**GUIDELINE FOR APPLICANTS**

**GRANT COMPETITION**

**Support the provision of primary legal aid to people on the left bank of the Nistru River by piloting the paralegals network**

IMPLEMENTED THROUGH THE PROJECT

„Building sustainable and inclusive peace, strengthening trust

and social cohesion on both sides of the Nistru River” (PBF)

July 2024

[**I.** **CONTEXT** 3](#_Toc173152371)

[**II.** **THE GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT** 3](#_Toc173152372)

[**III.** **GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE PROJECT** 4](#_Toc173152373)

[**IV.** **APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS** 5](#_Toc173152374)

[**V.** **BUDGET REQUIREMENTS** 5](#_Toc173152375)

[**VI.** **PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIAS** 6](#_Toc173152376)

[**VII.** **PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIAS** 6](#_Toc173152377)

[**VIII.** **APPLICATION PROCEDURE** 7](#_Toc173152378)

[**IX.** **EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE** 8](#_Toc173152379)

# **CONTEXT**

Moldova's prospects for lasting peace, stability and shared prosperity continue to be affected by the conflict on its territory. On July 21, 1992, an agreement was signed between Moldova and Russia on the principles for a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict on the left bank of the Nistru, but a political settlement of the conflict has not been reached. Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the situation deteriorated further.

Another challenge in the overall settlement process is related to the low levels of interaction between individuals and communities on opposite sides of the Nistru River as a result of more than thirty years of protracted conflict. Considering past activity on the left bank of the Nistru River, UN agencies can conclude that the left bank lags the right bank in terms of access to services, which in turn widens the gap between communities on the left and right banks of the Nistru River. The population on the left bank, especially vulnerable groups, has limited understanding of how to access basic public services. This includes services that are essential for the implementation of the agreements reached in the conflict settlement process, such as the apostille of diplomas from left bank institutions to the right bank. The limited access to services is caused by the lack of accessible information about these services and the limited understanding of people in the Transnistrian region about the institutional infrastructure for the provision of public services on the right bank.

Through the implementation of the project "Building sustainable and inclusive peace, building trust and social cohesion in Moldova", UNDP will aim to stimulate access to social services available on both sides of the Nistru River for people living on the left bank, bridge the existing gap and thus contribute to social cohesion between communities on both banks of the Nistru River.

# **THE GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT**

The project aims to ensure the access of people from the left bank of the Nistru River to various social services available on both banks, by providing primary legal assistance.

This will increase access for people on the left bank of the Nistru, among other things, to public services offered on the right bank. These could be services related to population documentation, education, and health services as well as specific services, which have been developed for the population of the Transnistrian region based on discussions in the working groups. For example, in the formal settlement process it was agreed, as one of the key achievements in recent years, that certain educational qualifications obtained on the left bank of the Nistru river could be confirmed on the right bank of the Nistru river. However, people in need of these services, especially those belonging to socially vulnerable groups, do not know the exact procedures and how they can be accessed.

The aim is to be achieved through the following objectives:

* + - 1. Piloting networks of paratroopers on the left bank of the Nistru River.
      2. Strengthening the professional capacities of parachutists on the left bank of the Nistru River.
      3. Providing mentoring to the paraprofessionals from the left bank of the Nistru River throughout the project implementation period.
      4. Inform the population on the left bank of the Nistru about the existence and importance of the primary legal aid service.

**Objective 1. Piloting networks of paratroopers on the left bank of the Nistru River**

In the framework of the previous initiative of the project "Building Sustainable and Inclusive Peace, Strengthening Trust and Social Cohesion in Moldova", a number of 25 persons from 5 NGOs located on the left bank of the Nistru River were identified to create a network of paralegals to provide primary legal services to people living on the left bank of the Nistru River. Subsequently, the identified persons were trained in providing primary legal aid. The next step is the actual piloting of the network of paralegals. This involves involving the selected paralegals in the provision of primary legal assistance to the population on the left bank of the Nistru. The involvement of par paralegals will be done by signing partnerships with selected NGOs on the left bank of the Nistru to which the trained paralegals belong. The project aims to provide primary legal assistance to at least 1,500 people living on the left bank of the Nistru River. During the piloting of the service, data will be collected on the consultations provided (domain, area where the beneficiary comes from urban/rural, age, gender, vulnerable group, if applicable).

