

TERMS OF REFERENCES

National consultant to pilot the set of gender equality development indicators

Estimated Duration:	March-May 2015, estimated volume of work 35 full working days
Contracting Authority:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Main beneficiary:	Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, National Bureau of Statistics
Main stakeholders:	All line-ministries
Reference to Project:	UN Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System
Project Activity:	Activity 5. Data use and statistical skills development

Background

Currently, a UN Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System of RM is implemented by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of the Republic of Moldova, in partnership with 5 UN agencies (UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, ILO), and aims at improving data collection, production, dissemination and use of statistical information with particular attention to national needs and official statistics overall conformity with international, in particular EU standards. One of the Statistics Project's intended results is the **improved use of available disaggregated statistics** by different categories of data users in particular for evidence-based monitoring of policies, development strategies, programmes, etc.

Successful monitoring of state policies, through the use of statistical indicators, helps to measure society's problems and affairs and contributes to good governance by showing how the Government is using its institutional resources to manage these problems. The production of reliable statistics and **use of statistical data for evidence-based** policy design and monitoring is fundamental to human development, the achievement of the MDGs and further approximation to EU standards for the Republic of Moldova.

The recognition of the importance of equality of opportunities and the empowerment of women is explicitly expressed in the **international commitments** undertaken by Moldova (e.g. signing CEDAW, Beijing Platform, certain ILO conventions), as well as **national legal and regulatory framework on gender equality** (e.g. adoption of the Law on the Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men¹, the Law on the prevention and countering of family violence², National Program for Ensuring Gender Equality 2010-2015³ and its action plans, etc.).

Gender statistics are the basis of any analysis of socio-economic relations between sexes, they indicate the place and role of women and men in a society, they make possible the formulation of forecasts, defining of targets, monitoring the progress in achievement of gender equality and of broader society development objectives, and they are a valuable tool in raising public awareness⁴.

According to the latest data users opinion⁵, in the recent years the availability of disaggregated data has increased⁶, but, nevertheless, sex disaggregated data use for evidence based policy making is still an issue, the interpretation of data remains deficient for the users (in particular public servants, media and CSOs).

Given the low levels of understanding and importance given to statistics among policy makers and other stakeholders, combined with growing demand for internationally comparable, reliable, systematic and disaggregated data, the interventions in the area of statistics have to be continued to make a real impact on the culture of decision-making. Different types of users should use official statistics and administrative data at all stages of policy cycle to develop the most relevant, effective and efficient policies that will have the maximum impact and adjust policies relying on the data, if necessary.

Specific context

In previous years, the UN Joint Project responded to gaps related to the quality and availability of sex-disaggregated statistical data. On one hand, this included actions on improvement of **statistical production** of new or improved datasets on topics of the greatest interest for gender equality measurement (e.g. violence against women, women's

¹ <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=315674>

² <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=327246>

³ <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=333441>

⁴ NATIONAL REPORT on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration, the Platform for Action (1995) and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly (2000), Chisinau, 2014

⁵ Data users' satisfaction survey with NBS data and services, 2012-2013, <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=399&id=2740>

⁶ Examples: gender statistics produced by NBS (<http://www.statistica.md/category.php?l=ro&idc=264&>), as well as other surveys such as Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 4), 2013.

entrepreneurship, socio-demographic profile, etc.). Thus, the Project has focused intensively on strengthening the capacities, improving methodological processes and infrastructure, quality and competencies of the NBS in producing and disseminating multi-dimensional disaggregated data.

Besides numerous statistical products aimed to describe and measure gender sensitive issues⁷, in line with its mandate on dissemination of official statistics, at the end of 2014, NBS launched a new distinct compartment on *Gender statistics* in its web DataBank⁸ which includes *data series* on a set of (42) gender indicators (most of calculated for the first time ever by NBS), compliant with the set recommended by UN Statistical Commission. The innovative approach has been applied according to which the indicators have been grouped not by statistical sectors, but by issues of gender equality concern at the national level: education and life-long learning of women (13), economic empowerment of women (11), women's participation in decision-making (4), health status (14).

On the other hand, efforts have been undertaken to raise **public awareness and capacity building** on gender statistics and its role as appropriate evidences to be used for formulation of strategic objectives, justification of policy actions, measurement of the impact of actions performed by public authorities over population's life. This has been addressed through:

- capacity building for gender focal points in line-ministries, social assistants, media;
- development of gender statistics' user guide and analytical texts (of different format and complexity) aimed to exemplify the use of gender sensitive data for tracking certain phenomena and explanation of observed evolutions in the status of women and men in the country;
- supporting the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family to collect statistical data for reporting of national action plans and international commitments;
- equipping the public authorities with certain tools aimed to serve as a platform for mainstreaming gender into national policies as well as a tool for more efficient monitoring and reporting on the promotion of gender equality.

