

ToR for Research Consultancy – Legal Research on the Kafala System in Lebanon

DETAILS OF POSITION

Organisation: Migrant Workers' Action

Job Title: Research Consultant - Legal Research On The Kafala System In Lebanon

Date: January 2026 - April 2026

Location: Beirut, Lebanon / Hybrid

Duration of contract: 30 days (over a period of three months)

Rate: \$350.00 USD per day / \$10,500 USD in total

Reports to: Executive Director / Policy and Communications Manager

Responsible for: Drafting a research report on the legal and policy framework of the Kafala System

Contract Start: ASAP

INTRODUCTION

Migrant Workers' Action (MWA) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO), founded in 2019 to advance social justice for migrant domestic workers (MDWs) and drive systemic change in labour migration systems in sending countries and Lebanon. Our goal is to build up the migrant workers' movement so that they can enjoy their fundamental freedoms, reclaim their rights, and abolish the sponsorship system (Kafala). We envision a just world in which migrant workers move, work, and live in dignity.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT.

The Kafala (sponsorship) system in Lebanon regulates the employment and residency of migrant domestic workers (MDWs), creating a structural framework that ties workers' legal status directly to their employers. This system exposes MDWs to heightened vulnerability, including exploitative working conditions, restrictions on mobility, and limited access to legal remedies.

The Kafala system is not based on a single law, but rather on a loose collection of policies, laws, regulations, and administrative circulars that collectively govern the recruitment, employment, and residency of migrant workers. These include labour laws, immigration regulations, ministerial guidelines, and procedural directives issued by various government departments over the years. The fragmentation and inconsistency of this legal framework often result in ambiguities that enable exploitative practices and make it difficult for workers to claim their rights.

Understanding the full scope of the laws, policies, and circulars that constitute the Kafala system is critical for identifying gaps, legal inconsistencies, and potential entry points for advocacy aimed at ensuring the rights and protection of migrant workers in Lebanon.

PART 1: JOB DESCRIPTION

OBJECTIVE

To conduct comprehensive research on the laws, regulations, and policies that establish and govern the Kafala system in Lebanon, and to produce a research brief highlighting potential avenues for legal and policy advocacy aimed at reforming the system.

SCOPE OF WORK:

The Research Consultant will be responsible for:

1. Mapping the legal and regulatory framework of the Kafala system, including:
 - a. Relevant Lebanese labour laws, immigration policies, and administrative regulations.
 - b. Government and ministry guidelines affecting MDWs' employment and residency.
 - c. Case law or judicial decisions relevant to the Kafala system and MDWs' rights.
2. Identifying gaps, contradictions, or legal loopholes that perpetuate exploitation or limit MDWs' rights.
3. Reviewing existing advocacy and reform efforts targeting the Kafala system, including reports by local and international NGOs, UN agencies, and legal actors.
4. Preparing a research brief summarising:
 - a. Key legal and policy findings.
 - b. Potential advocacy opportunities and recommendations for reform.
 - c. Priority areas for engagement with government authorities, embassies, and civil society.

DELIVERABLES:

- Inception note detailing methodology, legal sources, and research approach.
- Comprehensive legal research report (20–30 pages) with references to laws, policies, and case law.
- Research brief (5–7 pages) summarising key findings and actionable advocacy recommendations.
- Presentation of key findings to MWA staff and partners (optional, depending on availability).

PART 2: QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION:

- A degree in Law from a Lebanese University, preferably with knowledge of migration and labour law frameworks.

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE:

- Minimum of 5 years of experience in conducting legal research and analysis, focusing on the Lebanese legal framework, labour and migration policies
- Familiarity with the mandate, structure and decision-making process of the Lebanese Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Understanding of the legal and administrative structure of the General Directorate of General Security and the Internal Security Forces
- Experience in producing policy briefs and advocacy-focused research.

SKILLS:

- Fluency in Arabic and the ability to understand legal documents in Arabic
- Strong analytical and writing skills in English
- Proven ability to conduct comparative legal and policy analyses, with evidence of prior work in the field.
- Strong methodological skills, including designing and conducting interviews, stakeholder consultations, and desk reviews.
- Proficiency in report writing, with experience producing comprehensive research reports and policy briefs tailored to diverse audiences, including policymakers, NGOs, and academics.
- Competency in data visualisation and presenting research findings in accessible formats.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Commitment to ethical research practices, including ensuring confidentiality and informed consent.
- The consultant will be expected to engage with MWA staff, to contextualise legal findings within the lived realities of migrant domestic workers.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates are invited to submit the following by 10th January 2026:

- A detailed CV outlining relevant experience.
- Expression of interest outlining approach to the research.
- Sample of previous legal research or policy analysis work.

Email your application to hr@mwaction.org

Migrant Workers' Action values diversity. People of all genders, ethnicities, sexualities, ages, and abilities are encouraged to apply.