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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job title:	National Consultant on communications
Duty station:	Chisinau, Moldova
Reference to the project:	"Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support"
Contract type:	Individual Contract
Duration of assignment:	80 WD during 4 months assignment
Starting date:	14 September, 2015

1. Background:

During the last two years the Parliament of Moldova has been very active in developing its organizational setup in order to improve the legislative process and have prompt reaction to changes and priorities of the society. In this regard, important internal regulations and policies were approved, the document flow optimized, the capacities of staffers increased. In order to improve the dialogue between Members of parliament and constituents, in 2014 four Parliamentary Constituency and Information Offices (PCIOs) were opened by the Parliament. The offices serve as a 'hub' for information and education on parliamentary and democracy issues and offer a space for decentralized committee meetings, public hearings or consultations. The Parliament has also established a Media Centre and a Visitor's and Information Centre. Guided tours within the Parliament building and Open Doors Days have been organized since 2014. The ultimate goal was to improve the communication with citizens and increase the transparency of parliament's work.

However, following several economic and political crises, Parliament's image was seriously affected. According to the last opinion polls, the perception of trust in parliament is slowly but steadily decreasing, from 24% in 2014 to 11.3% in 2015¹. Lack of adequate working conditions (parliament's main building is still under reconstruction) affects parliament's capacity to efficiently communicate too.

In this context, it is essential to foster good communication mechanisms and to improve the information channels within the Parliament, on the one hand, and between Parliament and CSOs, media, academia, private sector and citizens, on the other hand. The Moldovan Parliament approved a 4-year Communication Strategy in 2011 which was not fully implemented. Therefore, the Parliament needs extra support for establishing an efficient, systematic and continuous process of interaction with different stakeholders. This will increase the transparency of the institution, will bring Parliament closer to citizens, and finally, will build the confidence of civil society in Parliament.

In this regards UNDP Democracy programme is seeking to hire a full-time qualified professional for a period up to 4 months, who will contribute to a better communication of parliament and advice on how to improve its image.

2. Objective and Scope of the assignment:

The expected output for the national consultant on communications is to provide strategic advice to the Parliament on internal and external communication, with specific focus on revising the communication activities by elaborating Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the General Department Communication and Public Relations and developing a new Parliament's Communication Strategy. The consultant will also coach parliamentary staffers on how to communicate effectively.

The consultant will ensure a high level of analytical support, facilitating the communication and cooperation with the Parliament and other stakeholders. The assignment shall be carried out in close cooperation with

¹ http://www.ipp.md/public/files/Barometru/BOP_04.2015_prima_parte_finale.pdf

the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova.

Scope of work and expected output:

The national consultant on communications will assist the Parliament in shaping and developing dynamic communications, revising the internal rules and procedures related to communications and establishing a systematic and continuous process of interaction with different stakeholders.

The consultant will also assist in updating Parliament's Communication Strategy, revising the communication activities and indicators of progress. He/She will advise on communication techniques and tools, providing coaching and where needed training to parliamentary staffers.

To achieve the stated objectives, the Communications adviser will be responsible for:

1. Getting acquainted with last Parliament's Communication Strategy (2011);
2. Assessing the effectiveness of existing communications means, procedures used by Parliament, identify gaps and provide recommendations on strengthening internal and external communication tools and channels (e.g. Media Centre, Visitor's and Information Centre, intranet, newsletters, illustrated magazines, etc.) for making parliamentary information more accessible to citizens, reinforcing the capacity of all stakeholders to participate in parliamentary processes and improving parliamentary accountability;
3. Ongoing support to the General Department Communication and Public Relations on internal and external communication consisting off but not limited to:
 - 3.1. Implementing press monitoring mechanisms and contribute to their replication in the communication practice of the Parliament of Moldova;
 - 3.2. Providing advice on PCIOs usage for an increased commitment to openness and to citizen engagement in parliamentary activity;
 - 3.3. Providing guidance and support to the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova in collating and re-writing technical and official documents in a media-friendly and informative manner;
 - 3.4. Coaching communication and committees staffers on how to develop and maintain contact with key journalists on parliament matters. Provide mentoring support to the staff in regard to media relations;
 - 3.5. Coaching on organization of press conferences, briefings and interviews. As follows, the consultant shall periodically coordinate and supervise, following up upon the case, with feedback for improvement, press conferences, media briefings and interviews;
 - 3.6. Provide advice and guidance for the planning and integration of existing and new social media as swift communications outreach channels and interactive tools to engage citizens;
 - 3.7. Coaching parliamentary staffers on writing and editing press releases, briefing papers and speeches;
4. Regularly contributing on to the content of the parliament's website by providing text, as well as make best use of photos and audio-visual materials done by the General Department Communication and Public Relations;*
5. Supporting the development of the updated educational video spot about the Parliament and providing support to actively promote civic education of the society, mainly youth;
6. Supporting the establishing of an efficient and structured communication system with the Government, with other national institutions, the national media, business associations and with international partners;
7. Supporting the development of a new Communication Strategy, in line with the Agenda of Association Agreement with EU;
8. Elaborating Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):
 - 8.1. Elaborating Standard Operating Procedure for Communication Department;
 - 8.2. Elaborating Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Visitor's and Information Centre;
9. Developing of special procedures on setting up a network of accredited parliamentary journalists;

