



Terms of Reference (ToR)

Development of the 2027-2031 Strategic Plan for the Independent Medico-Legal Unit

Introduction

The Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) is a governance, health and human rights Public Benefits Organisation (PBO) committed to the prevention of, and response to, torture and related violations. IMLU's work is anchored in a holistic approach that includes litigation, medical and psychosocial rehabilitation, socio-economic empowerment, oversight of government compliance with human rights obligations, and advocacy for political, legal and institutional reforms that promote accountability, healing and justice.

Over the last three decades, IMLU has supported more than 6,000 victims and survivors of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and related violations. The organisation has a national presence supported by a network of over 300 professionals, including doctors, trauma counsellors, advocates, human rights monitors and journalists.

These Terms of Reference are intended to guide the engagement of a consultant to facilitate the development of the 2027-2031 Strategic Plan. The process will provide an opportunity for IMLU to reflect on progress made under the current strategy, draw lessons from implementation, assess emerging trends and contextual shifts, identify institutional priorities, and define a renewed strategic direction for the next five years.

Background

IMLU's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan comes to an end in December 2026. The Plan has guided IMLU's work in advancing its vision of a society free from torture and related violations, with a focus on strengthening accountability mechanisms, enhancing redress, rehabilitation and socio-economic empowerment for victims and survivors, and positioning IMLU as a centre of excellence in torture response and accountability.

The 2022-2026 Strategic Plan was developed based on IMLU's long-standing institutional experience spanning over three decades, during which the organisation has worked to promote a legal, policy and institutional environment that supports accountability, justice, reparations and rehabilitation for victims and survivors of torture and related violations. IMLU has continued to

partner with state and non-state actors, justice sector institutions, civil society organisations, professional networks, communities, development partners, and survivors to prevent and respond to torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances and other related human rights violations.

In 2024, IMLU undertook a mid-term review of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan to assess progress made, document lessons learnt, identify emerging challenges and opportunities, and provide recommendations to strengthen implementation during the remaining period of the strategy. As the current Strategic Plan approaches its conclusion, IMLU seeks to develop a new five-year Strategic Plan for the period 2027-2031. The new Plan will build on the achievements, lessons and recommendations from the current strategy, while responding to emerging political, legal, social, economic, technological, environmental and funding trends that may affect IMLU's mandate and operating context.

The development of the 2027-2031 Strategic Plan will provide IMLU with a renewed strategic direction, clear institutional priorities, an updated theory of change, a results and monitoring framework, and a realistic resourcing and sustainability approach. The process will be participatory and evidence-informed, involving consultations with IMLU's Board, management, staff, professional networks, partners, state and non-state actors, development partners, communities, victims and survivors, and other relevant stakeholders. The resulting Strategic Plan will guide IMLU's programmes, partnerships, institutional strengthening and resource mobilisation efforts over the next five years.

Context Analysis

The development of IMLU's 2027-2031 Strategic Plan takes place within a dynamic and increasingly complex operating environment. In Kenya and the broader region, civic space continues to face pressure. Concerns around excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, intimidation of human rights defenders, restrictions on freedoms of expression and assembly, and slow accountability for violations has been documented. The 2027 general election cycle and the period beyond are likely to shape the human rights, governance and security context within which IMLU will operate. The new Strategic Plan should therefore position IMLU to remain responsive, adaptive and prepared to prevent, document and respond to torture and related violations before, during and after electoral and other politically sensitive periods.

The funding landscape for human rights and governance work continues to shift. The traditional donor funding is becoming increasingly constrained, competitive and tied to changing global priorities. This has implications for IMLU's long-term sustainability, institutional resilience and ability to deliver its mandate. The 2027-2031 Strategic Plan should therefore examine realistic

pathways for resource diversification, flexible funding, strategic partnerships, social enterprise opportunities, cost efficiency and resilience-building. With the Public Benefits Organisations Act and related regulations now shaping the operational environment for PBOs, the strategy should also explore opportunities for strengthening IMLU's public benefit mandate, compliance systems, local resource mobilisation and social enterprise models.

