialist**
Assignment:	**National Water Resources Management Specialist**
Duration of assignment:	260 days over a period of 1 year (Possibility of extension)
Duty station:	Office & Home based
Estimated Start Date:	17th July 2022
Language Required:	English & Arabic

BACKGROUND

Climate Change is turning out a major driver behind growing water scarcity in the Tigris, Euphrates, and Shat Al-Arab river basins. The impact of climate change related water scarcity is regional in scope. The riparian countries, Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria are facing greater stress due to a combination of climate change and a combination of socio-economic factors, i.e. population explosion over the past 50 years, urbanization, rapid economic growth and growing industrialization. The challenge of water scarcity across the river-basins are expected to intensify and tensions over shrinking water shares could lead to conflicts between riparian countries.

To address the growing water needs, upper riparian countries have been engaged in expanding the networks of dams and reservoirs, which has led to massive reduction in downstream flows. The diversion of water by upper riparian countries of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers has serious consequences for water availability in Iraq. Dam and hydropower project constructions on the Tigris and Euphrates are estimated to have cut water to Iraq by 80 percent since 1975. The reduction in river flows has jeopardized agriculture, ecosystems and biodiversity and Iraq is losing an estimated 25,000 hectares of arable land annually, mostly in the south.

The growing water shortage coupled with water pollution (which is partially a side effect of the reduced water flows) affects the socio-economic life in Iraq in multiple ways; including the supply of potable water, very high levels of salinity, waterborne diseases resulting from drinking and usage of polluted water, chronic drought conditions in the southern Iraq resulting from shrinking downstream flows, threats to food security, loss of biodiversity especially in the southern marshlands, sea intrusion, land degradation, loss of livelihoods by agrarian communities and displacement of communities are a few to be noted.

Diverse challenges exist within different areas of Iraq over water shares, seasonal water supplies, water quality and access. These for example include the differential supply and quality of water between northern vs southern Iraq, the lack of water supply to the historic marshes which are also home to rich but at-risk biodiversity, the tensions within southern governorates and the issues between federal and Kurdistan region governments.

There is also a sectoral dimension to water supply and quality: like the excessive consumption of water in the agriculture sector (due to old style irrigation) vs a vs other sectors, the polluting of rivers from urban, industrial and hospital sewage. Seasonal aspect of water management is important too, especially in the case of rain failures during winter which leads to subsequent shortages in summer for different downstream areas of Iraq. Southern farming communities and marsh Arabs are most vulnerable due to reducing and polluted water supply and are forced to abandon their communities and lifestyle.

In view of these growing risks to its society and economy, Iraq is looking for solutions to improve its water resources management regimen as well as to improve cooperation with upper riparian countries on transboundary water resources. Iraq is about to achieve accession to the UN Water Convention and this would require Iraq to address water as a basic human right issues and ensure supply of good quality water to all Iraqi citizens and sectors of economy. This may include developing new strategies, policies, laws and strengthening capacities, as well as adopting new technologies for efficient water resources