One of such tools is the **national set of harmonized gender sensitive statistical indicators** that has passed through several stages so far. Being conceptualized in 2008, this set of indicators has been firstly harmonized (under NBS leadership via extended consultative process) in the context of MDGs⁹, also responding to objectives spelt out in the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW.

Afterwards, in 2011, because of certain gaps and difficulties identified during the reporting of CEDAW-related indicators and their interpretation by specialists of concerned ministries, it has been revised (under leadership of MLSPF) through re-grouping of indicators by the 8 domains of interventions set in the National Program for Ensuring Gender Equality 2010-2015 (NPEGE). As a result, the previous comprehensive list of indicators has been simplified and split into **8 mini-sets**, each of them containing from 2 to 5 core/headline sector indicators and lists of complementary/secondary indicators, which qualitatively describe the core ones. In addition, each indicator has been accompanied by explanations and guidance of usage, as well as possible correlation with other indicators. This approach should have transformed the set of indicators into an easy-to-use tool being recommended by MLSPF¹⁰ to all relevant line-ministries and other decision-making authorities during the monitoring of NPEGE and formulation or monitoring of sectoral policies equitable for both women and men.

Within the next iterations of annual reporting, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family continued to face difficulties on NPEGE reporting on the basis of data gathered from the sectorial counterparts. Factors causing such a state of affairs relate to the weaknesses encountered by line-ministries and related institutions, as sources of administrative data, such as: weak knowledge, capacities and skills of gender focal points in these institutions on data operation and low application of NPEGE set of gender indicators, insufficiently documented statistical processes in institutions, lack of data quality control mechanisms and methodological consistency, duplication of some data collection, insufficient coordination and cooperation among institutions, etc.

A solution to mitigate these circumstances and to further ease the Government's task on evidence-based reporting of gender equality issues has been requested by the MLSPF. In response, the National Bureau of Statistics (as the main body responsible for the collection, centralization and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data¹¹) proposed to undertake the testing/piloting of the above mentioned *set of indicators harmonized with 8 domains of NPEGE* through a de facto data gathering exercise. All producers and holders of gender-sensitive statistical information, set in the NPEGE set of gender indicators, will be mandatory involved in this exercise.

Given the above context, one of the UN Joint Project's targets in 2015 is to assist the Government in evidence-based evaluation of undertaken actions and reporting of the results achieved in the framework of NPEGE. For that, the MLSPF and NBS, with the support of the Project, are to mobilize all the concerned central and local public authorities to

⁷ Statistical publications and data series on gender sensitive topics, produced by NBS and available on <http://www.statistica.md/category.php?l=ro&idc=264&>

⁸ <http://statbank.statistica.md/pweb/Database/RO/databasetree.asp>

⁹ The final harmonized set of development indicators in a gender sensitive manner in the context of MDGs has been endorsed by the Collegium of NBS (26.12.2008) and presented during the meeting of the National Commission on gender equality, <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=2622>

¹⁰ Setul armonizat de indicatori de dezvoltare sensibili la dimensiunea de gen în contextul Programului Național de Asigurare a Egalității de Gen în Republica Moldova pe anii 2010-2015, <http://mmps.gov.md/md/documente/>

¹¹ Article 22 of the Law no.5 as of 9.02.2006 on Ensuring Gender Equality between Women and Men: (1) National Bureau of Statistics will collect, process and generalize sex-disaggregated statistical information; (2) Central and local public administration authorities, parties, other social-political organizations, legal entities and entrepreneurs will present the necessary sex-disaggregated information to NBS.

provide contributions in the form of gender-sensitive statistical information and technical assessments of progress accomplished, as well as the pending issues by sectors to be considered for the elaboration of the new national program on gender equality after 2015.

The Project's purpose is also to contribute to the improvement of sex-disaggregated data made available to decision-makers and planners within the Moldovan central, regional and local government system so that government policy and planning on gender equality all levels is properly informed.

