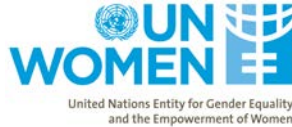


ANNEX 1. Activity's scope and terms of references



CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST on Development and institutionalization of statistical literacy university course for journalists and communication specialists

ACTIVITY'S SCOPE and TERMS OF REFERENCES

Main objective :	To increase the statistical literacy of the media and communication specialists through institutionalization of the capacity building in statistics with special focus on statistical process, documentation, use and interpretation of statistical data
Potential Applicants:	national academic institutions
Application Deadline:	25 April 2012
Expected Duration of Assignment:	May–November 2012
Duration of Initial Contract:	7 months
Reference to Project:	UNDP & UN Women & UNFPA & UNICEF & ILO Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System
Project Activity:	Development of institutional mechanisms for training and statistical skills development (activity 6)
Contract type:	Grant Agreement For Non-Credit Related Activities

BACKGROUND

The United Nations Moldova, in partnership with the Government of Moldova represented by the National Bureau of Statistics, are implementing the *Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System of RM* (a joint initiative of UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA and ILO) which aims at improving data collection, production, dissemination and use of disaggregated statistical information with particular attention to national needs and official statistics overall conformity with international, in particular EU, standards.

During 2007-2010 the Joint Project intensively focused on strengthening the capacities, improving methodological processes, infrastructure, quality and competencies of the NBS in producing and disseminating highly qualitative multi-dimensional disaggregated data. The quality of data produced by NBS has improved and openness towards data users has also enhanced. Overall NBS is now better prepared to respond to the different and increasing needs of the users and to provide seminars in specific fields of statistics.

While the quality and availability of data has improved, its usage is very limited, namely (i) insufficient cooperation and trust between data producers and users; (ii) weak capacities among public authorities, CSOs and academia to use statistical data for evidence-based policy making, analysis and monitoring, as well as advocacy; (iii) lack of quality training capacities and institutionalized systems for statistical skills development.

To address this issue, in 2012, more attention will be paid to support data users (public authorities, CSOs and media) in understanding, interpreting and applying the data for policy monitoring and analysis. Previous activities focused on seminars, roundtables and small research projects generally supported data dissemination, but could not always contribute to the wider result of increased statistical literacy among data users. Therefore, the Joint Project will further address this gap and put equal emphasis on strengthening capacities of data users, fostering dialogue between NBS and users, enhancing the understanding, trust and credibility and thereby increasing the data use.

One of the Project's targets in 2012 is to enhance the appropriate and efficient use of statistical data for the evidence-based and participatory policy-making process by the Government and the civil society through tailored capacity building for specific groups of data users (public servants, CSOs, academia, media and other partners) in the field of statistics and its appropriate use.

SPECIFIC CONTEXT

The need to educate and train **media and public relations specialists** in the areas of statistics is confirmed by the results of the last opinion poll on data users' satisfaction with NBS's data¹, as well as the attitude of media towards data producers (low interest and attendance of organised events, low quality and weak coverage with produced materials covering the achievements and products of NBS and of the national statistical system as a whole, etc.).

In 2011 the National Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the Joint UN Project on statistics carried out a practical 2-day workshop² for 20 young journalists who were familiarized with notions and definitions related to statistics, consolidated their capacities to explore and access information, use and interpret official statistical data in their daily activity.

Upon the workshop completion³ the journalists, as well as the trainers, have firmly confirmed the further need and demand regarding the building (on mandatory basis during the higher education and on permanent basis after graduation during the professional activity) of journalists' capacities in statistical issues, by specific topics of large interest to the public. Regarding data communication to the public, the workshop participants also acknowledged that any national statistical office should always present "dry" data in an impartial and objective manner, while the interpretation and analysis of data should be exclusively undertaken by the data users, and not those who produce or centralize these data.

