**UNICEF Moldova**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Title: National Expert (Consultant) on Accessibility to support the development of the new Program on social inclusion of persons with disabilities**

**Duty Station:** Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**Project reference:** Paradigm shift to disability inclusive services and Accountable Governance

**Contract type:** Individual Consultancy

**Duration of assignment:** Up to 45 working days during July - September 2023

1. **Background:**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (further referred as Ministry) has embarked on a range of reform processes aiming to address the challenges that exist in the field of social protection and social inclusion of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. In 2022, the evaluation of the implementation of the Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2018 – 2022 was conducted. For 2023, as part of the activity plan, the Ministry envisaged to develop the next National Programme of Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2023 - 2027.

For ensuring the compliance with the provision of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the process of developing the new program should be inclusive, with meaningful consultations and participation of persons with different types of disabilities, gender, age, etc. Among the pillars for the new program, that would be further defined following inclusive and participatory processes are mainstreaming disability inclusion; positive/special measures that would facilitate the process of inclusion of persons with disabilities; accessibility and empowerment and participation of persons with disabilities.

An inter-sectoral working group on the development of the Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the period 2023 – 2027 will be set up and coordinated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. The process of developing the program will follow the provisions of the [Governmental Decision nr. 386 from 17.06.2020 on planning, development, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies](https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=121921&lang=ro).

1. **Objective:**

The main objective of this consultancy is to support the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in the inclusive and participatory development of the National Programme for the Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2023 – 2027.

The consultant hired under this contract will work together as part of a team of 5 experts under the leadership of a Team leader. The Team Leader and the other consultants will be selected/contracted by various UN Agencies (UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO etc.) to support the process of developing the Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2023 - 2027 under the leadership of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and in consultation with other line ministries and other relevant national key stakeholders. The Team Leader is expected to be regularly in touch with the mentioned team of Individual National Consultants.

The Team Leader will ensure that the structure /format of the new policy document (including its Action Plan, M&E Framework and Budget) - is developed in alignment with requirements/ provisions of the national normative framework in force. This will be done, including by being responsible for the integration of all inputs developed by the Team of National Consultants into a single integrated set of documents, ensuring the timely delivery, and participation during inclusive consultations of the documents, as well as presentation within a validation meeting/round table to be held under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the final version of the developed set of documents, envisaged to be approved through a Government Decision.

The support provided by the Accessibility expert/consultant, in cooperation with the team of consultants selected by partner UN Agencies,will consist of:

* Development, jointly with the team of consultants, of the problem tree analysis, theory of change and concept note of the National Programme for the Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. The problem analysis and ToC will be developed based on a desk review of the available data and reports[[1]](#footnote-1) on the implementation of the Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2018 – 2022, the situational analysis conducted and validation of the identified problems through focus groups discussions.
* Development of the National Programme, its action plan and M & E framework in line with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
* Facilitation of inclusive public consultation sessions, including regional consultations with meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, on the documents developed by the team of consultants.
1. **Expected Deliverables:**

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| **ITEM NO.** | **DELIVERABLES** | **Estimate Workdays** | **Tentative timeframe** |
|  | ***Tasks*** |  |  |
| **I.** | ***Development of the problem tree analysis, theory of change and concept of the National Programme for the Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.*** * Develop, as part of the team of consultants under the leadership of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, the problem tree analysis, ToC & the concept of the new policy document.
* Actively participate within/ facilitate up to 3 focus group discussions aimed at validating the problem tree analysis, ToC and concept of the draft policy document. Diversity in participation will be ensured, so that persons with different types of disabilities, sex, age, geographic area are involved.

***Deliverables**** The problem tree, ToC and concept of the new policy document are developed and consulted.
* Up to 3 focus groups for validation of the problem tree, ToC and the concept of the new policy document with the participation of persons with disabilities moderated.
 | Up to 15 working days | By 30 July, 2023 |
| **II.**  | ***Contribution to the Development of the draft National Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities specific to the topic of accessibility;**** Provide support to the Working Group set up by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to develop and publicly consult the draft of the National Program, including its action plan and M&E framework;
* Contribute to the development of the divergence table and adjusting the draft program in alignment with the feedback received during the consultation and validation process.
* Facilitate inclusive consultations of the Programme.
* Development of the table of divergences based on the consultation process.

