Terms of Reference - Senior Electoral Expert

Job title: Senior Electoral Expert  
Duty Station: Moldova, Chisinau  
Duration of Employment: 60 working days  
Contract type: SSA

1. Organizational setting:
The International Consultant will work under the direction of the Project Manager of the e-Governance project and the Portfolio Manager for the Institutional Development/Governance Portfolio for the achievement of the tasks.

2. Job content

Background:

Through the “Building e-Governance in Moldova-2” project UNDP is assisting the Government of Moldova in implementing the e-Governance component of the National Strategy “e-Moldova”. With the overarching goal of strengthening democracy in the country, the Project aims to support the Government in advancing e-government solutions for a better public service delivery and more transparent decision making. It covers four main areas of intervention including: Policy support, development of electronic public services, training, e-democracy and public awareness.

One of the key project objectives is supporting the national authorities in implementing electronic voting. The Central Electoral Committee (CEC) has started the process of implementing these provisions by developing and approving a Concept paper on a new Information System “Elections” (ISE). It provides for automating the process of preparation, processing and counting the votes of elections or referendums. It is proposed that the ISE would:

- Ensure the transparency of the electoral process
- Permit to obtain fast figures on voters participation and, when system fully implemented, the results of the polling
- Increase the efficiency of all processes within elections and referendum periods (collection, processing, and transmission of information)
- Create conditions for better public control on reliability and integrity of information used in the election period
- Faster the obtaining the results of elections or referendum and of the statistical processing of the results
- Reduce in perspectives the organisations cost of election and referendum processes
- Integrate citizens of Moldova into international practice of ICT use increasing Good Governance

The CEC submitted the Concept to the Parliament for approval. According to the Concept, the first stage of e-Voting implementation is creation of the Register of voters (RoV) that is expected to be functional at 2009 Parliamentary elections. The draft technical specifications
and the draft Operational Plan for the creation of the RoV have been developed already by the CEC with the support of external expertise.

At the same time UNDP received by the CEC a request for electoral assistance. In order to answer to this request a Need Assessment Mission (NAM) was carried out between the 14 and 24 April 2008 from the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs (EAD/DPA) and by the UN/UNDP Brussels Office.

The NAM had the possibility to review several relevant papers and specific reports on the previous electoral processes in Moldova provided by the UNDP Country Office (CO) and by International and Domestic Election Observer Missions. In addition to that the NAM had the possibilities to meet with the different and relevant stakeholders. The NAM indicated the following as aspects to be taken into consideration in order to propose activities in support of the 2009-2013 electoral processes with a view to increase its transparency and integrity:

- Continuing changes in the electoral law; for example, most recently the establishment of a 6% threshold for party representation and prohibition of pre-electoral blocs; many reforms on paper but no sustained implementation
- Transparency of national and campaign finances; sources of funding, GDP/capita, etc. Unknown sources of political party funding; media funds, etc.
- Political parties based on personality rather than ideas; lack of grass root connection with party to government; unknown sources of political party funding;
- Public media bias in representing the governing party; unknown sources of funding; emphasis on television for news; smaller audience for radio and print media
- E-register (E-voting via Internet); cost and time required vs. election date and preparation time available;
- Quality of voters’ lists to be improved and the 3,3 MUSD proposal of the CEC to introduce an “Electronic Voter Register” before the elections 2009 need to be carefully assessed.
- Further Request of support from the CEC for;
  - Implementation of internet voting for people living abroad as test pilot for 2009 and legally binding for 2013
  - Staff resources including experts;
  - Training of regional and local election administration staff to ensure consistency of applications throughout the country;
  - Establishment of 4 permanent regional training centers;
  - Civic education programmes needed;
- Need for civic education at all levels
- Independence of the judiciary and need of improvement in the formal and informal electoral dispute resolutions mechanisms

Finally the questions of the Out of country or (External) voting (OCV) required a discourse apart. In facts there is a perceived inadequacy of consular services on administrative level caused by limited capacity of diplomatic and consular offices. The already problematic link of Moldavians to their homeland runs the risk of becoming even weaker and more diffuse. A serious shortcoming in the attempt to forge stronger links between Moldova and its migrants overseas is the conspicuous lack of regular and reliable channels for the exchange of information. It is important to underline that Moldova features a high number of it its citizens residing abroad, under different status (270.000 to 400.000, according to different estimates).

Voter turnout among Moldavians residing abroad is very low. While e.g. approx. 145,388 Moldavians reside in Moscow, only 2,760 voted in the parliamentary elections of 2005. In Italy, where approx. 55,000 Moldavians live, only 835 voted. Given the substantial proportion of migrants in the population, their inadequate participation in Moldovan elections influences the democratic process and prejudices good governance. Inadequate execution of external
voting was cited as a reason for low voter turnout during the parliamentary elections of 2005 among Moldavians residing abroad. Complaints of migrants about the administration of voting included: insufficient number of polling stations, shortage of ballot slips, distance and cost of transportation to polling stations, insufficient information, to name a few.

