APPLICATION GUIDE

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME – MONITORING THE NATIONAL INTEGRITY AND ANTICORRUPTION STRATEGY (NIAS) BY DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE REPORTS OF MONITORING SECTORIAL AND LOCAL ANTICORRUPTION ACTION PLANS UNDER THE SUPPORT OF THE "CURBING CORRUPTION THROUGH BUILDING SUSTAINABLE INTEGRITY IN MOLDOVA" PROJECT

> These guidelines describe the rules and procedures that will guide the submission, selection and implementation process of the Small Grants Programme under the "CURBING CORRUPTION THROUGH BUILDING SUSTAINABLE INTEGRITY IN MOLDOVA" Project implemented by UNDP Moldova and financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1. BACKGROUND

The goal of the project „Curbing corruption through building sustainable integrity in Moldova" is to contribute to achieving a sustainable integrity and anticorruption system in the Republic of Moldova through the strengthened capacities of the public and private sector entities and the civil society for the efficient application and monitoring of national integrity instruments and standards. The project will enhance capacities of the public and private sector actors, as well as of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for the implementation of effective corruption prevention instruments and tools and will strengthen the anticorruption demand side through an increased public awareness on anticorruption and on the means to curb corruption. It will contribute to the progressive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 16 that calls for a substantial reduction of corruption and bribery in all their forms and for developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. The Project is framed around the National Integrity and Anticorruption Strategy (NIAS) 2017-2020 and responds to the needs of its various actors and stakeholders in addressing the challenges for the effective implementation of NIAS, including lack of mechanisms for enforcing integrity standards in private sector; and weak anticorruption demand-side explained by the limited awareness of men and women on the available anticorruption tools to be used and on the means of protection in the event of denunciation of corruption.

The phenomenon of corruption undermines the political stability, society's confidence in political system, rule of law, economic development, and has a negative impact on quality of people's life and fulfilment of fundamental human rights. According to the 2018 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (TI CPI), Moldova scored 33 out of 100 points and ranked 117th out of 180 assessed countries, recording two points improvement in the public perception of corruption compared to the 2017 TI CPI. At the same time, national opinion polls still attest a low trust in public institutions (the level of distrust to Government and Justice is at 75%, and the level of distrust to Parliament is at 80% according to November 2018 Public Opinion Barometer), while corruption persistently remains among three major issues to be solved during the last four years.

To enhance the corruption prevention and combating efforts, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted a new National Integrity and Anticorruption Strategy (NIAS) for 2017-2020. The Strategy's structure is based on integrity pillars methodology developed by the Transparency International. This innovative approach focuses on a strengthened responsibility and accountability of the institutions representing integrity pillars. The policy document focuses on the effective enforcement of the legal and institutional frameworks, rather than legislative modifications and institutional restructuring prioritized in the previous years.

The Strategy is supported by a sound monitoring and reporting system that clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the NIAS's Secretariat and Pillar Monitoring Groups. The National Anticorruption Centre (NAC) is the institution responsible for the coordination of the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NIAS. The Strategy recognizes an important role of civil society and mass-media in the national integrity system, which can contribute to the efficient implementation of the Strategy through independent and impartial monitoring, as well as informing the society regarding the system deficiencies. Moreover, in addition to the submission of official reports to the Secretariat of the Monitoring Groups by the responsible institutions, civil society representatives are encouraged to draft and present to the Secretariat alternative monitoring reports.

The importance of civil society's role in anticorruption efforts is enshrined in the UN Convention against Corruption. Thus, Article 13 of the Convention states that "Each State Party shall take appropriate measures, within its means and, in accordance with fundamental principles of its domestic law, to promote the active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and to raise public awareness regarding the existence, causes and gravity of and the threat posed by corruption". At the same time, the involvement of civil society is also promoted by the Sustainable Development Goal 16 *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions*, namely through the objectives of 16.7. *ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels* and 16.10. *ensure* public *access to*

information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Civil society and the media can contribute directly to the implementation of action plans monitoring, focusing on: transparency of the public authorities' s activity, especially in the areas vulnerable to corruption; empowering public authorities, setting up internal institutional controls and encouraging denunciation of corruption. In certain sectors of decision-making, alternative monitoring is needed and sometimes becomes the only tool that can cause change.