***Deliverables:**** ***Inputs provided*** to the development of the Programme on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities;
* Facilitation/actively participation within all consultations and validation sessions and round tables to be held at the national level related to the development of the draft Programme.
* The National Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities finalised based on consultation process.
 | Up to 30 working days | By 30 September, 2023 |

1. **Organizational Setting:**

The Consultant will work under the under the guidance and supervision of the Social Policy Specialist in the UNICEF Moldova Country Office. The entire process of the new policy document development will be led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, which is the main beneficiary of this consultancy.

1. Performance indicators for the evaluation of results:

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

* Completion of tasks specified in the ToR.
* Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables.
* Quality of work.
* Demonstration high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts.
1. **Qualifications and skills required:**
2. Academic Qualifications:
* University Degree in Social Sciences, Social Protection, Sociology, Education, Law, Public administration or equivalent qualifications in a relevant field, is required;
1. Years and sphere of experience:
* At least 2 years of professional experience in the area of rights of persons with disabilities is required, with a specific focus on accessibility aspects, covering physical accessibility, and digital accessibility ;
* Experience in developing policy documents is required. Experience in developing policy document in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities is an asset;
* Experience of work with Central and/or Local Public Authorities is an asset;
* Experience in facilitating discussions with civil society, especially persons with disabilities, women, minority and vulnerable groups, is an asset.
1. Competencies:
* Good organization and drafting skills, ability to work under tight deadlines;
* Solid understanding of and ability to apply communications tools and techniques, including the ability to analyse and use research data, are required;
* Demonstrated knowledge of the situation of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova, is required;
1. Language proficiency
* Fluency in oral and written Romanian. Working knowledge of English would be an asset;
* Knowledge of one or more other languages relevant for Moldova, including Bulgarian, Gagauzian, Romani, Russian, Ukrainian or sign language, is an asset.
1. Soft skills:
* Resourcefulness, flexibility and punctuality;
* Ability to work in team.

UNICEF is committed to workforce diversity. Women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, as well as refugees and other noncitizens legally entitled to work in the Republic of Moldova, are particularly encouraged to apply.

1. **Content of technical proposal:**

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

* Letter confirming interest and availability to undertake the individual consultancy;
* Proposal (Motivation Letter): explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including previous similar or relevant experience in Projects (please provide brief information on each of the above qualifications, item by item);
* CV, with at least 3 references.

**Important notice:** The applicants who have the statute of Government Official / Public Servant prior to appointment will be asked to submit the following documentation:

* + - a no-objection letter in respect of the applicant received from the Government, and;
		- the applicant is certified in writing by the Government to be on official leave without pay for the entire duration of the Individual Contract.
1. **Content of financial proposal:**

The applicants should fill in the Financial Offer Template and specify the consultancy fee, per day of work, requested for the tasks described in the Terms of Reference in MDL.

The final selection will be based on the principle of “best value for money” i.e. achieving desired outcome at lowest possible fee.

If not provided by ToR, UNICEF will not reimburse costs that are not directly related to the assignment. This contract does not allow payment of off-hours, medical insurance, taxes, and sick leave.

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of the payment if performance is unsatisfactory if work/output is incomplete, not delivered or failure to meet the agreed deadlines.

1. **Evaluation criteria for selection**

The initial screening of candidates will be based on the following minimum qualification criteria:

* University Degree in Social Sciences, Social Protection, Sociology, Education, Law, Public administration or equivalent qualifications in a relevant field, is required;
* At least 2 years of professional experience in the area of rights of persons with disabilities is required;
* Experience in developing policy documents is required. Experience in developing policy documents in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities is an asset.

The shortlisted candidates will be further evaluated based on the following methodology:

**Cumulative analysis**

The award of the contract shall be made to the applicant whose offer has 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.

