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INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date: 28 October 2014

Country: Republic of Moldova

Description of the assignment: National consultant to perform the final evaluation of Project Component on Territorial Statistics

Project name: UN Joint Project "Strengthening the national statistical system", Component "Improvement of availability and reliability of regional statistics for decision-makers of the Republic of Moldova"

Period of assignment/services: November-December 2014, up to 20 full working days
Proposals should be submitted online by pressing the "Apply Online" button no later than **7 November 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 production of reliable statistics and use of statistical data for evidence-based policy design and monitoring is fundamental to human development, the achievement of the MDGs and further approximation to EU standards for the Republic of Moldova. This development challenge has been anchored in the United Nations development assistance and partnership frameworks and national strategic documents (national and sectorial development strategies, etc.). The European Neighborhood Programme Action Plan for Moldova, and later on the EU-Republic of Moldova Association Agreement, also recognized the need for further assistance in harmonization of official statistics with European standards.

Moldova's data system suffered from inconsistent methodology, multiplicity of data sources, weak capacity of data providers and data users to acknowledge the value and properly benefit of available data. A lot of statistical indicators were not disaggregated by required dimensions or, if disaggregated, then often not disseminated and not easily accessible or understood by users. The low statistical users' literacy generated poor use of available data for analysis of the current situation, participatory policy making, monitoring of policies' implementation and evaluation of their impact.

As a response to all these circumstances, in 2007, UN Joint Project on *Strengthening the National Statistical System*¹ of the Republic of Moldova has started aiming to provide more strategic and coordinated interventions to the Government of Moldova in the statistical field. The Project aimed to strengthen data production, dissemination and use and made a critical contribution to improving the quality and accessibility of statistical data in Moldova which was possible due to combined complementary areas of expertise of the joint UN agencies.

The respective Joint Project² was successfully implemented (as well as evaluated²) and in 2013 complemented with a new component on *Improvement of availability and reliability of regional statistics for Moldova's decision-makers* (or Territorial statistics Component), representing developmental assistance from the Government of Romania in partnership, besides National Bureau of Statistics, with the Ministry of Regional Development and Constructions and Ministry of Economy.

The given Project Component had to respond to the urgent need to improve the availability and quality of territorial statistics used to ensure that the disadvantaged areas of the country are clearly identified and their problems' nature is clearly understood. Statistical issues were identified and gradually resolved by exploring various approaches and learning from advanced experience of other countries, and building capacities of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to monitor the implementation of their Regional Development Strategies.

In the long term, when sufficient evidence is made available through official and/or departmental statistics – to which the Project Component contributed - 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.

¹ Statistics Project's card is available on <http://www.undp.md/projects/Statistics.shtml>, as part of the UNDP Democratic Governance Cluster.

² End of Project Evaluation and Future Programming entry-points in the field of statistics and evidence-based policy making, UN commissioned Evaluation Report, Arkadii Toritsyn and Gheorghe Caraseni, UNDP Consultants, July 2013

The overall objective of the Project Component is to contribute to the improvement of quality regional data made available to decision-makers and planners within the Moldovan central, regional and local government system so that government policy and planning on regional development at all levels is properly informed. Gaps in multi-dimensional disaggregated data at local/regional level were identified and filled, special focus being put on mechanisms fostering the capacities and cooperation between various data producers and targeting quality issues.

The successful accomplishment of the Project Component's targets should have led to the improvement of:

- 1) the system of socio-economic statistical indicators at local/regional levels (including data collection) and calculation methodologies;
- 2) the information flows, leading to the enhanced usage of administrative and statistical sources of information for production of reliable and disaggregated statistical data needed for the operation of LPAs and RDAs.

For more information on the Project Component outputs to be evaluated please refer to Terms of Reference.

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 **national consultant to perform the evaluation of Territorial Statistics Project Component.**

The purpose of the Evaluation is to review the progress made by the Project in fulfilling its agreed objectives under the described component on territorial statistics, through the planned activities, and to assess their efficiency and effectiveness and of resources used to generate results with special emphasis on impact and sustainability.

