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INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date: **05 March 2014**

Country: Republic of Moldova

Description of the assignment: Team of (one international and two national) consultants to develop options for implementation of NUTS regulation in Moldova

Expertise sought:

- A. international expert in EU regional development strategic and planning issues (also **as team leader** and further cited as **RDEU**)
- B. national expert in regional development of the Republic of Moldova (policy expert cited as **PE**)
- C. national expert in statistics (statistics expert cited as **SE**)

Project name: UN Joint Project "Strengthening the national statistical system"

Period of assignment/services: March- May 2014, up to 30 full working days for each consultant, plus 15 days for leading task. Proposals should be submitted online by pressing the "Apply Online" button no later than **24 March 2014**.

Requests for clarification only must be sent by standard electronic communication to the following e-mail: aurelia.spataru@undp.org. UNDP will respond by standard electronic mail and will send written copies of the response, including an explanation of the query without identifying the source of inquiry, to all applicants.

1. BACKGROUND

The main challenge of the regional policy of the Republic of Moldova is to ensure balanced sustainable economic and social development at the sub national level, solving the issues related to regional disparities. Therefore sustainable regional development is an imperative assumed by the Government of Moldova, which has also confirmed its commitment to fairly/equally distribute the opportunities/chances for regional development throughout the country. This is confirmed both at the legislative level¹ and at the strategic planning level². Successful implementation of the regional policy will foster and accelerate the development of the country as a whole, where the ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life of the citizens, wherever they live on the territory of Moldova.

Both, the implementation of transparent and efficient mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of regional development process, as well as the production and timely reporting of regional statistics, are the two specific objectives of the National Strategy of Regional Development.

The local authorities will be able to increase their role in completing the process of local development, to develop feasible policies for the local/regional development and to increase the capacity of different stakeholders at local level to implement these policies, only when sufficient evidence is made available through statistics.

The generation of disaggregated sub national level data has been increased especially in the recent years, when the needs for information based decision of central and local public authorities, managers, investors, analysts and other users regarding sustainable regional development increased significantly.

Considering the aspirations of Moldova's European integration, it is very important that the regional statistics, relevant for the country, to be compiled in compliance with the pertinent EU standards and best practices, taking into account the peculiarities of the Republic of Moldova. The basis for compilation of relevant and comparable statistics represents the application of appropriate classifications, including that of territorial units for statistics, NUTS³ classification being used for these purposes in EU being a geocode standard for referencing the subdivision of countries for statistical purposes, with three NUTS levels.

From the perspective of the **alignment** of the Republic of Moldova to the EU standards, in both legal and statistical fields, it is important to gradually implement and apply, also, the statistical classifications, in particular NUTS so that the informational needs of society in data disaggregated in regional perspective, internationally comparable, are met.

¹ Law No. 438 as of 28.12.2006 on regional development of RM. <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=320885>

² Government Decision No. 158 as of 04.03.2010 on approval of National Strategy on regional development, as well as the Activity Program Government of the Republic of Moldova European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare 2011-2014, <http://www.gov.md/doc.php?l=ro&idc=445&id=3729>

³ Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics OR Common classification of territorial units for statistics, REGULATION (EC) No 1059/2003 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 26 May 2003, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction

This step is determinant for both the assurance of spatial and time **comparability** of sub-national statistical data of the R. of Moldova with the EU statistics during the integration of the country into the European community, as well as for provision of reliable evidences in the process of regional development **funding**, in particular from the EU sources.

Thus, the elaboration and implementation of the national classification NUTS in the Republic of Moldova, taking into consideration the advanced experience of EU states, in particular the new member-states, represents a big challenge of high political, economic and social impact for ensuring a balanced development of settlements and reduction of regional disparities in the country.

Because the breakdown of regions according to NUTS should be performed with providence, considering multiple normative/legal, institutional, political, cultural, social, geographic, environmental and economic aspects, an exhaustive study should be conducted to allow the most appropriate identification of statistical territorial units for the Republic of Moldova and elaboration of the national NUTS classification.

Regional division of the country aims to provide a single and coherent territorial breakdown for the collection and development of regional statistics, harmonized with EU standards. Further, from economic point of view this will ensure the eligibility for aid from European funds for regional development (for those regions whose development is lagging behind) that is assessed at NUTS 2 level.

Joint UN Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System of RM is implemented by the Government of the Republic of Moldova in partnership with UNDP and other 4 UN agencies, as well as the Government of Romania, and aims at improving data collection, production, dissemination and use of statistical information with particular attention to national needs and official statistics overall conformity with international, in particular EU, standards.

For more info on NUTS and national context please see the Terms of References.