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| **Criteria** | **Scoring** | **Maximum Points**  |
| **Technical** |
| University Degree in Social Sciences, Social Protection, Sociology, Education, Law, Public administration or equivalent qualifications in a relevant field, is required; | *University degree – 35 pts, Master’s – 45 pts; PhD – 55 pts;* | 55 |
| At least 2 years of professional experience in the area of rights of persons with disabilities is required; | *(2 years – 40 pts, each additional year – 10 pts, up to a maximum of 80 pts.).* | 80 |
| Experience in developing policy documents is required. Experience in developing policy document in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities is an asset. (Minimum 1 policy document developed) | *(1 policy document – 40 pts, each additional policy document 10 pts, up to a maximum of 60 pts)**1 policy document in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities -20 pts.* | 80 |
| Experience of work with Central Public Authorities is an asset; | *(no – 0, yes - 25 pts).* | 25 |
| Experience in facilitating discussions with civil society, especially persons with disabilities, women, minority and vulnerable groups, is an asset. | *(no – 0, yes, 25 pts).* | 25 |
| Fluency in oral and written Romanian. Working knowledge of English would be an asset; | *Maximum 20 pts., (10 pts. - for each language).* | 20 |
| Knowledge of one or more relevant minority languages, including Bulgarian, Ukrainian or Romani, as well as sign language(s), will be a strong advantage. | *Maximum 10 pts., (2 pts. - each language).* | *10* |
| Belonging to the under-represented groups within the UN Moldova (persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, refugees and other noncitizens as self-declared). | *(no – 0 pts, to one group – 2 pts, to two or more groups – 5 pts.* | 5 |
| **Maximum Total Technical Scoring** |  | **300** |

*\* Under-represented group in the area of assignment (law enforcement) are women. Under-represented groups in UN Moldova are persons with disabilities, LGBTI, ethnic and linguistic minorities, especially ethnic Gagauzians, Bulgarians, Roma, Jews, people of African descent, people living with HIV, religious minorities, especially Muslim women, refugees and other non-citizens.*

***Please specify in CV, in case you belong to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment.***

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| **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** |

The selection process is aimed at selecting the applicant who obtains the highest cumulative score (technical evaluation + financial offer evaluation points) following “best value for money” principle.

1. Work location and official travel involved

The assignment does not envisage any travel. Should the need arise, in-country travel could be authorized by the responsible UNICEF staff. In such cases, expenses will be covered by UNICEF in line with the approved DSA and travel rates.

1. **Payment Schedule**

The payment will be done in 2 tranches, according to the following breakdown. All deliverables must be submitted on time and to the satisfaction of UNICEF Moldova.

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| Deliverable (completed according to the timeline agreed upon with UNICEF) | Proportion of payment |
| * The problem tree, ToC and concept of the new policy document are developed and consulted.
* Up to 3 focus groups for validation of the problem tree, ToC and the concept of the new policy document with the participation of persons with disabilities moderated.
 | 50% |
| * ***Inputs provided*** to the development of the Programme on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities;
* Facilitation/actively participation within all consultations and validation sessions and round tables to be held at the national level related to the development of the draft Programme.
* The National Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities finalised based on consultation process.
 | 50% |

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs are incomplete, do not meet quality standards, or not delivered for failure to meet deadlines.

1. **Ethical considerations**

The Consultant will ensure that the process is in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines[[2]](#footnote-2). The Consultant should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty while interacting with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the Consultant should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information. All participants should be informed about the context and purpose of the National Research, as well as about the confidentiality of the information shared. The Consultant is allowed to use documents and information provided only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

As per the [UNICEF Procedure on](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/portals/RF/Regulatory%20Framework%20Library/DHR%20Procedure%20on%20Consultants%20-%20DHR_PROCEDURE_2018_005.pdf) Consultants, together with the Notification letter, the consultant will be sent the [link on Agora](https://agora.unicef.org/course/view.php?id=15620) containing UNICEF policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption; Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgment, as well as mandatory online trainings. The selected candidate must complete the applicable mandatory online courses on UNICEF’s learning platform prior to the signature of the contract.  All certificates should be presented as part of the contract.

1. **Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as “[Elevated Risk Role](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Guidance%20on%20Identifying%20Elevated%20Risk%20Roles_finalversion.pdf?CT=1590792470221&OR=ItemsView)” from a child safeguarding perspective?

[ ]    YES     NO  [x]

1. Example: report on the evaluation of the National Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2018 – 2022; [Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities](https://www.undp.org/moldova/publications/situational-analysis-rights-persons-disabilities-moldova)  the developed by the UNCT Moldova; recommendations from international and regional human rights monitoring mechanisms, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNEG Guidelines <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/102> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)