Identification of the issue:

The most straight and easiest interventions in the education sector for constant and basic statistical literacy could be done at the level of education institutions (higher education or lifelong learning /vocational training) through comprehensive reviews and qualitative improvements of adults' education curricula. The improvements could include enriching of the spectrum/variety of education courses or qualitative refinement and update of the active courses and pertinent textbooks and learning materials taking into consideration the up-to-date approaches (on engendering, ensuring equity and reduction of disparities, human rights equality, sustainable development, etc.).

At present, there is no institutionalized mechanism of training on statistical literacy for civil servants (from PAME⁴ units and/or internal divisions of CPAs responsible for the direct elaboration and implementation of separate policies) or other categories of data users to be applied within the process of policy monitoring, evaluation and analysis. It would therefore be important to also improve the statistical skills and abilities of these target groups in view of the ongoing effort to strengthen the evidence-based national public policies-making capacities.

To address the above mentioned gaps and needs, NBS is considering the idea to **develop a training course** (including syllabus and manual) to support statistical skills development for journalists and communication specialists tailored to the needs of this group of data users and **embed it into the curriculum** of a higher education institution with specialised department/faculty on journalism and communication.

Moreover, given the high professionalism of NBS staff, they might participate in the provision of the trainings on topics related to statistical fields and methodological issues.

UN agencies (including UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, etc.) have previously collaborated with different higher education institutions and supported the development of syllabus and training manuals for different university courses (crisis communication, human development, MDGs), being mainly included in the curriculum as elective courses for the Masters' Degree programs (second cycle of higher education). Given the specifics of the above envisaged capacity building effort and its importance as a basic knowledge & abilities on statistics needed for every future professional who would activate in media and communication institutions, the future statistics literacy course should be implemented as a mandatory discipline for both specializations of the higher education level.

National framework:

On the national level, the cooperation between civil society and the public sector is mentioned as a priority within the *2011-2014 Activity Programme of the Government "European integration: freedom, democracy, welfare"* which is to be achieved as soon as the institutional framework required for efficient cooperation between the public authorities and the civil society is developed and becomes operational. For that the participation of civil society organizations (including media) in policy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation should be institutionalized, including by creating clear and effective mechanisms for consultation and participation in the decision making.

¹ Main results of the opinion poll on the data users' satisfaction with products and services provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (see on <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=399&id=2746>) include:

- 13% of data users activating in media institutions encounter difficulties to find official statistical data
- as frequently used source of data, media places emphasis on the press releases of NBS, less on the NBS Web-page;
- 14% of respondents working in media reported "little" or "none" interest regarding the statistical data produced by NBS;
- 60% of the media respondents considered necessary to implement a training program regarding the statistical domains and the way of using national statistical data;

² Workshop was led by Romanian expert Radu Soviani, journalist, the Money Channel, university lector of journalism/ communication courses, PhD in economics and co-facilitated by NBS specialists in sample surveys, social statistics and data dissemination.

³ 44% of respondents came to the workshop with a low level of knowledge, other 50% - with satisfactory knowledge. The workshop has considerably achieved its expected results because the share of participants who, after this training, estimated own knowledge as „good" and „excellent" constituted 88%, and only 12% - considered to have satisfactory knowledge.

⁴ PAME units – Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation units.

Furthermore, the same Activity Programme contains the Government's commitment to ensure quality teaching and research in higher education institutions. Development of consistent dialogue between the Government and education institutions to tailor the curriculum to the arising needs and standards on the labour market, of different professions, and the demands of the knowledge-driven economy.

In the long run, the proposed capacity building initiative, being institutionalized with the university curricular of a journalistic & communications department, is to contribute to the media's freedom of expression, creation of favorable conditions for its operation and provision of real access to public information, in particular statistical data, to appropriate knowledge in statistics and practical skills on its use.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

Responding to the identified needs, the UN Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System, in partnership with the National Bureau of Statistics, is announcing an open call for expression of interest **for higher education institutions**, with relevant experience in teaching journalism and communication disciplines, **to develop and implement STATISTICAL LITERACY UNIVERSITY COURSE** (as one or two separate courses) **for the departments of journalism and communication**.

The **main objective** of the activity is to teach the target-students on the basic and specific notions related to the statistical fields and its separate domains, consolidate their capacities to access information, and develop practical skills on the use and interpretation of official statistical data in a corresponding and accurate way. Also, the purpose of this effort is to strengthen the dialogue between the main data producer in the country and one of the most active data users group (journalists and communication persons), as well as enhance reciprocal credibility.

Target groups of the education course are the students of *journalism* (first priority) and *communication* (secondary priority) departments of the applicant-institution, future professionals or those who already, in parallel with the performed education, activate in the media or communication fields.

When making a justified decision upon the *selected education level* (first and/or second cycle of the higher education - BA and/OR MA) for the envisaged course, the applicant will take into consideration the specializations available within the journalism/communication departments, the number of students/graduates for whom the statistical literacy course will be relevant and useful for future professional activity, etc.

The assignment *pre-condition* envisages the introduction of the elaborated course into the university curricula, relating to the continuous education process, which will ensure the feasibility and sustainability of the effort aiming at strengthening the statistical knowledge and skills of journalists and communication specialists. The applicant-institution should present a guaranty on accomplishment of the given condition within the submitted proposal and, thus, will secure the teaching of the new course/s on regular basis by the implementing institution in the framework of its education curricula.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

An approximate spectrum of the expectations regarding the envisaged course/s (in particular for journalists) includes the below list which could be adjusted depending on the proposed application and evaluation of the training needs undertaken at the first stage of assignment.

At the level of knowledge and understanding the course should help the students to know and understand:

- the role and principles of operation/functioning of official statistics (mission, fundamental principles, functions, competences, responsibilities);
- the stages of statistical cycle/process (data collection, processing, compilation, means/methods of data dissemination used by NBS);
- the specialized terms used by NBS when presenting the statistical information;
- the system of statistical indicators produced by NBS (social and economic fields: living standard and conditions, demography, labour force occupation, social protection, salary earnings, education, health, macro-economic and business development, etc.), as well as current approaches and basic concepts applied in tandem with the statistical indicators (disaggregation dimensions, sensitivity to gender and gender equality, equity and human rights, key population groups, vulnerability and vulnerable groups, victims and survivors, etc.)
- the main used calculation formulas (average, median, others) and their appropriate and accurate use.

At the level of application the course should help the students:

- To get to know ways of selection, accessing, interpretation, communication of statistical information applying the impartiality principle;
- To acquire and apply techniques and various ways of using the data within journalistic materials in a clear and accessible (for public) manner through "humanizing" the statistical data;
- To systemize the stages of the journalist's work in producing materials using official statistical data;
- To identify the ways, methods and tools for information/ing with official statistical data;
- To learn how to use rapidly the official web page of NBS when searching data and metadata, especially the statistical databank;
- To learn how to use the statistical data in different contexts, to prevent misinformation and dissemination of wrong messages;
- To apply statistical data for sensational messages or conclusions only after consultation of /double-check with the experts in the field.

At the level of integration the course should help the students:

- To delimitate between the official, administrative and other information;
- To evaluate the relation between national and international statistics;

- To assess the impact of statistical data used by journalists to the public;
- To estimate the importance of connecting the event to official statistics.

The assignment will be built on the previous and on-going activities undertaken by the National Bureau of Statistics and Project partners, as well as other resources available (e.g. training courses on statistical literacy for CSOs previously developed by UNDP⁵, courses on "Journalism in crisis situations" and "Societal Communication and public relations in crisis situations" developed by UNDP and UNICEF, etc.).