**Objective 2. Strengthening the professional capacities of parachutists on the left bank of the Nistru River**

This objective is to be achieved by ensuring the participation of all 25 paralegals from the left bank of the Nistru River in additional training sessions, including those organized by UNDP Moldova. The trainings will be held by both national and international experts, who will share their experience in providing primary legal services.

**Objective 3. Providing mentoring to the paraprofessionals from the left bank of the Nistru River throughout the project implementation period**

An expert or a group of experts from the right bank of the Nistru River will be contracted to provide ongoing advice to paralegals from the left bank of the Nistru River. The expert or group of experts will be at the disposal of paralegals from the left bank of the Nistru and will facilitate the identification of responses to requests received from the beneficiaries of the primary legal service, in case paralegals encounter difficulties.

**Objective 4. Informing the population on the left bank of the Nistru about the existence and importance of the primary legal aid service**

The objective will be achieved by organizing events to inform the population about the existence of primary legal advice. In addition, information leaflets on how and where to access this service will be disseminated.

Similarly, the opportunity and possibility of inviting the media, social media, influencers from the left bank of the Nistru to the information events will be analyzed.

For this objective, comprehensive information will be provided to the population on the left bank of the Nistru, including socially vulnerable groups, about the work of parachutists and the types of public services they can benefit from on the right bank of the Nistru River.

# **GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE PROJECT**

The project will be implemented through a grant of up to 150,000 US dollars. The project implementation period is 6 months. The grant will be offered to a non-governmental and non-commercial organization registered under the national legislation of the Republic of Moldova.

Applicants may participate individually or in consortium of maximum two organizations. The applicant must have a bank account in MDL dedicated to this project. The grant will be disbursed in MDL at UNORE rate on the date of payment.

After selection, the Applicant will enter into a collaborative partnership with the NGOs of which the selected paralegals from the left bank of the Nistru River are members for the provision of primary legal services. The partnership will entail:

* 1. To support the provision of services offered by paralegals.
  2. Involvement of paralegals in professional capacity building.
  3. Involvement of the paraprofessionals in the information campaign.

# **APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS**

The applicant must meet the following requirements:

* + - 1. To be a non-governmental and non-commercial organization registered under the national legislation of the Republic of Moldova.
      2. In the case of a consortium the partner organization (leader) must be registered on the right bank of the Nistru River, and the co-partner organization to the consortium can be from both the right and left bank of the Nistru River.
      3. Have at least 3 years of experience in the field of human rights promotion and/or legal assistance.
      4. Have at least 3 years of experience in working with international institutions and organizations.
      5. Not have been found responsible for serious financial or professional mismanagement demonstrated by evidence recognized by UNDP Moldova.

# **BUDGET REQUIREMENTS**

* + - * The budget will be developed using Annex 3.
      * Maximum budget limit is equivalent of 150,000 US dollars.
      * The project budget must be expressed in US dollars.
      * The budget must contain clear information on how the funds will be used and a detailed breakdown of expenditures separately for each organization involved.
      * The budget must be realistic and cost-effective.
      * The budget must correspond to the activity plan as described in the project proposal.
      * All goods and services purchased will be included at the value excluding VAT.
      * Within the consortium, neither the partner (lead) organization nor the co-partner organization may have more than 70% of the total budget under management.

Eligible costs include:

* + - * Costs for the provision of primary legal assistance by paralegals.
      * The administrative costs of the project incurred by both the applicant and NGOs from the left bank of the Nistru River (remuneration of project management staff, telecommunication services, rent and utilities, bank fees) should not exceed 25% of the proposed project budget and should be well justified.
      * Costs for experts, consultants, and trainers.
      * Costs for service providers to provide services to both implementing and beneficiary organizations.
      * Transportation costs (rental of means of transport, fuel, transportation for participants, etc.)
      * Costs related to informing the population on the left bank of the Nistru about the existence and importance of the primary legal aid service.
      * Costs for the purchase of consumables and other materials necessary for the implementation of the project, including the organization of training events.
      * Costs for the events (catering, accommodation, accommodation, printing, interpretation, and translation, etc.).
      * Other duly justified costs necessary for the effective implementation of the project.