IMLU's work is also increasingly influenced by regional and transnational human rights trends. Patterns of transnational repression, cross-border violations, displacement, shrinking civic space and attacks on activists, journalists and human rights defenders across East Africa have contributed to growing demand for IMLU's expertise and services beyond Kenya. The strategic planning process should therefore examine what this means for IMLU's future growth and expansion trajectory, including the scope, feasibility, risks, partnerships and institutional capacity required for any regional or transnational engagement.

The new strategy must be firmly grounded in survivor-centeredness. Survivors of torture and related violations are not only beneficiaries of IMLU's work, but key rights holders whose lived experiences, priorities and recommendations should inform the design of future interventions. Drawing from the principles of the Survivors' Charter¹, the strategic planning process must ensure meaningful, safe and ethical participation of survivors.

Internally, IMLU has continued to evolve as an institution. Ongoing reforms, including the review of the organisational Constitution, human resource manual, policies, systems and structures, provide an important foundation for institutional strengthening. The 2027-2031 Strategic Plan should assess how IMLU's governance, leadership, staffing, internal systems, professional networks, policies and organisational culture can be strengthened to effectively deliver the strategy. This should include attention to staff wellbeing, workload management, technical capacity, succession planning, accountability systems and institutional resilience.

The media and communication landscape has also changed significantly. Digital platforms, social media, citizen journalism and youth-led civic engagement have created new opportunities for visibility, advocacy, public education, rapid response, movement building and donor engagement. At the same time, these channels present risks related to misinformation, digital security, surveillance, online harassment and reputational exposure. The new Strategic Plan should therefore define how IMLU can strengthen its visibility, strategic communication, digital engagement and knowledge leadership while safeguarding staff, survivors, partners and sensitive information.

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/charter-victims-survivors-of.pdf>

Overall, the 2027-2031 Strategic Plan should be forward-looking, context-responsive and grounded in IMLU's mandate. It should enable the organisation to respond to emerging human rights challenges, including SGBV, strengthen survivor-centred programming, build institutional and financial resilience, explore responsible growth opportunities, enhance visibility and partnerships, and position IMLU as a leading centre of excellence in torture prevention, response, accountability and rehabilitation.

Objective of the Consultancy

The overall objective of this short-term consultancy is to conduct a rigorous, participatory, and evidence-based process for developing IMLU's 2027-2031 Strategic Plan, including the strategic narrative, theory of change, results and M&E framework, costing, resource mobilisation strategy, risk analysis, and implementation arrangements required for effective execution and governance approval

Specific Objectives:

1. Review IMLU's mandate, strategic positioning, operating context, institutional capacity, performance trends, growth, scaling up and emerging priorities for 2027-2031.
2. Synthesize key lessons from the 2022-2026 strategy, the midterm review process and findings, annual reports, workplans, budgets, donor commitments, and other core organisational materials.
3. Conduct stakeholder mapping and design a consultation process that is inclusive, survivor-safe, gender-responsive, and fit for purpose.
4. Develop a roadmap for sustained use of the body of evidence and research opportunities from the ongoing work of IMLU.
5. Facilitate strategic choices that position a transformative vision, mission, goal, values, strategic priorities, target results, partnerships, and implementation model.
6. Develop a clear theory of change and results framework, including outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines, targets, means of verification, responsibilities, and review cycles.
7. Prepare a realistic costing and phasing framework for strategy implementation, together with a resource mobilisation and partnership strategy.
8. Develop a strategic risk analysis and mitigation framework covering programmatic, political, operational, financial, legal, reputational, safeguarding, and digital risks.
9. Mainstream gender, GBV, disability inclusion, human rights, conflict sensitivity, and survivor-centre approaches throughout the strategy.
10. Propose digital/ICT priorities for the period, including data governance, knowledge management, secure case and evidence management, communications, reporting, and cyber/privacy considerations.
11. Produce a final Board-ready strategic plan package and support validation and approval processes.

12. Provide a roadmap for a social enterprise model that would enhance IMLU’s internal fundraising and resourcing capacities and scope.