The Evaluation is expected to examine whether the activities, outputs and objectives outlined in project document have been achieved, as well to underline factors that impacted Joint Project's outputs and outcomes, capture good practices as well as lessons learned, including unintended consequences (positive and negative). The UNDP Country Office accordingly plans to make use of the exercise as a learning opportunity not only for the office but also for key partners and stakeholders, as inclusively and as practically possible. The findings and recommendations generated by the evaluation should inform the implementation and targeting of activities related to evidence-based policy M&E and strengthening the necessary statistical capacities planned within UN-RM Partnership Framework until 2017.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

1. Provide an objective and independent assessment of achievements and results, constraints, performance, impact, relevance and sustainability of the interventions ;
2. Generate lessons learned and good practices from respective interventions to inform current and future programming at the country level;
3. Assess whether the results achieved are relevant for the current statistics related environment in the country;
4. Provide clear and forward-looking recommendations that can guide UNDP, partner UN agencies and other players in developing effective, realistic and evidence-based strategies.

The evaluation should be comprehensive and cover the outcome, outputs, activities and inputs of the project. The results of the evaluation will be used for re-focusing the interventions and guiding future programming. In this context, the evaluation will:

- (i) Extract lessons for future interventions in the statistical sector;
- (ii) Propose improvement of the coordination between donor-supported interventions in meeting national requirements;
- (iii) Outline main areas of focus for future UNDP /UN projects.

For detailed information on Evaluation criteria, Tasks and Responsibilities, Expected Deliverables please refer to Terms of Reference.

3. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- I. Academic Qualifications:
 - Master's degree or equivalent (5 years University degree) in management, public administration, development studies or other relevant fields
- II. Years of experience:
 - At least 5 years of professional experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (public administration, democratic governance and its development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation, regional development)
 - At least 3 years of experience in conducting evaluation of development projects / programmes in the socio-economic fields
 - Practical experience of work related to the use of statistical data and evidences and undertaking participatory monitoring
 - Experience of collaboration with Moldova's Government institutions in areas relevant for assignment
 - Experience of collaboration with UN/DP or other development organizations in Moldova or outside the country (in areas of managing, monitoring and evaluating projects)
- III. Competencies:
 - Familiarity with the national context related to the areas of assignment
 - Ability to analyse, plan, communicate effectively orally and in writing, produce well written analytical reports, solve problems, organize and meet expected results, manage diversity of views, adapt to different environments (cultural, economic, political and social)
 - Fluency in English and Romanian languages
- IV. Personal Qualities and other requirements:
 - Good interpersonal skills, solid judgment/ decision making, having demonstrated initiative; creativity; self-starter and results-oriented

- 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:
 - (i) Letter of Interest explaining why the candidate is the most suitable for the work
 - (ii) Provide a brief methodology on how the candidate will approach and conduct the work
 - (iii) Confirmation of availability to provide services within the stipulated timeframe
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.

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:

- Master degree or equivalent (5 years University degree) in management, public administration, development studies or other relevant fields;
- At least 5 years of professional experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (public administration, democratic governance and its development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation, regional development);
- At least 3 years of experience in conducting evaluation of development projects / programmes in the socio-economic fields.

The short-listed individual consultants will be further evaluated, 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
<u>Technical</u>		
1. Master's degree or equivalent (5 years University degree) in management, public administration, development studies or other relevant fields	Master's – 30 pts, PhD – 40 pts	40
2. At least 5 years of professional experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (public administration, democratic governance and its development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation, regional development);	5 years – 40 pts, 6-7 year – 41-50 pts; >7 years – 51-60 pts	60
3. At least 3 years of experience in conducting evaluation of development projects / programmes in the socio-economic fields;	3 years – 30 pts, 4-6 year – 31-40 pts; >7 years – 41-50 pts	50

4. Practical experience of work related to the use of statistical data and evidences and undertaking participatory monitoring	Large – 20-30 pts, to some extent – 5-19 pts, No or limited – 0-4 points	30
5. Familiarity with the national context related to the areas of assignment	Large – 15-20 pts, to some extent – 5-14 pts, No-0 pts	20
6. Experience of collaboration with Moldova’s Government institutions in areas relevant for assignment	Extensive – 11-20 pts, to some extent – 5-10 pts, No or limited – 0-4 points	20
7. Experience of collaboration with UN/DP or other development organizations in Moldova or outside the country (in areas of managing, monitoring and evaluating projects)	Extensive – 11-20 pts, to some extent – 5-10 pts, No or limited – 0-4 points	20
8. Fluency in Romanian and English languages	Romanian – 5 pts, English – 5 pts	10
9. Relevant technical proposal (justification of being most suitable for the work vision and working approach)	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: $S = F_{min} / F * 200$ 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

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