Not-eligible costs include:

* + - * Costs incurred before the signature of the grant agreement (including costs related to the submission of the project).
      * Fines and penalties.
      * Activities already financially covered by another grant program.
      * Costs for IT equipment.
      * Individual sponsorship for participation in workshops, seminars, and conferences.
      * Individual scholarships.
      * Coverage of an organization's actual costs, unless justified, where they are clearly related to the project objectives.
      * Costs for the purchase or production of alcoholic beverages, tobacco articles, munitions, luxury goods and other goods prohibited under UN regulations, including those related to the organization of gambling.
      * Exchange losses.

# **PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIAS**

Submitted projects will be subject to an eligibility analysis according to the following criteria:

* + - 1. The project is submitted by a non-governmental and non-commercial organization registered under the national legislation of the Republic of Moldova.
      2. The maximum budget limit of the project is 150,000 US dollars.
      3. The project implementation period is 6 months from the moment of signing the grant agreement.
      4. Administrative costs of the project shall not exceed 25% of the proposed project budget.
      5. Existence of a partnership agreement if the applicant is a consortium.
      6. The project is submitted by an organization that meets the requirements of the applicant.

# **PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIAS**

Project proposals that are identified as eligible will be subject to an evaluation process according to the following criteria:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criteria** | **Description** | **Maximum score** | **Weight**  **%** |
| Project structure and description | The proposed project is clearly described. There is a logical framework between the proposed actions. The well-defined action plan is closely linked to the budget. Potential risks are identified and mitigating actions are clearly defined. | 35 | 30% |
| Impact of the project | The indicators for determining the impact of the project are well defined. The method for collecting impact indicators is clearly described. | 30 | 30% |
| Project sustainability | The project proposal outlines actions to ensure continuity in the provision of the primary legal advice service after the project has been completed. The proposed actions are reliable. | 20 | 20% |
| Project coverage | Level of coverage of the service provided in the total area of the region left bank of the Nistru | 10 | 10% |
| Project team experience | Project staff have sufficient qualifications and expertise for the project activities, including primary legal aid. | 5 | 10% |
| **Total** |  | **100** | **100%** |

# **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Interested organizations will submit a package of documents including:

* **Application form,** signed by the representative of the Applicant or in case of consortium by the representatives of both partner organizations (Annex 1).
* **Project description** according to the form (Annex 2).
* **The Budget,** signed by the representative of the Applicant or representatives of the consortium (Annex 3).
* **A Copy of the Registration Certificate** for the Applicant, and in case of consortium only for the lead organization.
* **A Copy of Applicant’s statutes**, and in case of consortium only for the lead organization.
* **Partnership agreement,** in case of consortium.
* **CVs** of the project management team. In the case of the consortium, the management team from both organizations.

The application form and annexes are posted on the UNDP Moldova website (<https://sc.undp.md/viewtenders2/>). These documents can also be obtained by sending a request to Marcel Blanuța at the following e-mail address: [marcel.blanuta@undp.org](mailto:marcel.blanuta@undp.org).

The applications must be sent electronically by e-mail to [marcel.blanuta@undp.org](mailto:marcel.blanuta@undp.org). Application deadline is **August 23, 2024, 18:00**. Message subject "Piloting Paralegals". Documents in the application packet must be in PDF format, except for the Budget which will be in .xlsx format.

Applications submitted by any other means will be rejected. Applications that are incomplete or submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Applications sent by e-mail must not exceed 20 MB. Applications larger than 20 MB will be split into multiple messages, and in the subject line of each message, in addition to "Piloting Paralegals", the subject must indicate "part x from y - Organization Name". For example if the file is to be submitted in three messages, then the first message will have the subject "Piloting Paralegals 1 from 3 - Organization name" and the last message "Piloting Paralegals 3 from 3- Organization name".

Requests for clarification on the application can be sent to the following email address: [marcel.blanuta@undp.org](mailto:marcel.blanuta@undp.org).

# **EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

Projects will be evaluated by a project selection committee. The committee will evaluate the applications received in two stages:

Stage I: Checking the eligibility of the application. This stage involves but is not limited to: (a) verification that the eligibility of the project complies with the above-mentioned criteria; (b) complete submission of the application; (c) the veracity of the information provided in the application. Applications that are incomplete, erroneous or do not meet the eligibility criteria will be excluded from the competition. At the end a list will be drawn up of the organizations passing to the second stage and those eliminated will be announced

Stage II: Evaluation of project proposals from organizations that have passed Stage II. The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria mentioned above, awarding the appropriate score. The applicant with the highest score will be announced as the winner. At the end, the organizations in that phase will be informed about the decision of the evaluation committee.