Scope of Work

The consultant(s) shall undertake, at a minimum, the following tasks:

- Conduct an inception phase, including review of all relevant documents and agreement on the process, governance structure, milestones, and consultation architecture.
- Review the current strategy, annual workplans, performance reports, budgets, fundraising materials, organogram, policies, donor requirements, and any available midterm evaluation documentation.
- Undertake a strategic diagnostic covering external context, political economy, civic-space trends, institutional strengths and weaknesses, stakeholder expectations, funding trends, and operational risks.
- Develop a stakeholder map and engagement plan identifying internal and external stakeholders, including survivors and clients, Board, management, staff, professional networks, civil society partners, state and justice-sector stakeholders, county actors, media, academia, funders, and allied movements.
- Design and implement a mixed-method consultation process, including key informant interviews, focus groups, staff and management workshops, Board engagement, and a validation workshop. A targeted online or phone survey may be used where appropriate.
- Analyze strategic options and facilitate decisions on whether IMLU should retain, refine, or restructure its current pillars, operational and geographic scope and implementation model.
- Develop a theory of change that is evidence-informed, explicit about assumptions, and usable for programming and fundraising.
- Develop a results framework and M&E architecture aligned to the theory of change and realistic organisational capacity.
- Prepare a strategic risk register and mitigation matrix, including scenarios related to civic space, political change, staff wellbeing, data security, funding fluctuations, social enterprise model and safeguarding.
- Integrate gender/GBV and human-rights mainstreaming across the strategy, using survivor-centered and do-no-harm principles.
- Design options for research and strengthened adaptation of the body of evidence for growth and sustainability

Key Deliverables

The following are key deliverables for the consultancy firm;

Deliverable	Core content	Required format
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Inception package	Inception report; detailed methodology; workplan; stakeholder mapping and engagement plan; consultation tools; ethics, safeguarding and data-management protocol; quality-assurance plan; outline of the final strategy	Word and PDF; editable tools in Word/Excel
Stakeholder consultation and data gathering package	Conduct structured consultations with key internal and external stakeholders, collect evidence, perspectives, and recommendations.	Excel data set
Draft strategic plan package	Full draft strategic plan, implementation framework, draft M&E framework, draft risk register and validation presentation, preferably to at least 3 different stakeholder categories, including the Governance, Internal-staff and external audience that will include survivors and representation of professional bodies and CSOs that IMLU works with.	Word and PDF, Excel, PPT
Final strategic plan package	Final revised strategy, 3-5 page executive summary, 2-page Board brief, final PowerPoint deck, clean editable source files, M&E framework and Risk register	Word, PDF, Excel, and PPT editable files

Timelines

The duration of the assignment will be approximately 30 consultancy days spread over a period of six months. The assignment is expected to commence in June 2026, following the signing of the consultancy contract and completion of the inception meeting. The consultant will work closely with the IMLU management team and designated focal persons throughout the assignment period to ensure the timely completion of all agreed deliverables. The final 2027-2031 Strategic Plan, incorporating feedback from the IMLU management team and Board of Directors, shall be presented for validation to key stakeholders at a date and time to be mutually agreed upon by the consultant and IMLU.

Future Use of Data

During the data collection exercise, the consultant should take into consideration the do-no-harm, survivor-centred, gender and safeguarding principles. Due to the level of sensitivity of the data collected, it will be paramount that the consultant adheres to IMLU's data protection policy and the Data Protection Act of Kenya.

All data collected will be the sole property of IMLU. The consultant must not use the data for their own research purposes, nor license the data to be used by others, without the written consent of IMLU. The raw and synthesised data will be shared with IMLU for future use in the forms/ format agreeable with the consultant.