10. Contributing to the day-to-day transfer of experience to and capacity building of the parliamentary staffers responsible for communication in the planning and organization of communications and public relations events;
11. Developing and updating outreach strategy guidelines, templates and checklists and works with the support team to produce communication event guidelines and tools;
12. Developing monthly progress reports on the performed activities**
13. Coordinating the above mentioned activities with the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova.
14. Any other duties that may be assigned by the senior management of Parliament.

*The consultant in close cooperation with the Head of General Communication Department of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova will work towards completing the content of the new Parliament's official web page – www.parlament.md and will report on the activities carried out in this context, by means of the monthly progress reports.

**The monthly Report covering the activities carried out in the context of the ongoing support to the General Department Communication and Public Relations on internal and external communication and the progress towards completion of the deliverables shall be submitted by the the date of 5th of the next month.

3. Deliverables and Timeframe:

	Deliverables/Outputs	Target Due Dates
1	A detailed Work Plan developed, coordinated with UNDP and the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova	By 18 September, 2015
2	A Report on parliament's internal and external communication, containing an overview of the current situation, a list of specific findings and recommendations for improvement developed	By 5 October, 2015
3	A new draft Communication Strategy and Action Plan developed	By 30 October, 2015
4	SOPs for Communication Department; SOPs for Visitor's and Information Centre; Outreach and communication guidelines and templates as well as special procedures on setting up a network of accredited parliamentary journalists developed;	
5	A final report on the assignment with findings and recommendations developed	31 December, 2015

All communications and documentation related to the assignment will be in Romanian and English. The Parliament will provide consultant with working space, access to Internet, printer and telephone line at the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova.

The timeframe for the work of consultant is tentatively planned through September – December, 2015.

4. Management arrangements:

The national consultant on communications will work under the guidance of UNDP Parliamentary Specialist and in close coordination with the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova – for substantive aspects of the assignment, and under the direct supervision of Programme Manager – for administrative aspects. The consultant will report monthly to the UNDP Programme Manager and Head of General Communication Department of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova.

The Final Report will have to be approved by both UNDP Programme Manager and Head of the General Department Communication and Public Relations of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

Financial arrangements:

Each candidate will be required to submit an aggregated financial offer ("aggregated financial offer" is the total sum of all financial claims of the candidate for accomplishment of the task), which includes proposed consultancy fee per day, travel and communication costs (if required). The payment will be disbursed in four instalments upon submission and approval of deliverables and certification by the Programme Manager that the services have been satisfactorily performed.

5. Qualifications and skills required:

Academic background:

- A Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, media studies or any other appropriate field;

Experience:

- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in public relations and communication at governmental level;
- Experience in developing and implementing Communication/PR Strategies;
- Experience in working with parliament, government and/or international organizations (successful experience in working with UN agencies is an asset);

Abilities:

- Solid understanding of and ability to apply communications tools and techniques;
- Ability to analyse, plan, communicate effectively orally and in writing, draft report, solve problems, manage PR projects/ events, organize and meet expected results, adapt to different environments (cultural, economic, political and social);
- Knowledge of political, parliamentary, social or economic issues;
- Outstanding drafting and communication skills;
- Fluency in Romanian. Knowledge of English and Russian would be a strong asset;

Skills: Computer literacy and ability to effectively use office technology equipment, IT tools.

Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations, in particular, respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status.

UNDP Moldova is committed to workforce diversity. Women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, as well as refugees and other non-citizens legally entitled to work in the Republic of Moldova, are particularly encouraged to apply

6. Documents to be included when submitting the proposals:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Proposal:
 - Explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including past experience in similar assignments;
 - Providing a brief information on each of the above qualifications, item by item and a brief methodology on how they will approach and conduct the work (if applicable);
2. Financial proposal (in USD), specifying a fee per day and total requested amount including all related costs, e.g. fees, per diems, travel costs, phone calls etc.;
3. Duly filled in and signed Personal History Form (P11) and at least 3 names for a reference check.