Objectives of consultancy assignment

Under this assignment the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Moldova through UN Joint Project "Strengthening National Statistical System" is seeking a national consultant **to assess the feasibility and the quality of indicators and to conduct the statistical data gathering on the basis of the Harmonized Set of Gender Sensitive Development Indicators¹² in the context of Government's reporting on implementation of the National Program on Ensuring Gender Equality and its action plan.**

The key objective of this activity is to pilot-test the set of gender sensitive development indicators considered appropriate for problem identification and progress reporting in the context of the NPEGE. Based on a data gathering exercise (about 170 core and secondary indicators of priorities 1, 2, 3), with involvement of all relevant public institutions holding statistical information pertinent to gender equality area, the testing should result in a list of good practice indicators assessed as feasible, reliable (qualitative) and useful quality monitoring tools, underscoring specific areas of gender equality for improvement.

For certain indicators, which do not meet the enumerated criteria (gathered data will be not available, incomplete or irrelevant), feasibility barriers will be identified and described; these may include (but not be limited to) difficulties in identifying target observance population, deficient records or processing constrains, irrelevant concepts/definitions, low prevalence of cases for some indicators, existence of specific quality gaps, etc.

Further refinements in the description of the NPEGE set of indicators (and its structural elements - definition, source, periodicity, etc.), on the basis of the actual use of the gender sensitive indicators by committed institutions, should be also proposed by the consultant. In addition, recommendations on further production and maintenance of such indicators will be made for concerned public institutions, and a mechanism (or tool, procedure) to periodically compile the respective statistical data will be suggested to MLSPF as the national focal point on reporting gender issues.

Thus, the main output of the whole assignment will represent the revised set of gender sensitive development indicators, accompanied by the pertinent time series for 2010-2014, and procedures to facilitate its further use for planning monitoring and reporting purposes. The Government will be invited to consider the revised set when developing the new national program on gender equality and setting its medium-term M&E framework.

The revision will be built on the previous and on-going activities undertaken by the Project partners, as well as other resources available (national and sector legislative and normative framework, international regulations, printed and electronic publications, conferences/events results, reports, etc.).

Given the specifics of the present assignment, all activities under it will be undertaken in compliance with the Law on Official Statistics¹³, the Law on Ensuring Gender Equality between Women and Men and other national/ sector policy and regulatory documents and in compliance with international standards in official statistics and relevant best practices of other countries.

The envisaged exercise will reveal the completeness of efforts on integration of gender dimension in data collection process by the concerned line-ministries and subordinated bodies during the past years. Besides that, it should enable the inventory of sex-disaggregated data mapping available for policy-making and reporting on international commitments.

Scope of Work of contracted consultant

Under the current assignment the UN Joint Project, in collaboration with the MLSPF and NBS, are looking for the following expertise on the part of the hired national consultant:

- (A) To pilot-test the harmonized set of gender sensitive development indicators compliant with NPEGE through data gathering from all Governmental sources and analyze the gaps/difficulties/weaknesses in definitions, sources, processing instruments, quality aspects;
- (B) To provide the necessary tools for institutionalization of the regular data compilation on the basis of tested set of indicators for application by MLSPF, NBS and other users.

Tasks and Activities to be performed

In order to achieve the envisaged objectives, the contracted national consultant, under the overall supervision of the Project and in tight cooperation with MLSPF and NBS, will have the following major responsibilities and perform activities:

¹² <http://mmps.gov.md/md/documente/>

¹³ Law no.412 as of 9.12.2004 on Official Statistics, <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=312436>

1. Desk review and preparatory activities:

- Get acquainted with the results of previous activities undertaken by the Project and its counterparts in the field of concern;
- Analyze background and reference materials available in the areas covered by assignment (NPEGE and its action plans, other relevant legislative and policy documents for sectors to be covered, national and sector reporting on gender equality domains, both harmonized sets of gender sensitive development indicators, in the context of MDGs and of NPEGE, data disseminated by concerned public institutions and indicators' methodological guidelines, printed and electronic publications, etc.);
- Propose own approach and vision for the expected intersectorial assessment of gathered data and propose a detailed action plan;
- Contribute to the structure & template to be used for the data gathering exercise on the basis of NPEGE priorities/domains and pre-set indicators, taking into consideration the multiple disaggregation dimensions to be covered and characteristics to be captured by each indicator;

2. Undertake consultations with data producers

Given the specifics of assignment, an extensive *consultation with relevant counterparts and stakeholders* with regard to the NPEGE priorities/domains would be a mandatory element of the working approach throughout the whole assignment. Stakeholders to be consulted would include, but not be limited to:

- a) Public authorities which produce and provide data for reporting of actions and domains of NPEGE: line-ministries and NBS, and their subordinated entities at central and local levels (State Chancellery, Central Election Commission, Parliament, National Employment Agency, employers/employees organisations, local public administration, National Office of Social Insurance, National Health Insurance Fund, National Health Management Center, etc.);
- b) MLSPF and other users of gender sensitive statistics for decision- and policy-making and reporting at the sector, national or international levels.

