

Terms of Reference:

International Consultant – Evaluation of the project “Support for blood transfusion services within medical units in the South of the Republic of Moldova”

1. Background and Context

Romania’s development assistance (ODA) programme has been officially launched in 2007, following the country’s accession to the European Union (EU). Since then, Romania has strived to position itself on the international development arena as an innovative donor, with the main comparative advantage of being able to share its direct experience and knowledge in the democratic transition and Euro-Atlantic integration processes. Romania’s strategic objective in development cooperation is to contribute to poverty reduction by promoting security and economic welfare, state of law, sustainable economic development, climate change mitigation and investments in education, complementing international efforts in the field.

Romania has identified the thematic and **geographic priorities**, and has developed a clear national Policy and institutional framework for its ODA. The geographical focus is now on twelve countries: in the Black Sea extended region - the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan; and in North Africa and the Middle East - Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan. The Romanian current ODA **thematic priorities** are: 1) transition to democracy (reconstruction of the state, democratic governance, administrative reform, support for the civil society, the media, and conflict resolution); 2) support for agriculture and sustainable economic growth in the climate change context—preferably in the phytosanitary and sanitary and veterinary fields; 3) environment protection and support for activities to promote sustainable energy in the context of the climate changes. The secondary sectors are health and education.

In view of further consolidating national capacities in the field of ODA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are currently implementing *The New ODA Cooperation Partnership with Romania* project (2013-2015), with the overall objective to support Romania in becoming an effective, innovative and increasingly influential actor for development cooperation so it can achieve sustainable, scalable development impact in the countries that are a priority of Romanian ODA. The UNDP continues to provide the MFA with the necessary administrative and implementation mechanism and tools for ODA delivery (project/programme frameworks and management capacity) where needed.

As part of the Romanian ODA Programme, the Romanian Government also offers direct funding to beneficiary countries for selected projects, transferring ODA funding to relevant national institutions in the respective partner countries. One such intervention is the project “**Support for blood transfusion services within medical units in the South of the Republic of Moldova**”, financed through two Memoranda of Understanding in 2010 and 2012 respectively, signed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova, following the direct and specific request of the Government of the Republic of Moldova. The main objective of this project was

to enhance the availability of blood transfusion services in the Southern region of the Republic of Moldova, by rehabilitating the Regional Center for Blood Transfusion in Cahul. This project was a coordinated effort of seven different partners: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova, the Local Council Cahul, the National Health Insurance Company, the National Blood Transfusion Center, Global Healing and the Development Bank of the Council of Europe. The funding received from the Romanian MFA (in two different tranches) was used for the construction works necessary for the rehabilitation of the Regional Blood Transfusion Center building in Cahul.

2. Scope and purpose of the Evaluation:

The evaluation is intended to assess the implementation status of the project (particularly at the results level) and the quality of the resulting outputs. In particular, the evaluation should consider the following criteria:

- a) **Relevance** of: i) the project to national/regional development needs; and ii) to the Romanian ODA policy, priorities and niche.
- b) **Effectiveness** of the project, including an assessment of the **funding modality** used by the donor for delivering ODA in this particular case, identifying lessons learned and developing recommendations on intervention design to be used for future infrastructure/large scale rehabilitation projects
- c) **Efficiency** in spending the financial resources allocated by the Romanian Government, also assessing the coordination of funding available from the other donors.
- d) **Sustainability** of the project results.

The Evaluation Questions

The following key questions will guide the project evaluation process:

- Relevance of the intervention:
 - a) To what extent is the project relevant to national/regional development needs?
 - b) To what extent is the project relevant to the Romanian ODA policy, priorities and niche?
- *Intervention Design and Management Arrangements*
 - a) To what extent was the funding modality (direct allocation through memorandum of understanding, in the absence of a specific project document) adequate and effective for this type of intervention? Are there any alternative solutions that could bear better results under similar circumstances?
 - b) To what extent was the project management/implementation structure adequate, in terms of human resources allocation?
 - c) To what extent were the management arrangements of the project clear and appropriate?