2. SCOPE OF WORK, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ANALYTICAL WORK

The Joint UN Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System is to hire a team of one international consultant and two national consultants with relevant experience who will develop feasible options for the most appropriate sub-division of the country territory taking into consideration the NUTS regulations, other EU relevant requirements and best practices, as well as the national specifics.

Under the current assignment the Project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Regional Development and Constructions, State Chancellery, National Bureau of Statistics and Project team, are looking for the following expertise on the part of the team of sought international and national consultants:

- (A) To conduct a study in order to develop a set of options for most appropriate statistical sub-division of the country taking into consideration the NUTS regulations, other EU relevant requirements and best practices, as well as the national particularities;
- (B) To develop feasible draft(s) of national NUTS classification;
- (C) To propose corresponding adjustments to the legal framework;
- (D) To make recommendations for regional data collection according to the proposed classification.

The work of consultants will be led by a *team leader*, function cumulated by international expert besides the tasks related to the area of his/her competence, being responsible for coordination and consistency of produced reports, as well as overall guidance of the national experts.

For detailed information on Tasks and Responsibilities, Expected Deliverables for each consultant please refer to Terms of Reference.

3. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

I. Academic Qualifications:

- Advanced degree in public policy, development, economics, statistics, social and/or other related science
- Other formal education relevant for the assignment

II. Years of experience:

- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in applied area/s of expertise
- Experience including substantial participation in analytical works (thematic analysis, assessments, evaluations, reviews, policy advisory, or research work) in applied area/s of expertise
- Development and/or implementation of relevant national/EU classifications
- Experience of participation in policy-making processes
- Previous experience in coordination/leading of /participation in complex team-works, joint research activities, moderating working groups, organizing national/local level consultation events
- Experience of collaboration with Government/s, in particular in area/s relevant for the present assignment
- Experience of work with development partners, in particular EU, UN/UNDP

III. Competencies:

- Strong knowledge and understanding of area/s of expertise applied
- Ability to analyze, plan, communicate effectively orally and in writing, draft reports, solve problems, organize and meet expected results, adapt to different environments (cultural, economic, political and social)
- English and Romanian (an asset for the international expert) languages proficiency

IV. Personal Qualities and other requirements:

- Good interpersonal skills, solid judgment/decision making, initiative and creativity
- Ability to be independent, impartial and credible in a challenging environment
- Availability to work with UN and Project's national stakeholders during the indicated/approved period
- Adherence to UN's values and ethical standards
- Cultural and gender sensitivity.

4. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Technical Proposal including:
 - brief explanation of how the Applicant responds to each of the qualification requirements and why he/she is the most suitable for the work;
 - own vision and working approach in undertaking the assignment;
 - 1-2 samples of similar work undertaken previously (or link to access them online).
2. Personal information (as a detailed CV or as a Personal History Form /P11) including records on past experience in similar projects/assignments and concrete outputs obtained;
3. Financial proposal (in USD, specifying a total lump sum amount and the number of anticipated working days).

Additional Information: In the case of engagement of Civil servants under Individual Contract modality, (i) A “No-objection” letter in respect of the individual is requested from the Government employing him/her, and; (ii) The individual must provide an official documentation from his/her employer formally certifying his or her status as being on “official leave without pay” for the duration of the Individual Contract.

5. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The financial proposal shall specify a total **lump sum** amount, and payment terms around specific and measurable (qualitative and quantitative) deliverables (i.e. whether payments fall in installments or upon completion of the entire contract). Payments are based upon output, i.e. upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR.

In order to assist the requesting unit in the comparison of financial proposals, the financial proposal will include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (including all related costs e.g. fees, phone calls etc.) and the number of anticipated working days. The consultant shall bare costs for all supplies needed for data collection and data processing including possession of his own personal computer.

Travel

All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel. In general, UNDP should not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources.

Two missions to Moldova of the international expert (of 5 days) are envisaged.

Also, during the contract period two trips to Comrat (ATU Gagauzia region) might be required (if need will confirm) at the average distance of 100 km from Chisinau. The cost of respective round trips should be included in the applicant's financial proposal and include all the pertinent costs.

In the case of other travel, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between the respective business unit and Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

6. EVALUATION

Initially, consultants will be short-listed based on the following minimum qualification criteria:

- Advanced degree in public policy, development, economics, statistics, social and/or other related science;
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in applied area/s of expertise (*RDEU* – EU regional policy, *PE* – regional development in RM, *SE* – production of statistics in RM).

The short-listed individual consultants will be further evaluated, by applied 3 areas of expertise, based on the following methodology:

Cumulative analysis

The award of the contracts shall be made to the individual consultants whose offers have been evaluated and determined as:

- a) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
- b) having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

* Technical Criteria weight – 60% (300 pts);

* Financial Criteria weight – 40% (200 pts).