Possible methods to carry out the consultation may include, but not be limited to:

- ad-hoc meetings;
- face-to-face interviews and/or focus-groups;
- communication by other means (phone, email, etc.);
- tools for situation analysis and/or self-assessment (e.g. questionnaires designed to elicit the strengths and weaknesses of the statistical data/information requested);
- field visits, de/briefing sessions, consultation and validation meetings;
- presentation of results for gender focal points, etc.

3. Mapping of statistical data and information per each area of NPEGE's concern gathered from available data producers

Official letters will be addressed by NBS and the MLSPF to data producers to provide the necessary statistical data and information needed to report on NPEGE. The consultant will unify data formats received, validate the data, input the information and compile the database received from concerned data sources.

The information to be gathered by the priority domains of NPEGE should describe, but not be limited to:

- data series for the period of 2010-2014 by indicators from NPEGE set;
- metadata/description on collected data including the name and definition of indicator, unit of measure, source/tool, periodicity, access for use (means of dissemination), disaggregation dimensions available at or used by the respective data producer.

On the basis of the information gathered from official, administrative and other sources, the analysis of all gender sensitive indicators will be undertaken. This should result in a matrix of indicators containing two outputs:

1. list of valid indicators – it will include the indicators assessed as feasible, reliable (qualitative) and useful tools for monitoring of specific areas of gender equality accompanied by the corresponding data series. For this, the consultant will quality check and validate the gathered data, ensuring their compliance with the methodological features of indicators in the NPEGE set;
2. list of non-valid indicators – it will include indicators which do not meet the feasibility & reliability criteria (gathered data will be not available, incomplete or irrelevant). In this case the feasibility barriers will be identified and described; these may include (but not be limited to) difficulties in identifying target observance population, deficient records or processing constraints, irrelevant concepts/definitions, low prevalence of cases for some indicators, existence of specific quality gaps, etc.

The indicators will be grouped by priority domains of NPEGE and differences in definitions and terminology used by different data producers for the same/similar indicators/data will be tracked. Respective adjustments to the indicators' description, availability (data production status) and priority level will be made.

Thus, the mapping exercise will result in a qualitative assessment, via technical consultations with data sources, of existing/currently produced statistics from the points of view of accuracy, reliability, coverage, timeliness, periodicity, relevance, comparability, accessibility. This exercise should facilitate indicators' usage in practice by the policy and

decision-makers, avoid the duplication of data collected by different producers, contribute to the producing of more reliable sex-disaggregated data and ensure the sustainability of undertaken effort.

4. **Describe the procedures and tools for regular gathering of sex-disaggregated data**, to enable the analysis and use by MLSPF and other for planning, monitoring and reporting purposes.

Procedures on gathering of the sex-disaggregated data, on the basis of harmonised set of gender sensitive indicators, from the set data sources will be described in a reader-friendly manner explaining the modality, timeliness, tools (forms and templates) to be applied, data providers to be involved. All these elements will be compiled into a user guideline on application of the Harmonized set of gender indicators, which will be concluded with recommendations on specific measures to be undertaken in order to conduct further monitoring of the progress on ensuring gender equality.

5. Other activities:

- Support the organisation and facilitation of minimum *two public presentations* of results with the participation of concerned partners (in particular a round-table for gender focal points in line-ministries and presentation in the framework of *Governmental Commission for Gender Equality*), gather and consider their feedback.
- *Advocate for the delivered results* and contribute to the increase of awareness and understanding of partner institutions regarding the role of qualitative data in the process of policy formulation, monitoring and impact evaluation.
- Ensure a high level of work, efficient *communication and cooperation* with Project's national counterparts and stakeholders, UN staff;
- Develop an *activity report* on consultancy undertaken in the applied part/area of assignment, including stages passed, resources used, results obtained versus expected, impact of obtained results, risks overcome, problems faced, lessons learned, conclusions and next stage recommendations.