The NAM suggested to consider providing institutional capacity building for the Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs for enhanced consular services along the lines of the “EU - Moldova Action Plan” that mentions as a priority the strengthening of the stability and effectiveness of institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law and ensuring the democratic conduct of parliamentary elections. The NAM also suggested to take in consideration IOM as implementing partner for this specific activity given the global experiences IOM has on this field and especially given that IOM Moldova already commissioned research and produced a number of recommendations on enhancing consular services, including external voting, and strengthening the links with Moldovan MCA, after completing the research Exploring the Link between Moldovan Communities Abroad (MCA) and Moldova. This research was conducted within the framework of the project “Capacity Building for Developing Migration Management Procedures and Migration Policies in the Republic of Moldova” financed by SIDA.

Purpose:

In the above mentioned context, a Senior Electoral Expert is sought to keep the momentum and maintain the fundamental interactions between the UNDP Country Office, the CEC and Development Partners. The Expert to be selected must have previous extended experiences with the technical synergies between civil and voter registration and external voting using of the latest Information Communication Technologies (ICT). The objectives of this assignment are:

- Revise the Technical Specifications and Operational Plan of the ROV taking on board and advising the CEC and the UNDP Country Office with the best practices in voter registration, external voting and (internet) voting systems as well as to re-estimate the cost of the proposed technical solutions.
- Prepare the necessary tendering documents for contracting the company that will support the CEC in developing the RoV.
- Prepare an operational plan in collaboration with IOM in order to provide institutional capacity building for the Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs for enhanced consular services in favor of external voting procedures and enfranchisement of voters.
- Finalize the UNDP Project Document and Budget related to the “Support to the 2008-2013 Moldovan Electoral Cycles” taking in to consideration the NAM’s mission report and by interactive with the different stakeholders, in primis the CEC, UNDP Country Office but also with EAD/DPA and UN/UNDP Brussels Office.

3. Deliverables, timetable and Inputs

The expert will ensure following deliverables included as annexes in its Final Report to be presented to the Senior Management of the UNDP Country Office Moldova:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Draft revision of documents</td>
<td>20.06.2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Draft Project Document and Budget</td>
<td>30.06.2008</td>
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<td>3. Revision endorsed by CEC</td>
<td>15.07.2008</td>
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5. Qualifications

Knowledge and skills:
- University Degree in ICTs or Political Sciences, Law, International Relations coupled with relevant ICTs experiences;
- In-depth knowledge and large comparative experiences in ICT use in Civil/Voter Registration, External Voting and Electronic (internet) Voting.
- Broad Experience in project and programme implementation of civil/voter registration, external voting and e-voting
- 10 years relevant work experience, at least five of which involve programming, formulation, management and advice on electoral assistance activities at a senior level, especially in the field of voter registration, external voting and internet voting;
- Experience in planning and formulating technical specification of electoral assistance projects for international organizations an asset;
- Experience in donor coordination, donor government relations and working in a multi-donor basket fund an asset;
- Experience in working with transnational and emerging democracies and post-conflict environments an asset;
- Computer proficiency, including deep knowledge of database issues and of MS Office products (Word, Excel, Powerpoint), Front Page, Adobe In-Design; web-based management systems.
- Proficiency in written and spoken English with notions of Romanian and Russian as an asset.

Personal and Functional Competences:
- Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
- Promotes the vision, mission and strategic goals of the UN system;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism.
- Demonstrates sound knowledge of i) UN rules, regulations, policies, procedures and best practices in the electoral assistance field; ii) the EC electoral assistance process, including EC rules and regulations on project cycle management, aid delivery methods, operations cycle and financing modalities; iii) electoral management issues, including the different steps of the electoral cycle;
- Excellent negotiation and representational skills, at senior level (with international organizations and/or diplomatic missions);
- Displays analytical judgment and demonstrated ability to handle confidential and politically sensitive issues in a responsible and mature manner;
- Demonstrates strong intellectual and operational capacity in providing and coordinating advisory services to stakeholders in electoral processes, specifically to EMBs and civil society organizations;
- Builds solid client relationships with strong networking and advocacy skills; focuses on impact and results;
• Demonstrates openness to change and ability to manage complexities.
• Demonstrated ability to multitask under pressure and to meet strict deadlines often under hardship conditions;
• Excellent organizational skills and ability to work effectively in teams, delivering through and with others;
• Self-management, including conflict management/negotiating skills.