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 210 points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points Obtainable
Technical		
1. Advanced degree in public policy, development, economics, statistics, social and/or other related science: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Development Expert/RDEU - economics, public policy, social sciences • Statistics Expert/SE - statistics, economics • Policy Expert/PE - economics, public policy / social sciences 	Bachelor’s – 20 pts, Master’s – 25 pts, PhD – 30 pts	30
2. Other formal education relevant for the assignment (certified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDEU and PE – any related and certified • SE incl. statistical analysis software (SPSS, STATA, etc.) 	Any relevant for area of expertise applied – 10 pts	10
3. At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in applied area/s of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDEU: strategic planning and implementation of EU regional policies, socio-economic analyses of EU regions, with the use of regional statistics • SE: methodological work and production of territorially disaggregated statistics (preferably official) in Moldova, following the international/EU standards • PE: planning, design and implementation of regional development or related areas in Moldova, following EU standards and/or best practices 	5 years –30 pts, 6-7 year – 31-35 pts; >7 years – 36-40 pts	40

Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points Obtainable
4. Experience including substantial participation in analytical works (thematic analysis, assessments, evaluations, reviews, policy advisory, or research work) in applied area/s of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: regional development, planning, strategic thinking, evidence-based monitoring in EU SE: statistical indicators production and evidence-based monitoring PE: related to Moldova's current policies, programs, strategies in regional development 	Large (>5 pieces) – 16-30 pts, to some extent (1-5 pieces) – 1-15 pts, No-0 pts	30
5. Development and/or implementation of relevant national/EU classifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: Development and implementation of relevant EU classifications in statistics SE: Development of national classifications, also in compliance with EU/international requirements PE: Use of national classifications 	Entire fulfillment of criteria – 20 pts, partial – 10 pts, None-0 pts	20
6. Experience of participation in policy-making processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: provision and use of evidences for planning, monitoring and evaluation of regional development policies in EU countries and (as asset) in Moldova SE: production and use of data for monitoring and evaluation of policies in Moldova (in particular in regional development or related fields) PE: evidence-based planning, designing, monitoring and evaluation of policies in Moldova (in particular in regional development or related fields) 	Large – 10-15 pts, to some extent – 5-9 pts, No-0 pts	15
7. Previous experience in coordination/leading of /participation in complex team-works, joint research activities, moderating working groups, organizing national level consultation events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: coordination/leadership SE: participation PE: participation 	Large – 15-20 pts, to some extent – 5-14 pts, No-0 pts	20
8. Experience of collaboration with Government/s, in particular in area/s relevant for the present assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDE: Governments of EU countries and (as asset) in Moldova SE: Government of the Republic of Moldova and (as asset) in EU countries PE: Government of the Republic of Moldova and (as asset) in EU countries 	Large – 20-30 pts, to some extent – 5-19 pts, No-0 pts	30
9. Experience of work with development partners, in particular EU, UN/UNDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: experience in international projects managed/funded by EU institutions, in particular specialised in regional development and statistics SE: experience in international projects focused on statistics PE: experience in international projects focused on regional development 	Large – 15-20 pts, to some extent – 5-14 pts, No-0 pts	20
10. Strong knowledge and understanding of area/s of expertise applied <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: regional development, planning, strategic thinking, evidence-based monitoring, but also EU classifications, in particular in statistics SE: functioning of official and/or administrative statistics (concepts, regulatory framework, EU/UN standards, best practices, classifications) PE: national strategic context in regional development and/or related fields at all levels (national, sectorial, regional perspective and EU practices) 	Large – 15-20 pts, to some extent – 5-14 pts, No-0 pts	20
11. English and Romanian languages proficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDEU: Excellent English, knowledge of Romanian/Russian as an asset SE: Romanian-excellent, Good skills in oral and written English PE: Romanian-excellent, Good skills in oral and written English 	English – 5 pts, Romanian – 5 pts, Russian - 5	15
12. Relevant technical proposal (justification of being most suitable for the work vision and working approach) <i>Note: Qualifications under criteria 10 & 12 might be also confirmed during the interview</i>	Fully relevant – 30-50pts, at some extent – 9-29 pts, irrelevant – 0 pts	50
Maximum Total Technical Scoring		300
Financial		
Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula: S = Fmin / F * 200 S – score received on financial evaluation; Fmin – the lowest financial offer out of all the submitted offers qualified over the technical evaluation round; F – financial offer under consideration.		200

Note on abbreviations used: RDEU – regional development expert, SE – statistics expert, PE – policy expert

Winning candidate

The winning candidates will be those who accumulated the highest aggregated score (technical scoring + financial scoring).

ANNEXES:

ANNEX 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCES (TOR)

ANNEX 2 – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS