



Terms of References

Job title:	National Consultant to provide coordination and expert support to the Common Dialogue Platform of the Women MPs in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova
Duty station:	Chisinau, Moldova
Contract type:	Individual Consultant
Contract duration:	August 2020 - January 2021 (up to 120 working days)
Starting date:	August 2020

1. BACKGROUND

The United Nations is committed to working together with the Government of the Republic of Moldova to support making a lasting contribution to national human rights and development priorities and to further improve the living conditions of all people in the country, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, in line with the long-term vision for the development of the Republic of Moldova as reflected in the National Development Strategy 2020, adopted in 2012, Association Agreement with the EU signed in 2014, and the nationalised SDGs also reflected in the draft National Development Strategy Moldova 2030. These key events and strategic aspirations underpin the Republic of Moldova–United Nations Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (PFSD) with the Government of Moldova for the period 2018–2022, which is aimed at assisting Moldova achieve its SDG targets by supporting the pursuit of European integration with a rights-based and inclusive approach¹, and the Common Chapter of the Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 referring to the joint work of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women. Under the Priority Area 1 „*Governance, Human Rights and Gender Equality*” of the PFSD, United Nations aims to achieve that „*the people of Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from democratic, transparent and accountable governance, gender-sensitive, human rights- and evidence-based public policies, equitable services, and efficient, effective and responsive public institutions*”. Output 1.4 under this Priority Area suggests that UN Agencies will make concerted efforts towards increasing capacities of women and men to participate in democratic governance.

In line with the above objectives, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women join efforts to support addressing the existing development challenges in the area of gender equality through further developing capacities of women, as the underrepresented sex, and thereby expanding

¹ <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/moldova/docs/Legal%20Framework/UNDAF%20Moldova%20EN.pdf>

enhanced opportunities for equal participation in politics, economy and decision-making in the public and private sectors.

In recent years the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted important legislation that ensures 40% gender quota in the political parties governing bodies, on the political parties' candidate lists (Law 71 from 2016), and the gender placement provision imposing at least 4 candidates of the underrepresented sex out of each 10 on the political parties' candidates lists (Law 113 from 2019). These provisions shall dramatically change the gender balance in the elected bodies and ensure women indeed make at least 40% in those.

With UNDP support, the Parliament has taken important steps towards becoming an efficient, modernized and transparent institution, genuinely representing men`s and women`s interests. An important direction of UNDP`s work with the Parliament was mainstreaming of gender and human rights across its legislative, oversight and representation functions, so the institution takes into consideration particular needs of women and men, boys and girls, as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups, to leave no one behind along the reform pathway.

UNDP assisted in assessing the Parliament`s gender responsiveness from the operational and institutional perspectives, as well as in building the knowledge and raising awareness of MPs and staffers on gender equality matters and enhancing the skills necessary for conducting the gender analysis of the legislation. In 2015, the first ever Gender Audit of the Parliament was carried out to analyse the internal policies, regulations, standards, capacities and practice from a gender perspective and to identify critical gaps and challenges. Based on this analysis, the Parliament adopted the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) for 2017 – 2021, aiming at achieving higher institutional standards of gender equality and gender responsiveness.

Under its mandate, UN Women provides support to relevant institutions to embed gender equality in this work. In this respect, UN Women has a Specific Output “Elected and appointed women have skills and knowledge to promote gender sensitive governance, in alliance with men”, aimed at provision of support to women from Central Public Administration to promote women`s leadership. UN Women, under its projects and initiatives, provides systematic support to the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and to the Government to develop legal framework, bylaws and regulations aimed at mainstreaming gender equality in the work of Central Public Authorities and in daily life of people.

In the broader context of its overall mission to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights and address demographic changes, UNFPA is working with public and private sector in implementing gender-responsive family policies, in order to engage decision makers and legislators in formulating comprehensive and coherent legal provisions and demographic policies allowing women and men to harmonise their career goals with desired fertility and family aspirations. To this end, UNFPA Moldova interacts with the Parliament to advocate for gender-sensitive family-friendly policies for elimination of existing limitations in legislation, while building additional support for the codification of gender-empowering norms and practices.

As a result of an increased gender knowledge and awareness, women MPs from all 5 political Factions established a Women`s Caucus, called the Common Dialogue Platform for Women MPs of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova (Women MPs Platform) in 2015. UNDP supported the creation of the platform`s Coordination Council, in formulating the mission and vision, as well as a Roadmap of activities.

The Women MPs Platform had an important role in advancing the gender equality in the legislation, in particular to be mentioned the adoption of the Law 71 introducing a 40% gender quota for political parties, 14-day paternity leave paid by the State, prohibition of the sexist language in mass-media, etc.; amendments to the Law 196 on domestic violence; and amendments to the Law 294 on political parties. These demonstrated that women MPs can achieve transformative changes on the gender equality agenda if they join the forces.

The elections of February 24, 2019 brought a record 26 women (25,7 %) to the Parliament. At the same time, 77% of the elected women are in their first mandate and this might pose them in a weaker position compared to the more experienced men MPs. The Parliament leadership confirmed the commitment of women MPs to relaunch the work of the Women MPs Platform.²

To support the efforts of the Women MPs in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova in advancing its work towards reflecting the interests of both women and men through the law-making and oversight functions and adoption of the gender-sensitive legislation that would improve gender equality in social, economic and decision-making areas, and would address the needs of the most affected by COVID pandemic population groups, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women are seeking to hire a national consultant on gender mainstreaming to support the re-establishment of the Women's Caucus in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

2. SCOPE OF WORK AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The national consultant's expected role is to provide expert and coordination support to the Women MPs Platform and to work closely with the Women MPs facilitating and guiding the process of identifying and agreeing the Women MPs Platform objectives and priorities, formulating the Regulations to govern the work of the Platform, designing its 2020 – 2023 Action Plan, Communication and Outreach Plan and Capacity Development Programme, as well as supporting the resource mobilisation for the implementation of the Plans by drafting a Project Document.

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

1. Undertake a comprehensive desk review of the national legal framework, Parliament Rules and Regulations, as well as best international practice on the organisation of the Women's Caucuses, and provide recommendations to the Women MPs Platform on the most efficient structure, leadership, division of roles and responsibilities, frequency of meetings, decision-making mechanisms, etc. The recommendations shall be reflected in the Women MPs Platform regulations and subsequently transposed in amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament. The consultant is expected to facilitate and guide the review of the named documents and approval of the final version;
2. Advocate with Women MPs and political factions the review of the draft Parliament's Rules of Procedure as to ensure equal opportunities for men and women when establishing parliament's working bodies, respecting the principle of equal representation in parliamentary delegations and including an obligation for MPs to refrain from using sexist, discriminatory and offensive language, make gender-impact analysis of the draft legislation mandatory based on the recommendations produced by UNDP Strengthening Parliamentary Governance in the Republic of Moldova Project;

² <http://parlament.md/Actualitate/Comunicatedepresa/tabid/90/ContentId/5623/Page/36/language/ro-RO/Default.aspx>

3. Provide support to the Parliament representative responsible for the work of the Women's Caucus (further on "Parliament representative") in the organisation and facilitation of the Platform's leadership and plenary meetings, suggest topics for the agenda, offer analytical support on the issues to be discussed and coordinate the follow-up actions on the decisions approved in the meetings;
4. Facilitate and convene consultations between UN agencies and Women MPs from all parliamentary factions in order to identify the joint priorities to be addressed by the Women MPs Platform, taking into consideration the post-COVID recovery context and relevant needs of women and men; use UN Agencies' analytical products to assess needs and opportunities and inform decision making (e.g. UNFPA Gender and Generations Survey, UNFPA comparative study on national legislation on gender-responsive family policies versus EU Directive 2019/1158, UNFPA National Transfer Accounts report, etc.);
5. Based on a participatory process of consultations with women MPs and following the best international practices in Women Caucuses' activity, draft the 2020 – 2023 Action Plan of the Women MPs Platform. Liaise with the UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women in establishing the priorities and Action Plan of the Women MPs Platform. The consultant is expected to ensure that the plan contains activities related to the law-making and oversight functions of the legislature, and is in line with the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, Parliament's internal instructions and regulations as well as the Permanent Bureau decisions;
6. Support the establishment of communication networks between the Women's Caucus and its prospective dialogue partners - central and local public administration, women's organisations and CSOs, private sector entities - for an exchange leading to identifying the issues related to gender inequalities and insufficient gender-responsive family policies as a basis for legal initiatives and oversight activities with a particular focus on post-COVID recovery measures;
7. Organise and facilitate a strategic planning event with the participation of Women MPs, to discuss and agree upon the priorities for the Women MPs Platform, as well as adopt the 2020 – 2023 Action Plan of the Platform;
8. Liaise with UN Agencies to support the participation of Women MPs in public consultations events to promote gender mainstreaming and inclusive gender-sensitive family policies;
9. Facilitate the Capacity Needs Assessment of the members of the Platform and the approval of the Capacity Development Programme for Women MPs;
10. Coordinate, jointly with the Parliament representative, technical assistance and capacity building activities provided to the Women MPs Platform by other development partners to ensure that the support and expertise aim at enhancing capacities of the Women MPs Platform for the effective law making and oversight activities and for the implementation of the Women's Caucus Action Plan;
11. Facilitate the consultations between Women MPs on the Communication/ Public Outreach Plan of Women MPs Platform and support the Parliament representative in ensuring the visibility of the Women MPs Platform activity through the agreed communication channels;
12. Draft a Project Document aiming at the comprehensive and effective support to the implementation of the Women MPs Platform, as described in its agreed Plans and placed in the context of the post-COVID recovery needs;
13. Support drafting of the quarterly and annual activity reports of the Women MPs Platform.

