

Terms of Reference

Job title:	National Consultant to provide support in creation of National Association for Local Action Groups as part of the EU LEADER/CLLD approach implementation
Duty station:	Chisinau, with field visits
Reference to the project:	Support to Agriculture and Rural Development Project (SARD)
Contract type:	Individual Contract (IC)
Contract duration:	September 2018 - November 2018 (up to 35 working days)
Starting date:	September 1, 2018

1. BACKGROUND

The "Support to Agriculture and Rural Development" SARD Project is a three-year initiative funded by the European Union, and implemented by the UNDP. The main objective of the project is to foster confidence building in the Republic of Moldova by targeting regions and territorial administrative units with special status. People from ATU Gagauzia, Taraclia district and neighboring communities will benefit from improved development opportunities in their localities, grasping the benefits of the National Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy. The proposed intervention will aim to address key gaps identified in the main strategic document of the region's development in line with national priorities.

The project has the following components:

Component 1: Enhanced Dialogue and Community Empowerment;

Component 2: Local entrepreneurship and SMEs development;

Component 3: Small-Scale Infrastructure Refurbishment and Promotion of Inter-Municipal Cooperation.

SARD will contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of the agro-food sector in the target regions, promotion of local entrepreneurship, creation of jobs and raising income; as well as increasing capacities of local communities to identify development ideas, develop and fundraise resources as well as implement development projects. The project is connecting region's authorities and structures to the national ones, facilitating dialogue and inclusion in development of national strategies, as well as connecting neighboring villages through inter municipal cooperation and implementation of the LEADER/CLLD approach.

Specific background

The component 1 of the Programme focuses on the enhancement of the capacities of local communities to create, develop and manage basic public services, as well as to rehabilitate small-scale social infrastructure to address agriculture and rural development priorities.

Because of their local knowledge and mandate, local governments, civil society and other organisations are the best placed to identify needs and constraints of target/vulnerable groups and to provide them with access to services. The Community Mobilisation for Empowerment approach¹ is used and updated in line with the EU LEADER and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) approach.

The SARD Programme provides training and support for the creation, functioning and management of the cross-sector or commodity-specific 8 Local Action Groups (LAGs) in rural

¹<http://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/library/poverty/community-mobilization-for-empowerment-of-vulnerable-women-and-m.html>

villages from targeted regions. The programme helps with all necessary human resource development, legal aspects, identification of co-financing and governance. The SARD Programme, starting from August 2016 initiated pilot EU LEADER approach activities through a series of sensitizing and mobilizing activities both during regional and national seminars and round tables, and study tours to 5 EU countries to learn from their LEADER experiences. As a result, first 8 Local Action Groups were created in the ATU Gagauzia, Taraclia district and neighboring districts. SARD provided grants to these LAGs to support their operation and finance first rural development projects.

Besides SARD pilot activities there was a noticeable progress last year in promoting and initiation of LEADER/CLLD approach throughout Moldova, namely:

- LEADER Coordination Committee under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE) was created, including National NGOs, Donor projects, Agency for Payments in Agriculture (AIPA); the committee conducts regular meetings to shape up National LEADER programme;
- MARDE initiated 2 legislation initiatives to streamline introduction of LEADER approach to Moldovan Grounds as well as support registration and provision of financial support to newly established LAGs
- The National Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy (ARDS) has included in the list of actions, point 3.3.2 "Creation and operationalization of Local Action Groups of rural development, based on best practices and principles of EU LEADER Programme (pilot activity)".
- Several informational campaigns and study tours were organized by Donors and local NGOs;
- In addition to established by SARD 8 Local Action Groups in Gagauzia, Taraclia district and neighbouring districts at least 7 more LAGs were created in the other parts of Moldova, using SARD methodology.

In line with the above SARD Programme seeks an experienced national consultant to support establishment and registration of a national association for the LAGs in Moldova – name of the association will be decided by the members.

2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work will consist of providing a clear guidance for establishment and registration of the national association for LAGs.

The expected output of the present assignment is:

- ✓ Analysis of EU experience in setting up to LAGs Associations and recommendation on the best model to be used in Moldova;
- ✓ Mapping the potential members of the national association for LAGs, preparatory visits and meetings conducted;
- ✓ Set of complete Association documents package completed;
- ✓ General Assembly conducted, Governing bodies elected and association is registered.

