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Resilient nations.*

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>Job title:</b>	Consultant on Parliament and Budget Process
<b>Duty station:</b>	Chisinau, Moldova
<b>Reference to the project:</b>	"Strengthening Parliamentary Governance in Moldova" Project
<b>Contract type:</b>	Individual Contract (IC)
<b>Contract duration:</b>	October – December 2016 (up to 40 working days)
<b>Starting date:</b>	October, 2016

### 1. BACKGROUND

The goal of the UNDP "Strengthening Parliamentary Governance in Moldova" Project, further on referred to as the SPGM project, is designed to address the main needs of the Parliament of Moldova in the areas of legislation making, oversight and representation during the on-going process of domestic reform spurred by closer relations with the EU. The project is also assisting in making the Parliament's legislative activity more open, transparent and participatory through establishing tools and mechanisms for the engagement with the Civil Society, professional associations and general public. Project interventions will offer and encourage equal opportunity for male and female participation.

The budget is the most important economic policy tool of a government and provides a comprehensive statement of the priorities of a nation. As the representative institutions of the people, it falls to national parliaments to ensure that the budget optimally matches a nation's needs with available resources. Effective legislative participation in the budget process establishes checks and balances that are crucial for a transparent and accountable government and ensures efficient delivery of public services.

Through national budgets, governments outline their policy objectives intentions and the resources they intend to use to implement them. Increasing demands for democracy and good governance require that parliaments play a more active role in the budgetary process. As the supreme representative institutions at the national level, parliaments and their members are under the obligation to ensure not only that the needs of their electorates are met, but also that public money has been equitably raised, well spent and can be properly accounted for.

An important component of the legislative scrutiny is to ensure that the budget addresses the needs of women and men equitably, and that it is supportive of particularly vulnerable groups in society including poor girls and boys, people with disabilities, minorities and the aged. Analysing the budget from a gender perspective provides a useful mechanism to assess the effects of government policies on men and women, boys and girls, and the real contributions all individuals make to the economy. In this way, government can evolve and implement policies that ensure equity and equality.

In parliamentary systems of governance, budgets have to be passed regularly by the national parliaments, usually on an annual basis, in order to ensure that government continues to operate. The budget process is governed by a timeline that can be separated into four different stages: drafting, legislating, execution, oversight, and audit. The principle of the legislative authorisation of all public spending and taxation ensures the 'rule of law' in public finance. There is an obligation on the national parliament to ensure that the revenue and spending measures it authorises are fiscally sound and fairly match the various needs of citizens, both men and women, with available resources.

The annual budget formulation process in Moldova is divided into two separate stages. In the first stage, lasting from January to the end of April, the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) is elaborated. The second stage is the process for drafting the annual budget law, which starts when the medium-term expenditure framework is finalised, and ends when the draft budget is submitted to parliament on 1 October. The annual cycle of budget formulation follows a detailed and comprehensive timetable for both the MTEF and the draft annual budget proposal in which it is stated, which entity will prepare which information and at what time. Although the timetable is detailed and codified in a government decree, in reality there have been frequent significant delays.

Formally, the Parliament of Moldova receives the draft budget law on 1 October from the Ministry of Finance. Informally, the draft budget is available for the Budget Committee on the website of the Ministry of Finance two

weeks before. Parliament examines the draft budget in three readings. The first and the second readings are held one after the other in October, while the third reading takes place in November.

However, in reality the role of the Parliament of Moldova in the budget process is limited. The process, as defined in the Constitution and the Budget Code (the organic budget law), gives parliamentarians approximately two months to scrutinise the government proposal, which is a bit shorter than the minimum of three months recommended in the "OECD Best Practices for Budget Transparency" (OECD, 2002). A budget committee is in place, with a co-ordinating role in the budget process. However, this role could be extended through provision of additional non-partisan staff to support the budget committee concerning budgetary issues. The staff could help provide additional and alternative information, for instance from independent research institutes or think tanks, and could help committee members to familiarise themselves with the technical aspects of the budget.

With that in mind, the Project "Strengthening Parliamentary Governance in Moldova", will concentrate on supporting the Budget Committee of the Parliament of Moldova in better review of proposal annual state budget and enhance capacities of MPs (from Budget Committee and Women Platform) to review the budget from gender perspective.

In this context, UNDP SPGM project is seeking to hire a consultant to assist the Parliament of Moldova in enhancing its input in the budget review process.

## **2. SCOPE OF WORK AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

The expected output for the consultant's assignment is to assist the Parliament of Moldova, its MPs and staff in active engagement in the budgetary process and to thoroughly scrutinise the draft budget for achieving its inclusiveness and responsiveness to the country's strategic priorities. The consultant will work closely with the relevant stakeholders in the Parliament of Moldova to advance its own institutional capacity to make a positive impact on the budget, and to equip parliament, its members and parliamentary staff with the necessary tools to examine the budget from a gender perspective.