All activities under the present assignment will be correlated to the needs of key-stakeholders and in compliance with the international standards, relevant national and sector policy documents, and will be built on the previous and on-going activities undertaken by the Projects and national counterparts

Deliverables and Timeframe

Performing the mentioned above activities, the national consultant will be responsible for delivering of the following outputs, comprising the main milestones:

Nr.	Deliverable	Timeframe from contract date
1.	Own approach including working methodology, vision on organization of consultation with the national counterparts, detailed action plan	1 week
2.	Supporting documents to be used for data gathering according to the Harmonized set of gender indicators and consultations with data producers (templates and forms to collect data)	2 weeks
3.	Compilation of sex-disaggregated data gathered by priorities of NPEGE, including data series and metadata on indicators	5 weeks
4.	Revised /improved Harmonized Set of gender sensitive development indicators and report on undertaken revision	7 weeks
5.	Procedures and tools for regular gathering of sex-disaggregated data on the basis of Harmonized set of gender sensitive development indicators	8 weeks
6.	Activity report on undertaken assignment plus documentation related to the conducted work	9 weeks

All the deliverables should be agreed with MLSPF, NBS & the Project staff and be provided in Romanian (except the last one –in Romanian & English), electronic copy.

The activities under the present assignment will commence at the **beginning of March** and conclude by the **middle of May, 2015**. The consultancy presumes **35 working (full) days**. The consultant/s will be assisted by the staff of NBS, MLSPF and the UN Project for conceptual and technical aspects of the assignment.

Note: The mentioned number of working days has been estimated as being sufficient/ feasible for the envisaged volume of work to be completed successfully and can not be used as criteria for completion of work/assignment. The provision of envisaged deliverables approved by the Project and its partners and concerned national stakeholders would be the only criteria for the Contractors work being considered completed and eligible for payment/s.

Institutional arrangements

The National Consultant is expected to work in a close cooperation with the national counterparts at the National Bureau of Statistics (gender focal point and relevant statistical units), Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (Division of Equal Opportunities and Violence Prevention), the UN Women and UNDP staff, and regularly keep them updated on the progress.

The Project and their national partners will be supporting the National Consultant by nominating the responsible persons on behalf of each partner and providing him/her with the relevant regulatory acts, results of previous work,

and with the guidelines on the legal and institutional framework of the partner institutions thus ensuring that the undertaken assignment conforms with sectorial and national priorities.

Payments will be disbursed in installments upon Project's acceptance on delivering of the contract obligations, services and products in a satisfactory manner. The Consultant may be provided office space in the Project's premises if needed. The Project will facilitate access to relevant information and the necessary meetings.

Qualifications and Skills required

Academic Qualifications:

- Master degree in statistics, social sciences, economics and/or other relevant areas;
- Additional certifications in the area of gender equality (*will be an asset*);

Years of experience:

- At least 5 years of overall professional experience (executing, advising, managing, consulting, etc.) in public administration, institutional development, service provision, academic and/or applied research or other relevant to the assignment;
- At least 3 experience records related to the development of evidence-based analytical works (thematic analysis, assessments, evaluations, reviews, policy advisory, etc.) in the fields of gender equality concern;
- Proved practical experience of work with statistical data (methodological work, data collection, compilation, use, etc.), evidences and informative materials;
- Experience of collaboration with Government, preferably in area/s relevant for the present assignment;
- Experience of work with international organizations and UN agencies in particular;

Competencies and Skills:

- Good knowledge of monitoring and legal framework related to the fields of gender equality concern;
- Knowledge of statistical concepts and definitions, methods and data sources at the national level related to the areas of gender equality (*would be an asset*);
- Excellent computer skills, knowledge of data base applications, ability to work with large datasets or even use of statistical analysis software (i.e. SPSS, STATA);
- Strong analytical, writing and communication skills;
- Familiarity with UN Women/UN mandates and work in the area of gender equality;
- Excellent communication skills in Romanian; Good knowledge of English;

Personal Qualities and other requirements:

- Good interpersonal skills, solid judgment/decision making, initiative and creativity;
- Availability to work with UNDP and Project's national stakeholders during the indicated period;
- Adherence to UN's values and ethical standards.

Performance evaluation

Contractor's performance will be evaluated against such criteria as: timeliness, responsibility, initiative, communication, accuracy, and quality of the products delivered.

Travel Requirements

During the contract period no travel is required.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

The submission package will consist of:

1. Technical Proposal explaining how the applicant responds to each of the qualification requirements and why he/she is the most suitable for the work;
2. Personal information (as a detailed CV or as a Personal History Form /P11) including records on past experience in similar projects/assignments and concrete outputs obtained;
3. Financial proposal (in USD, specifying a total lump sum amount and the number of anticipated working days).

Additional Information: In the case of engagement of Civil servants under Individual Contract modality, (i) A "No-objection" letter in respect of the individual is requested from the Government employing him/her, and; (ii) The individual must provide an official documentation from his/her employer formally certifying his or her status as being on "official leave without pay" for the duration of the Individual Contract.