- *Implementation Performance*

- a) Effectiveness of Project Implementation:

- i. To what extent was the project effective in delivering the planned results?
- ii. To what extent were the management tools used by the project appropriate? (i.e. monitoring tools, reporting tools, financial control, etc)

- b) Efficiency of Project Implementation

- i. Was the process of achieving results efficient?
- ii. Do the actual or expected results justify the costs incurred?
- iii. Were the resources utilized effectively and transparently?
- iv. Were the project activities efficiently coordinated with related interventions (funded nationally and/or by other donors at the European level)? Could a different approach have produced better results?

- *Sustainability of results*

- a) Are there suitable institutional and organizational arrangements in place to allow for the continued functioning of the Blood Transfusion Center? Are they clear and agreeable to all stakeholders? To what extent are the project partnerships conducive to insuring the project results sustainability?
- b) Are there suitable financial arrangements in place to allow for the continued functioning of the Center?

The evaluation should point out lessons learned and recommendations that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant stakeholders may use to improve the design and implementation of similar interventions.

In addition to a descriptive assessment, criteria should be rated using the following divisions: **Highly Satisfactory**, **Satisfactory**, **Marginally Satisfactory**, and **Unsatisfactory** with an explanation of the rating. Also the Overall Rating of the project should be indicated. The evaluation should provide gender disaggregated data, where possible.

3. Methodology for Evaluation

The evaluation will provide quantitative and qualitative data through the following methods:

- Desk study and review of all relevant project documentation including memoranda of understanding, project proposal, formal communications between the donor and the recipient, progress reports, monitoring mission reports and any other documents that appear necessary.
- In depth interviews to gather primary data from key stakeholders (relevant Romanian MFA representatives of the Romanian Embassy in Chisinau and General Consulate in Cahul, representatives of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova, representatives of the National Blood Transfusion Center as well as the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre in Cahul, representatives of the Local Council Cahul, etc.) using a well structured methodology.
- One fact checking mission in Chisinau and Cahul.

4. Duration of the Evaluation:

The evaluation is expected to start on March 10, 2014 for an estimated duration of 25 working days. This will include desk study and review, interviews with stakeholders, field mission and report writing.

Milestone	Date/no. of consultancy days
Evaluation kick off	10 March 2014
Desk review of all relevant project documentation	(approx.) 7 days
In depth interviews with key stakeholders	(approx.) 5 days
Mission in Chisinau & Cahul	(approx.) 5 days
Draft report elaboration	(approx.) 4 days Delivery to UNDP: 7 April
Final report	(approx.) 4 days Delivery to UNDP: 14 April

5. Expected Deliverables:

The key product expected from this exercise is an evaluation report in English language. A draft report including research methodology, structure and preliminary findings should be submitted to UNDP as per the consultancy schedule (above). The Report will be a stand-alone document that substantiates its recommendations and conclusions. The report provide to the UNDP complete and convincing evidence to support its findings/ratings. The length of the final evaluation report shall not exceed 15 pages in total (not including annexes).

6. Management Arrangement:

The Consultant will report to the UNDP ODA Project Manager and will work in close coordination with the project team and the MFA project partners. Upon UNDP's request and if deemed necessary, the consultant will provide further details/ clarifications related to the findings of the report submitted.

7. Required expertise and qualification:

a) Academic qualifications:

- Masters degree in Public Policy, International Development, Development Economics/Planning, Economics, International Relations/ Diplomacy or any other relevant university degree;

b) Years of experience and competencies:

- At least 4 evaluations performed and accepted by the hiring organization; experience in conducting UNDP project evaluations is a strong asset
- At least 3 years of experience in working with international organizations and donors
- Good knowledge and understanding of development cooperation and aid effectiveness, related issues, including the Paris, Accra and Busan agenda
- Proven understanding/training in public acquisitions and construction work

c) Skills:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English

- Proficiency in Romanian language
- Strong analytical competences
- Well-developed ability to synthesize information
- Knowledge of Russian language represents an advantage