3. KEY DELIVERABLES AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

	Deliverable	Tentative timeframe/deadline

1.	Inception Report containing a detailed Work Plan developed and submitted	By August 5, 2020
2.	Recommendations for amendments of the Regulations of the Women MPs Platform provided and updated version of the Regulations developed and submitted for clearance to the Platform leadership	By August 24, 2020
	Comparative review of existing women parliamentarian influence and lobby structures / practices (e.g. other European countries, EU Parliament) and outline of applicable best practices, with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive family policies	by 1 October 2020
3.	Draft 2020 – 2023 Action Plan of the Platform developed in a participatory manner and submitted for consultations to the Women MPs.	
4.	Strategic planning event with the participation of Women MPs, to discuss and agree upon the priorities for the Women MPs Platform, as well as adopt the 2020 – 2023 Action Plan of the Platform, organised and facilitated	By October 30, 2020
5.	Communication and Public Outreach Plan of Women MPs Platform developed and submitted	
	Series of consultations between MPs and UN Agencies on analytical products pertaining to strategic priorities in demographic change, gender-responsive family policies, sexual and reproductive health and rights	By November 30
6.	Capacity Needs Assessment of the members of the Women MPs carried out and the Capacity Development Programme consulted with the representatives of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women and approved	By December 1, 2020
7.	Support to the Parliament representative in the organisation and facilitation of the Platform's leadership and plenary meetings, formulating the agenda, expertise on the issues to be discussed provided and the follow-up actions on the decisions approved in the meetings provided;	Throughout the assignment
8.	Support the Parliament representative in effective coordination of the technical assistance and capacity building activities provided to the Women MPs Platform by other development partners;	Throughout the assignment
9.	Support to the Parliament representative in ensuring the visibility of the Women MPs Platform activity through the agreed communication channels	Throughout the assignment
	Schedule of Strategic Engagements - key advocacy and communication opportunities led by UN Agencies in Moldova, with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive family policies	By 31 August
	Knowledge management system (e.g. database) synthesising and compiling all information researched, discussed and produced during analytical exercises, brainstorming sessions, consultations etc., with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive family policies;	Basic structure by August 31 / maintenance throughout the assignment
10.	Final version of the Draft Project Document to support the implementation of the Women MPs Platform 2021 – 2023 Action Plan submitted	By November 30 2020
11.	Quarterly and annual activity reports of the Women MPs Platform drafted	By November 15, 2020/ January 15, 2021

12.	Monthly timesheets describing the implemented tasks and results achieved during the reported period, developed and submitted to UNDP	By end of the reporting month, throughout the assignment
13.	Final Report that would include the analysis of the progress achieved in the area of gender equality through the activity of the Women MPs Platform	By January 29, 2021

4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The national consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Project Advisory Group, consisting of representatives of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women on strategic issues and of the UNDP Programme Specialist/ Effective Governance Cluster Lead, on administrative issues, and in close coordination with the Parliament representative responsible for the work of the Women MPs Platform.

The Parliament will offer a permanent access to its premises and a work place as necessary.

Timeframe

The Consultant is expected to work up to 120 working days. The timeframe for this assignment is planned tentatively through August 2020 – January 2021.

The consultant will report monthly to the UNDP Programme Specialist on the tasks carried out by means of the monthly time sheets.

Language

All the deliverables shall be submitted in Romanian language, in hard copy and electronic format. Before submission of final deliverables, the consultant will discuss the draft documents with the parties involved, so that the final products reflect their comments.

Financial arrangements: The Payment will be disbursed in instalments upon submission and approval of the monthly timesheet describing the implemented tasks and results achieved during the reported period.

Confidentiality: Materials provided to the consultant and all proceedings within the consultancy contract shall be regarded as confidential, both during and after the consultancy. Violation of confidentiality requirements may result in immediate termination of contract.

5. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED:

Educational background:

- Master's degree or equivalent (5-years university education) in gender issues, social sciences, human rights, public policy or any other relevant field;

Working experience:

- At least 5 years of progressively responsible professional experience in human rights, political affairs, social policy analysis / development, gender equality and women/gender-related topics in Moldova;
- At least 3 assignments in the area of gender mainstreaming in projects, programmes or policies;
- Experience in organizing workshops, public consultations, conferences and other public events would be a strong advantage;
- Experience in working with parliament, government and/or international organizations (successful experience in working with UN agencies is an asset);
- Desirable: experience in building multi-stakeholder partnerships and facilitating dialogue between legislators and decision makers, on one hand, and private sector,

CSOs, media etc., on the other; familiarity with gender-responsive family policies under national labour law / other normative frameworks

Competences:

- Knowledge of analytical methods and tools for mainstreaming gender is considered an asset;
- Sound understanding of gender and development issues in Moldova;
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing, draft reports, organize and meet expected results, provide strategic advice in the area of expertise, adapt to different environments (cultural, economic, political and social);
- Excellent skills in evidence-based analysis, negotiations, leadership and overall diplomatic skills;
- Fluency in Romanian, Russian and English.

UN is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

6. 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 explain why they are the most suitable for the work including experience in similar assignments and the relation to the above-required qualifications.
2. Financial proposal (in USD), specifying a fee per day and the total requested amount including all related costs, e.g. fees, phone calls etc.;
3. Duly filled in and signed Personal History Form (P11) and at least 3 names for a reference check.