3. KEY ACTIVITIES

In order to achieve the stated objective, the following activities are to be addressed:

- Based on consultancy provided by the European Expert for Rural Development, conduct an analysis of the legal and regulatory framework related to LAGs Association in EU countries on registration and functioning;
- In line with national legislation, identify a model which can be adapted to the legal, financial, programming and LAG situation in Moldova and propose the best form and

- method of associating of Moldovan LAGs and relevant other stakeholders;
- Based on the results of the preparatory meetings and consultations with future members and other relevant stakeholders define concrete criteria for potential members of national association for LAGs, as main criteria being organizations active in rural development active in contributing to further development of the LEADER/CLLD approach;
- Consulting the results with all stakeholders, including SARD, ministry, donors;
- Conduct in-country visits and mapping potential members of the national association for LAGs according with the defined criteria; mobilize potential members and develop their capacity on networking;
- In constant coordination with potential future members, as well as under guidance and supervision of SARD / European Expert for Rural Development and relevant officials of MARDE develop a set of needed documents:
 - ✓ Statute
 - ✓ Internal rules
 - ✓ Organigram
 - ✓ Name versions
 - ✓ 2-year work plan, communication plan and financial plan;
- Organize preparatory meetings for establishment of the national association for LAGs;
- Facilitate organization and conducting of the first General Assembly to approve the statutes and elect board, president and auditing committee and the action plan;
- Complete association registration procedures.

4. DELIVERABLES AND INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME

Deliverables	Due Date
<i>Analysis of the legal and regulatory framework related to LAGs association in EU countries, proposal for a model to be used in Moldova</i> Deliverable 1: Report on LAGs' association status, composition, major function in EU Countries and proposal on Moldova's LAGs association structure, endorsed by SARD. The report shall be submitted in Romanian and English.	By September 10, 2018 (Indicative workload – 5 work days)
<i>Development of criteria for potential members of the National Association for LAGs,</i> Deliverable 1a: Set of eligibility criteria and documentation to formalization of the national association for LAGs, endorsed by SARD. The documents shall be submitted in Romanian.	By September 30, 2018 (Indicative workload – 5 work days)
<i>In-country visits and mapping potential members of the national association for LAGs according with the defined criteria; visits to local and National organisations;</i> Deliverable 2: Progress Report on visits conducted and meetings held; recommendations for further support and list of potential members and contact details. The report shall be submitted in Romanian and English.	By October 15, 2018 (Indicative workload – 7 work days)

<p><i>Facilitate and organize the first national preparatory meeting, where all LAG initiatives and major stakeholders are invited to discuss the draft statutes, organizational structure and 2- year work plan</i></p> <p>Deliverable 3: Preparatory meeting/Strategic Planning workshop is conducted, Minutes on decisions and recommendations of the preparatory meeting</p>	<p>By October 25, 2018 (Indicative workload – 3 work days)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide further clear guidance for establishment and registration of the national association for LAGs;</i> • <i>Facilitate the process of association name and logo development;</i> • <i>Preparatory work for conducting the General Assembly;</i> • <i>Assist association members to debate and decide important Association issues such as membership fee and available office;</i> • <i>Based on prior association members' decisions develop Internal Regulation Documents, Organigramme, key Position Descriptions, 2-year work plan, communication plan and financial plan;</i> • <i>Assist with Association registration procedures and obtaining all required documents and stamp;</i> • <i>Facilitate General Assembly meeting and further Association Registration.</i> <p>Deliverable 4: Final Report – on establishment and registration of National association for LAGs, set of institutional, programmatic documents; recommendations for further support. The final report shall be submitted in Romanian.</p>	<p>By November 15, 2018 (Indicative workload – 15 work days)</p>

Note:

The indicated tentative timeframe has been estimated as being sufficient/feasible for the envisaged volume of work to be completed successfully and is proposed as a guideline for the duration of the assignment. It cannot and shall not be used as unique criteria for completion of work/assignment. The provision of the envisaged deliverables approved by the SARD shall be the only criteria for Consultant's work being completed and eligible for payment/s. All deliverables shall be developed and submitted in English in electronic format.

5. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

All above deliverables shall be endorsed by the SARD Manager, SARD European Expert for Rural Development.

6. DURATION OF WORK

The whole activity (preparation, implementation and reporting) shall be carried out by November 2018 in the limits of the above-mentioned general timeframe. The assignment envisages in-country visits and the costs shall be included in the financial offer as well.

7. REQUIREMENT FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

I. Academic Qualifications:

University Degree in Law, Public administration or related areas.

II. Working experience:

- At least 5 years of proven previous experience in NGO sector (agricultural, rural and SME development areas), and institutional development;
- Previous experience in working with local stakeholders and NGOs – in terms of providing training, coaching, strategy development services;
- Previous working experience in elaboration of assessments (agricultural, rural and SME development areas) and studies.

III. Competencies:

A solid experience in the areas of NGOs registration

- Practical experience in organization management,
- Demonstrated capacity of team-orientation work, excellent planning and organizational skills;
- Membership in Legal/Professional Bodies/Associations as well as possession of Specialized relevant licenses and certificates is a strong advantage;
- Strong, research, communications and writing skills;
- Fluency in Romanian and Russian, English is an advantage;
- 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.