The respective assignment is part of the NBS effort to promote proactive dialogue with users of statistical products and services and to strengthen the national and media's capacities on use of statistical data in the participatory process of development, monitoring, evaluation and analysis of public policies and their impact on welfare. Therefore, the collaboration between the applicant-institution and NBS, envisaging the sharing by the latest of the gained experience and expertise in the field of statistics, would be benefic and appropriate for the accomplishment of the assignment's objectives.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- Statistical course/s for journalists and communication specialists, focused on multi-dimensional disaggregated data, data sources, indicators (by sectors of economy), their calculation, interpretation, analysis, are developed (containing but not being limited to the modules mentioned below) and introduced in the curricula of accredited educational institution as part of journalism & communication education;
- Future journalists and communication specialists are familiarized with:
 1. General notions in statistics (types of statistics, basic data sources, data collection methods, tools and methods of disseminating information, basic statistical concepts, units of measure, etc.) {Module 1};
 2. The main statistical domains:
 - **Social statistics** (incl. demography, labour, education, living standards and conditions, social protection, health, gender statistics, etc.) {Module 2} and
 - **Economic statistics** {Module 3},
 Including: notions/definitions, data interpretation, analysis and use, sensitivity from gender, equity, vulnerability, human rights perspectives, etc;
- Strengthened/improved capacities and practical skills of journalists (and communication specialists) in their daily activity on documenting (through easy access to available data sources), on use (competent, adequately, correctly), interpreting, commenting and broadcasting the messages with official statistics content (for the public);
- Qualitative use of official statistics in journalistic materials and communication messages increased.

Expected results and outcomes in a *medium and long term perspective*:

- The quality and complexity (in terms of factual material used) of the media/journalistic products improved;
- Increased volume of messages and journalistic (or communication) materials based on evidence (containing references to official statistics) and easy to understand;
- Increased capacity of the national stakeholders to appropriately use the available statistics (indicators, time series, methodological guidelines, analytical reports) for the measurement of social and economic phenomena in the society and their coverage in media;
- Contributions to the credibility and visibility of the National Bureau of Statistics of RM through increasing the accuracy of taking over, understanding, commenting, and broadcasting by the media of the journalistic messages containing references to official statistical data;
- Reliability towards the statistical products of NBS and other data producers acknowledged by the trained students/journalists and the dialogue between these parts facilitated;
- Improved understanding, credibility and use of statistical information.

SCOPE OF WORK

Under the current assignment, the Project and NBS are looking for the following expertise on the part of a national higher education institution:

(A) To develop a university course (one or two separate pieces) on statistical literacy to be taught to the students of journalism and (optional) of communication departments, with special focus on statistical notions and process, documentation, interpretation and use of statistical data in the journalistic/communications activity/profession.

(B) To pilot/test the elaborated course and to institutionally embed it into the curricula of the university through official approval/decision by the competent body, this representing the assurance for the sustainability of the course's implementation on regular/continuous basis by the institution;

(C) To promote the statistical literacy capacity building among professional media & communication specialists by expanding the partnership and collaboration with other universities, vocational education & training institutions, media organisations (national and local).

⁵ A ToT on statistical literacy for CSOs in Moldova was provided in 2008. The training package aims to strengthen civil society actors to understand and use the information collected to support country achievement of the MDGs through evidence-based policy making and planning. The training course was designed for basic and advanced level of statistical literacy. More information: <http://europeandcis.undp.org/uploads/mdgtraining/>

TASKS and RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to achieve the envisaged objectives, the APPLICANT, under the overall supervision of the NBS & Project, are expected to undertake the following major responsibilities and perform the following activities:

1. Undertake a DESK REVIEW through thorough analysis of the background and reference materials related to:
 - a. national context
 - b. international experience and best practices of teaching statistics for media and public relations specialists;
2. Perform a NEEDS ASSESSMENT in the area of concern which will include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Identify the available supply of training opportunities on statistical literacy for non-statisticians in the country (national and, if relevant, local level) on both public and non-government sectors;
 - b. Review the existing/previous knowledge and experience on implementing statistical literacy course in academic institutions of the country, including the Applicant Institution and the Project partners, in particular training targeting journalists and public relations specialists;
 - c. Estimate the demand and concrete actual needs for statistical literacy training, also on the basis of opinions/views collected from teaching staff and targeted students groups;
 - d. On the basis of a.-c., define the overall characteristic of the future training/education course;
3. DEVELOP the statistical literacy COURSE (one or two separate pieces) for the students (at first and/or second cycle/s of higher education) of journalism and of communication departments of the applicant academic institution:
 - a. the course will mandatory include, but not be limited to, the 3 modules (mentioned above under "Expected results") and fully respond to the objective of assignment;
 - b. the course curriculum and syllabus/manuals are the final expected products to be produced in the state language for each of the target groups of students;
 - c. Applicant Institution should submit a justified proposal on the modality of embedding the elaborated and piloted/tested course into the university curricula, either the first cycle and/or second cycle of the higher education (Licentiate and/or Master programmes – see section "Main Objectives").
 - d. international experience, national knowledge & practice and needs assessment (mentioned under p.2) will be applied;
4. IMPLEMENT the elaborated statistical literacy COURSE through:
 - a. Preparation of the teaching staff to teach the course ;
 - b. Organization and conducting of the pilot/test training for the target groups of students;
 - c. Identification of the gaps and fine-tuning of the course package of training materials;
 - d. Organize a review of the course by academicians, reviewing committees and other relevant bodies;
 - e. ensure the approval of statistical literacy course and its modules by institution's academic senate;
 - f. On the basis of approved curriculum and syllabus of the course, develop Student's practical Guide/s (in consultation with NBS and Project UN Agencies) ;
 - g. Ensure the teaching of approved statistical literacy course, including logistics and provision of teaching materials within the education process of the Applicant academic institution;
 - h. The implementing academic institution will ensure the application of the methods described under the "Teaching methods" section of present document during the teaching of statistical literacy course.
5. Build institutional capacity of the Applicant to implement and PROMOTE STATISTICAL LITERACY among data users, including active media & communication specialists:
 - a. Create the Statistical Literacy Training package with relevant teaching materials to ensure its accessibility for students and teachers through available tools of the Applicant.
 - b. Provide inputs and ideas to NBS and partner UN agencies for provision of new statistical skills development opportunities and tailored training to relevant data users (media persons and other user groups) which would contribute to the increase of data use, as well as credibility towards the produced statistical data and products;
 - c. Support the NBS and partner UN agencies in the dissemination of printed and promotional materials within target student community;
 - d. Establish partnership and collaboration with homologue universities, vocational education & training institutions, media organisations (national and local), media NGOs aiming to expand the statistical literacy capacity building through (any of...):
 - i. round tables to present, promote and share own experience on statistical literacy for media and communication specialists;
 - ii. implementation of statistical literacy course in the academic programmes of other education or training institutions specialised in journalism or public relations through replication of the Applicant's experience;
 - iii. encourage active or learning media & communication specialists to appropriately use statistics in their journalistic or press materials through application of motivation and stimulation modalities/techniques;
 - iv. other.

The Applicant will identify and propose the Team of experts to be involved in the assignment; any changes in the composition should be coordinated with Project team & NBS. It is the responsibility of the selected Applicant to supervise its team and to ensure the high quality of results.

NBS and Project may decide to provide technical support to the selected Applicant at key stages of the assignment which may include: review of proposed working methodology; monitoring of quality control to evaluate progress and refocus if necessary; review of drafted materials and recommendations for production of the final products.

The selected Applicant will make sure the exercise follows the agreed upon time schedule and will be accountable for the quality delivery of the outputs.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS and ESTIMATIVE TIMEFRAME

The Applicant will develop a work plan and time schedule according to the present document and enclosed guideline (Annex 3) and envisage the completion of the proposals by the end of November 2012 the latest.