In order to achieve the stated scope of work, the Consultant shall perform the following tasks and activities:

1. Conduct a desk review of the existing legal framework, policies and regulations related to the roles and responsibilities of the Parliament of Moldova and international best practices and rules related to the role of Parliament in budget review process.
2. Support the Committee on Budget to review the annual state budget:
  - Conduct the review and analysis of the annual state budget
  - Provide assessment of the draft law on state budget based on World Bank's Principles of Good Budgeting, OECD's Best Practices for Budget Transparency, and IMF's Code of Good Practice on Fiscal Transparency
  - Coach members of the Committee on Budget in the process of the review of the annual state budget
  - Develop a concept note on enhanced role of the Parliament in budget review process
  - Draft Committee on Budget rules and a workplan for the budget review process
  - Deliver a training for MPs and parliament staff on effective techniques of budget drafting, review and analysis
  - Organize mock hearings on budget issues with participation of civil society organizations
  - Present best practices and draft a concept note on the role of a budget office in the Parliament
3. Assist the Committee on Budget and Women Platform on Gender Responsive Budgeting:
  - Conduct a gender-sensitive/gender-responsive analysis of the draft law on state budget based on international tools/standards
  - Deliver a training for MPs and parliament staff on gender responsive budgeting on the basis of the analysis mentioned above
  - Assist interested MPs to prepare amendments to the draft law on state budget to address findings of the gender-sensitive/gender-responsive analysis

The consultant will have to undertake three Missions to Moldova (tentatively) in the period between September – December 2016:

- Second half of October r 2016
- First half of November 2016
- First week of December 2016

### 3. KEY DELIVERABLES AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

	Key deliverables:	Tentative timeframe/deadline
1.	An Inception Report containing a detailed Work Plan and Methodology developed	By October 13, 2016
2.	Assessment report with recommendations on the review and analysis of the annual state budget developed	By October 28, 2016
3.	Committee on Budget rules and a work plan for the budget review process developed	
4.	Coaching of the members and staff of the Committee on Budget in the process of the review of the annual state budget provided	By November 10, 2016
5.	Concept note on enhanced role of the Parliament in budget review process developed	
6.	Training for MPs and parliament staff on effective techniques of budget drafting, review and analysis delivered	By November 15, 2016
7.	Mock hearings on budget issues with participation of civil society organizations organised	
8.	Concept note on the role of a budget office in the Parliament developed	By November 30, 2016
9.	Gender-sensitive/gender-responsive analysis report of the draft law on state budget based on international tools/standards developed	By December 9, 2016
10.	Training for MPs and parliament staff on gender responsive budgeting delivered	
11.	Assist interested MPs to prepare amendments to the draft law on state budget to address findings of the gender-sensitive/gender-responsive analysis	

### 4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the UNDP Parliament Specialist for substantive aspects of the assignment, and under the guidance of the Senior Project Officer – for administrative aspects. The consultant will report to the Parliament appointed representative and the Parliament Specialist of UNDP SPGM project. The Parliament will provide consultant with working space, access to Internet, a printer and a telephone line.

#### *Timeframe*

The timeframe for this assignment is planned tentatively through October – December 2016. The Consultancy should involve about 40 days of work. The exact schedule of missions in Moldova, as well the dates of trainings shall be coordinated in advance.

#### *Language*

All communications and documentation related to the assignment will be in English. Before submission of the deliverables, the consultant will discuss the draft documents with the parties involved (i.e. Parliament, UNDP and other stakeholders) so that the final products reflect their comments.

### 5. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The payment of the Consultant will be made following the certification by UNDP that the services related to the Deliverables, as described in the Terms of Reference, have been satisfactorily performed and the Deliverables have been achieved by or before the specified due dates.

### 6. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

- I. Academic Qualifications:
  - Master degree or equivalent (5 year university degree) in economy, finance, political sciences, public administration, law, social sciences or other related fields.
- II. Years of experience:
  - At least 7 years of relevant professional experience in the field of state budgeting and/or gender responsive budgeting;
  - At least 5 years of established experience in designing capacity building programmes related to state budget process;
  - At least 3 years of proven experience in organizing, facilitating and conducting seminars, trainings and workshops with state institutions/agencies/organizations, on budgeting issue;

- Previous experience supporting Parliaments in budget review and gender responsive budgeting process is a strong asset;
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the OECD's Best Practices for Budget Transparency, World Bank's Principles of Good Budgeting and IMF's Code of Good Practice on Fiscal Transparency
- Experience of advisory work on parliamentary development or practical experience as Member of Parliament or parliamentary staffer is a strong advantage;
- Proven experience in engaging diverse stakeholders in state budgeting exercises and gender responsive budgeting
- Experience in comparative analysis, research, assessment on the implementation of the international legislation and policies.

III. Competencies:

- Strong analytical and drafting skills;
- Excellent writing and oral communication;
- Leadership skills and ability to work with teams;
- Knowledge of UN system and UNDP will be considered a strong asset;
- Fluency in English. Knowledge of Romanian and/or Russian will be an asset.

Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations, in particular, respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status.

**7. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS:**

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

1. Methodological Proposal that should contain:
  - i. A brief methodology on how they will approach and conduct the assignment.
  - ii. Explain why they are the most suitable for the work including past experience in similar assignments and the relation to the above required qualifications.
2. Financial proposal (in USD), specifying a fee per day and total requested amount including all related costs, e.g. fees, per diems, travel costs, phone calls etc.;
3. Duly filled in and signed Personal History Form (P11) and at least 3 names for a reference check.