Requirement and Competencies

i. Functional Competencies

The applicant(s) in the consultancy firm should possess the following;

- Expert knowledge of human rights, legal framework, health and the law;
- Experience in developing strategic plans for human rights institutions
- Ability to research and write at a high level;
- Expert knowledge of governance processes;
- Ability to research and conduct interviews with key informants; and
- Experience in the usage of mobile data collection, data analysis and data visualization software's.

ii. Core Competencies:

- Ability to produce high-quality outputs in a timely manner while understanding and anticipating the evolving client needs.
- Strong organisational skills;
- Ability to work independently, produce high-quality outputs;
- Sound judgment, strategic thinking and the ability to manage competing priorities;
- Demonstrates integrity by modeling IMLUs values;
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of IMLU;
- Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

iii. Education

- The lead consultant should have a minimum master's degree in law, statistics, gender, communication or other social sciences.
- Minimum of 5 years' demonstrable experience in research, implementation and review of strategic plans, conducting multi-project evaluations and or in the human rights field, especially in torture and ill treatment in Kenya.
- The consultant(s) / firm must have demonstrated consultancy track record and be recognised as seasoned professionals with a high degree of proficiency, extensive experience in the field of human rights.

Bid Requirements

Firms/Consultant(s) who meet the requirements stated should submit an expression of interest (maximum of 5 pages), which should include the following:

- A technical proposal, work plan and evaluation framework, including commitment to be available for the entire assignment period.
- A detailed financial proposal (Attached as an annex)
- Updated resume that clearly spells out qualifications and experience for the key Consultant(s). (Annexed, and are not part of the statement of expression of Interest)
- Reference organisations that have recently (preferably in the last 3 years) contracted the firm/consultant(s) to carry out relevant research/survey or related work.
- The consultant/ firm must be registered under recognised professional bodies and within the laws of Kenya.
- Sample reports of similar work done in the last five years with International Non-governmental organisations.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation committee shall evaluate the proposals on the basis of their responsiveness to the Terms of Reference, applying the evaluation criteria.

- Preliminary evaluation
- Technical evaluation
- Financial evaluation

Preliminary evaluation

The following shall form the basis for preliminary evaluation before proceeding to the technical evaluation stage.

- Certificate of registration or incorporation.
- Copy of VAT/PIN certificate from KRA.
- Valid Tax compliance certificate
- CVs for proposed key personnel
- Availability statement for the full assignment period
- Should be a firm/individual consultant with office/operational establishments within Kenya.

Technical evaluation.

The evaluation committee shall evaluate the proposals on the basis of their responsiveness to the Terms of Reference, applying the evaluation criteria as follows:

No	Particular Requirements	Max Points
1	Experience in conducting similar services within the last five years. Attach contracts, purchase orders, or recommendation letters etc. 20 points (<i>At least four proof of previous work experience are required</i>)	40 points

	<p>Previous consultancy experience working in similar assignments with CSOs focused on Human rights, governance advocacy and reforms. Attach at least two sample reports of similar work done, preferably for an international or national non-governmental organisation with programming on human rights, governance and policy reforms. 20 points</p>	
2	<p>The lead consultant must have a minimum of 6 years' experience in designing strategic plans, reviewing strategic plans and conducting evaluations with international or national NGOs, preferably with a broad understanding of human rights issues, policy and governance. 20 points</p> <p>The consultant/applicant must have a master's degree in either law, statistics, governance, gender, communication or other social sciences. (Attach academic certification and CV) 20 points</p>	40 points
3	<p>Adequacy of methodology in responding to the terms of reference and the proposed work plan.</p> <p><i>(15 points will be awarded for an adequate methodology, and 5 points for the work plan)</i></p>	20 points

Each proposal shall be rejected at this stage if it does not respond to important aspects of the Terms of Reference or if it fails to achieve the minimum technical score of 70%

Financial evaluation

Tenders that are determined to be substantially responsive to the requirements of the technical evaluation shall be subjected to price comparison.

Submission of Bids

Applications should be sent to procurement@imlu.org by **12th June 2026** with the title of the assignment "IMLU 2027-2031 Strategic Plan" in the subject line of the email, or be sealed and hand delivered to IMLU offices addressed to;

The Procurement Committee
Independent Medico Legal Unit (IMLU)
69 Mokoyeti West Road, off Lang'ata Road
Near Galleria Shopping Mall, Karen Estate
P. O Box 16035-00509, Galleria, Nairobi Kenya

NB: Only shortlisted firms/ Candidates shall be contacted