



## **Supporting Civic Activism and Advocacy Initiatives in Albania**

### *Terms of Reference: Mental Health Expert*

#### *Project Overview*

The project 'SPARKs: Supporting Civic Activism and Advocacy Initiatives in Albania' (SPARK) implemented by Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development, tackles the need to expand and strengthen the community of activists in Albania by enhancing their internal capacities to monitor, analyze, and undertake concrete actions contributing to tangible change to their communities or groups they represent. SPARK aims to promote and spread the culture of activism and advocacy nationwide by facilitating interaction and exchange between activists, civil society organizations, media, researchers, etc., and support structured and evidence-based policy dialogue in pressing issues and important democracy and governance processes. To make this happen, a series of tailored capacity development and coaching processes are envisioned in the form of workshops and coaching components, covering theoretical and practical aspects of activism and advocacy. In the process, the participants will have improved their knowledge of how to engage in various activism forms and advocacy processes (monitoring, analyzing, influencing), how to establish dialogue platforms with the local/regional/ and national authorities, how to raise particular pressing issues within the sector, and how to initiate lobbying and advocacy actions in view of influencing policy-making.

SPARKs also aims to support a number of mental health activism and advocacy initiatives within Albania. As part of this project, a Mental Health Expert is sought to provide guidance, mentorship, and expertise to individuals and organizations involved in mental health-related activism and advocacy causes.

#### *Objective:*

The primary objective of engaging a *Mental Health Expert* is to enhance the effectiveness and impact of mental health activism and advocacy initiatives in Albania. The expert will provide specialized knowledge, support, and mentorship to empower stakeholders to address mental health challenges effectively.

#### *Responsibilities:*

##### **1. Mentorship and Guidance:**

- Provide one-on-one mentorship sessions to individuals and organizations involved in mental health activism and advocacy.
- Offer guidance on developing strategic plans, campaigns, and initiatives to raise awareness and promote mental health and wellbeing.



- Assist in the formulation of advocacy messages and campaigns that resonate with diverse audiences.

## **2. Capacity Building:**

- Provide information and know-how on mental health-related topics, including stigma reduction, self-care practices, and effective advocacy strategies.
- Equip the #shkëndija program participants with the necessary skills and tools to advocate for policy changes and improve mental health services within Albania.

## **3. Technical Expertise:**

- Offer expert advice on evidence-based practices, interventions, and approaches for addressing various mental health issues.
- Stay updated on the latest research, trends, and best practices in the field of mental health to inform and guide advocacy efforts.

## **4. Networking and Collaboration:**

- Facilitate networking opportunities and foster collaborations among mental health stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, healthcare professionals, and community-based organizations.
- Identify potential partnerships and opportunities for joint advocacy initiatives to amplify impact and reach.

## **Qualifications:**

- Degree in psychology, psychiatry, public health, social work, or a related field.
- Hands-on experience working in the field of mental health;
- In-depth knowledge of mental health issues, policies, and systems, particularly in Albania or similar contexts.
- Strong communication, interpersonal, and facilitation skills.

## **Duration and Time Commitment:**

The consultancy is expected to last 6 months and involve a total estimated time commitment of 15 days. The exact schedule and duration will be finalized in consultation with the selected expert.

## **Reporting:**

The Mental Health Expert will report to the Project Manager/Coordinator, providing regular updates on activities, progress, and challenges encountered. Reports should include recommendations for future actions and adjustments as needed.

## **Application Process:**

Interested candidates should submit a detailed CV, cover letter, and proposed consultancy plan outlining their approach to mentoring mental health activism and advocacy initiatives in Albania. **Applications should be sent to [co-plan@co-plan.org](mailto:co-plan@co-plan.org) by 15 May 2024.**