In order to ensure the implementation and participatory monitoring of the NIAS and to stimulate and support civil society involvement in corruption prevention activities, the Project intends to select up to 6 (six) project proposals: 3 (three) for the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans and 3 (three) for the monitoring of sectorial anticorruption action plans in the areas of the public sector (Pillar II of NIAS) vulnerable to corruption defined in the NIAS (police, customs, fiscal services, education, health, subsidizing in agriculture, environment, public procurement, administration and privatization of public property, local public administration). NGOs project proposals will have the opportunity to receive, through a small grant competition, financial and informational support at the elaboration of alternative monitoring reports on the NIAS implementation. In this context, the Project is launching a Call for proposals for the "SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM" – "MONITORING THE NATIONAL INTEGRITY AND ANTICORRUPTION STRATEGY (NIAS) BY DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE REPORTS OF MONITORING SECTORIAL AND LOCAL ANTICORRUPTION ACTION PLANS" (hereinafter – the "Small Grants Program").

2. IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME AND PROJECT SIZE

The Projects should be implemented between **July 2019 – February 2020.** The total maximum amount the applicants can request under their Project Proposals Budget should not exceed **10,000 USD** for the project proposals that refer to the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans and **15,000 USD** for project proposals that refer to the monitoring of sectorial anticorruption action plans.

3. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The Project should pursue a long-term vision which should result in the establishment of a sustainable partnership with the Secretariat of the monitoring groups ensured by NAC for future exchange and distribution of information. Only applications that will plan to carry out the monitoring and alternative evaluation activities for one year (2019) of local or sectorial action plan implementation **for the sectors included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Pillar II of the NIAS (police, customs, fiscal services, education, health, subsidizing in agriculture, environment, public procurement, administration and privatization of public property, local public administration)** will be considered.

Applicants will identify specific needs to verify the timeliness and accuracy of planned actions in local or sectorial anticorruption action plans.

Integrity monitoring activities within public entities aimed at enhancing the accountability of public institutions, based on the approved action plans, is a basic requirement of this Call for Proposals.

Entities eligible to submit Project Proposals should meet all the following criteria:
- Be a registered non-profit Organization (NGO) or Civil Society Organization (CSO). It is advisable for local plans to be monitored by local non-profit organizations, and alternative monitoring may target some local public authorities (district councils).

- Demonstrate experience and relevant expertise in monitoring the policies and/or activities of the central public authorities and/or local public authorities;

- Be able to organize and carry out monitoring activities within the timeframe;

- Be directly responsible for the development and management of the implemented Project;

- Submit at most 2 (two) Project Proposals per organization (for example, one for the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans and one for the monitoring of sectorial anticorruption action plans) under the current Call for Proposals.

4. SPECIFIC PROJECT PROPOSALS REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Geographic coverage

To ensure as wide as possible territorial coverage of activities under the Small Grants Program, the Project Proposals submitted by applicants, in case of project proposals that will refer to the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans should include activities to be carried out in **one** or **more administrative-territorial units**.

In the case of project proposals that will refer to the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans, priority will be given to those project proposals that will carry out monitoring activities in two or more administrative-territorial units. If the Applicant plans to carry out its activities in more than one administrative-territorial unit, the Project budget will not exceed the USD 10,000 limit anyway.

4.2. Activities

Project proposals must contain clear and interconnected activities that would generate specific results in a given period of time. Monitoring activities could include: legal framework analysis, selective questioning of employees within implementing authorities, selective questioning of citizens, use of the "Mysterious Petitioner" technique, monitoring of print/electronic press, radio and TV related to corruption and to the activity of implementing authorities, monitoring of

web pages/portals, self-evaluation performed by local public authorities, requesting information from public authorities, analyzing statistical data provided by public authorities, confronting information from various sources, etc.

The monitoring/evaluation activities under the project will be carried out between July 2019 and January 2020 and, in order to ensure a more comprehensive and complete monitoring activity, the monitoring period for local anticorruption action plans and sectorial anticorruption action plans will cover the period of January – December 2019. The annual monitoring reports of the local/sectorial plans developed under the Project will be submitted to the NIAS Secretariat and presented in a public event.

5. PROJECT BUDGET

■ The budget of the Project, as part of the Application Form should be in US Dollars (USD);

■ The budget should not exceed the total of 10,000 US Dollars (USD) for the project proposals referring to the local anticorruption action plans and 15,000 US Dollars (USD) for the project proposals referring to the sectorial anticorruption action plans;

■ The budget should contain clear information about the way the funds will be spent and a detailed breakdown of expenses;

■ The budget should be realistic and cost efficient;

■ The budget must correspond to the activity plan as it is described in the Project Proposal;

■ A maximum of up to 5% of the budget can be used for the **procurement of specific small equipment and devices** (notebook, printer), with the condition that it is clearly related to the project goals;

■ A maximum of up to 25% of the budget can be used for **administrative expenses** necessary for the Project implementation (salaries for project staff (project director/coordinator, accountant), office rent, transport, etc.). The Project Director/Coordinator may cumulate the Expert/Monitor function as part of the monitoring process, as long as a clear and detailed costs per each position is provided.

Ineligible expenses are:

■ Procurement of video, audio, IT or other equipment (except the small equipment mentioned above);

■ Expenses incurred before the contract has been signed (including expenses related to project submission);

■ Fines and penalties;

■ Activities already financially covered by another grant programme or other persons;

■ Providing financial support or expenses that have already received funding from other sources;

■ Individual sponsorship for participation at workshops, focus-groups, seminars and conferences;

■ Individual educational scholarships;

■ Coverage of current costs of an organization, unless it is clearly related to the project goals;

■ Exchange rate losses.

6. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

NGOs and CSOs that are interested in applying for the Small Grants Program – "Monitoring the National Integrity and Anticorruption Strategy (NIAS) by developing alternative reports of monitoring sectorial and local anticorruption action plans" should submit a package of documents, including the following:

■ Application Form[1] (which will include the requested budget and activity timelines) filled either in Romanian, English or Russian. Handwritten Application Forms will not be accepted;

■ Copy of the Registration Certificate demonstrating the legal status of the Applicant;

■ Declaration of partnership, where applicable, signed by parties;

■ CVs of Project team members involved in the process of the Project implementation (compiled in the same format for the whole team);

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[1] The Application Form and the Applicant's Guidelines are placed on the UNDP Moldova web site http://www.undp.md/tenders/index/shtml. These documents can also be requested via e-mail from Olga Crivoliubic at the following e-mail address olga.crivoliubic@undp.org

- A brief overview of the previous activities implemented by the Applicant (including recommendation letters from other donors, studies, reports, any other relevant material/information) to demonstrate the experience and ability to implement the Project in accordance with the requirements under Small Grants Program;

- Other relevant materials to increase credibility of the Applicant and to complement the Project's justification.

The **Application Form** must include enough detailed data, in particular with respect to the means of achieving the Project's objectives and the way through which the applicant will be reached through planned activities.

Proposals shall be submitted only electronically via e-mail to the address olga.crivoliubic@undp.org   (Olga Crivoliubic, Project Manager Corruption by Building Sustainable Integrity in Moldova).

Applicants shall ensure that a receipt confirmation is received upon submission of offers in view of the existing file size restrictions (10 MB). UNDP shall not be liable for applications for which a receipt confirmation was not issued.
Incomplete proposals shall not be examined.

Any clarification questions shall be addressed via e-mail to:
Stela Pavlov (Small Grants Coordinator), e-mail: steluta_pavlov@yahoo.com with copy to
Olga Crivoliubic (Project Manager), e-mail: olga.crivoliubic@undp.org

All clarifications questions and answers related to the application process will be published on UNDP Moldova web-site http://www.undp.md/tenders/index.shtml under the respective grants competition page.

Incomplete proposals shall not be examined.

Deadline for submission of proposals is 5th of July 2019 at 14:00 (Moldova Local Time).

7. INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR APPLICANTS

The UNDP Moldova Project Team „Curbing corruption through building sustainable integrity in Moldova" in cooperation with NAC representatives will organize 4 information-training sessions for interested NGOs/CSOs to address final questions regarding the application procedure and/or the content of the Project Proposals. During the sessions, participants will also be trained on familiarity with integrity and anticorruption policies and the National Integrity and Anticorruption Strategy for the years 2017-2020, as well as issues related to their monitoring/evaluation process (basic notions, object and subjects of the monitoring, monitoring frequency, monitoring indicators and sources of information, alternative monitoring mechanism, methods of evaluation and analysis in alternative monitoring, etc.). During the training it will be provided the level of specific expertise needed to enable participants in the training program to develop and deliver well-grounded and high-quality project proposals.

Representatives of entities willing to apply under the Small Grants Program – "Monitoring the National Integrity and Anticorruption Strategy (NIAS) by developing alternative reports of monitoring sectorial and local anticorruption action plans", are invited to attend one of the information sessions, as per schedule below:

Chisinau – June 24, 2019 10:00 h	Location will be announced later on the UNDP Moldova website and to the organizations that confirmed their participation.
Balti – June 25, 2019 10:00 h	Location will be announced later on the UNDP Moldova website and to the organizations that confirmed their participation.
Comrat – June 26, 2019 11:00 h	Location will be announced later on the UNDP Moldova website and to the organizations that confirmed their participation.
Chisinau – June 27, 2019 10:00 h	Location will be announced later on the UNDP Moldova website and to the organizations that confirmed their participation.

All interested applicants are asked to confirm their participation by **June 21, 2019, 16.00** (Moldova Local Time) to the following e-mail address:

Mrs. Stela Pavlov

e-mail: steluta_pavlov@yahoo.com

(*or by telephone at +373 60 366 106*).

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

If you do not receive a confirmation by email, please contact Olga Crivoliubic by phone at +373 22 257 415. Proposals received after the deadline shall be rejected.

Upon the expiration of the deadline, a two-stage evaluation process of the Project Proposal will take place:

Stage I: Verification of administrative compliance and eligibility of applicant – exclusion stage.

At this stage it will verify whether the Application Form is duly filled in, the package complete, the Project Proposal fits within budget threshold per Applicant and the stated criteria are met.

This stage is carried out by the UNDP Moldova Project Team in cooperation with the NAC representatives.

Stage II: Evaluation of Project Proposals

At this stage the compliance of the submitted Project Proposal with the stated objective and priorities of the Small Grants Program – "Monitoring the National Integrity and Anticorruption Strategy (NIAS) by developing alternative reports of monitoring sectorial and local anticorruption action plans" is verified.

This stage is carried out by an independent Stakeholder Committee of grants selection, which consists of the representatives of the UNDP Moldova, NAC and experts in the field. Projects that receive the highest ranking will be recommended for final approval by the Council of grants selection.

Evaluation Criteria for the Project Proposals

Selection Criteria	Description	Weighting points
Quality and relevance of the Project Proposal	▪ Relevance of the Project to the Small Grants Program general objective	20
	▪ Relevance of the Project to the Small Grants Program objective, expected results and results indicators of the Pllar II from the NIAS	20
	▪ Identification of the problem/need and quality of justification	20
	▪ Originality, innovative character of the Project	10
	▪ Project sustainability	10
Sub-total		80 points
Methodology of Project implementation	▪ To what extent the proposed activities match the objective and expected results of the Project	10
	▪ To what extent are the activities specific, measurable, achievable and time bound	20
	▪ Existence of impact, visible benefits – the extent to which the problem or need from which it is started is/will be improved	10
	▪ Geographic coverage of the Project (1 administrative-territorial unit – 10 points, 2 administrative-territorial units – 20 points, 3 and more administrative-territorial units – 30 points) (*for project proposals that refer to the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans*)	30
	▪ Complexity of proposed monitoring tools to identify specific corruption issues in the sector for which they are opting (*for project proposals that refer to the monitoring of local anticorruption action plans*)	30
Sub-total		70 points
Capacity of the Applicant	▪ Competence and experience of the applicant in projects implementation on the integrity and anticorruption sector	10
	▪ Competence and experience of the applicant to collaborate with public authorities	10
	▪ Applicant's relevant experience in drafting, implementing and evaluating projects	20
	▪ Degree of experience of the Project implementation team	10
	▪ Availability of resources required for the implementation of planned activities (premises, equipment, etc.)	10
Sub-total		60 points
Project budget	▪ Clarity of expenses and justification of Project expenses	20
	▪ Expenses matching the activities in realistic terms	10
		10

	▪ Cost effectiveness ratio of expenses	
Sub-total		40
TOTAL		**250 points**

Maximum allowable amount of points per Project is 250. Only those Projects that accumulated at least 70 out of 100 points will be recommended to the Council of grants selection for consideration.

The final decision on the financing of a project is taken, on a consensual basis, at a joint meeting. If the NGO representative attempts to influence the opinion of one or more members of the Council of grant selection during the evaluation period, the application will be automatically rejected.

The Council may take the following decisions on a project funding:
– Approval of the project for financing (with or without conditions);
– Rejecting the project;
– Returning the project to the Applicant with recommendations of modification/completion for a new submission. The Council's decision with modification/completion recommendations does not guarantee the approval of the project. The Council's decision will be in writing communicated to the applicant.

If the project proposal is selected for funding by the Council, a grant agreement will be signed. If the approval was conditioned, the agreement is signed only after all the required conditions have been met.

Funding will be awarded in two installments:
– the first tranche (70%) after the signing of the Grant Agreement;
– the second tranche (30%) in the second month before the end of project implementation.

9. METHODOLOGICAL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO THE SELECTED GRANTEES

For the selected Grantees, the Project team, in close cooperation with NAC, will provide a training session for interested NGOs/CSOs which will last one day, taking place in a training format, organized in Chisinau.

At the training, two representatives of each Grantee will be invited and trained on specific tools and techniques to perform project activities/monitoring, as well as be advised on certain aspects of the proposed activities. The event will enable the Grantees to improve their Projects and provide creative ideas and solutions for monitoring activities.

Participation at the event is mandatory for all Grantees (travel costs to Chisinau for the relevant staff of the organization shall be preliminary included in the Project Proposal Budget).

Annex:

1. Announcement (in English, Romanian and Russian)

2. Application Form in Word format (in English, Romanian and Russian)

3. Applicant's Guidelines (in English, Romanian and Russian)