The contracted Applicant are to produce and deliver the following outputs, each of them being coordinated with the Project team and approved by the NBS:

<i>Deliverables and Outputs</i>	<i>Tentative timeframe</i>
1. Detailed approach and working methodology	In 2 weeks from contract date
2. Needs assessment in the area/sector of capacity building on statistics	In 2 months from contract date
3. Brief outline and structure of the future education/training course (on the basis of needs assessment results)	
4. Draft Statistical Literacy Course (one or two separate pieces) for the students (at first and/or second cycle of higher education) of journalism and of communication departments of the applicant academic institution, including corresponding curriculum and syllabus	Within 3 months from contract date
5. Curriculum and teaching materials of the Statistical Literacy Course and its modules approved by Applicant's academic senate	Within 4 months from contract date
a. produced and piloted training materials fine-tuned b. laid out and printed for the education process	
6. Student's practical Guide developed on the basis of approved curriculum and syllabus of the course	Within 5 months from contract date
a. the guide reviewed and approved by the didactic council of the corresponding department b. laid out and printed for the education process	
7. Conceptual inputs and ideas provided to NBS and partner UN agencies for provision of new statistical skills development opportunities and tailored training to relevant data users	Within 6 months from contract date
8. Evidence and actions focused on establish partnership and collaboration with homologue universities, vocational education & training institutions, media organisations (national and local), media NGOs aiming to expand the statistical literacy capacity building	Within 7 months from contract date
9. Hard (few printed copies) and digital files produced during or as a result of the accomplished assignment.	During submission of the last deliverable
10. Narrative report on accomplishment/completion of assignment (in Romanian and English) and use of funds, in electronic and hard copies.	In 1 week after presentation of final results.

The activities under the present assignment are expected to commence at the **beginning of May 2012** and end before **November 15, 2012**. Nevertheless, the above-mentioned timeframe is tentative and will be finally agreed once the grant beneficiary is selected and the consultants' team identified.

TEACHING METHODS

The course should be based on, but not limited to, the next teaching methods:

- *Teaching the theoretical aspects* of the topics related to official statistics during the courses (including the participation of NBS personnel when required);
- *Independent study* of the reference resources and the factual media materials, in accordance with theoretical issues taught;
- *Debate* the key elements on documentation, use and interpretation of official statistical data during seminars, including approach-based data analysis (from the gender, equity, age-related, vulnerability, human being & rights, other perspectives) which confers depths and qualitative intensity to the produced materials/analysis in particular those reflecting the lives of population and socio-economic realities;
- Making *practical group exercises* for applying the gained knowledge based on concrete tasks (correct exposure of the essence, correct use of specialised terms, misuse of interview techniques in preparing homework/subject, etc.) and using statistical Databank: create multifunctional tables, their editing, calculations, graphical visualization;
- Study and review the *journalistic comments and interpretation from international and national media*, used as examples for the final essays;
- Writing and editing unbiased *journalistic materials* using official statistical data, in particular paying due attention to sensitivity aspects (related to gender, age, status, other issues) in human/population-based stories;
- *Analysis of the media materials* performed by students on a certain topic;
- Development of *portfolio* with news, interviews, reports based on conducted labs by each student.

The main capacity building element of the course should be the *creative laboratory* that would be aimed at cultivating the habits, skills to write and edit journalistic materials, using official statistical data and making it more human, through accurate and full description of the activities and characteristics of the country population. The laboratory should focus on debates about the examples of good practices in using and interpreting the official statistical data by national and international journalists. Also, it should focus on simulation/modeling of various situations where the statistical data should be consulted and reflected in media materials, and on comparative and critical analysis of the news, interviews and reports made by students. The labs will include the brainstorming technique, analysis of the elements of networking between journalists and communication persons from NBS and line-ministries.

The course should be based on interactive methods of conducting the theoretical sessions and conclude with the development of portfolios.

EXPECTED SUPPORT TO THE APPLICANT

The Project and its national partner (NBS) will be supporting the selected Applicant by:

- On behalf of each partner, nominate the responsible staff to support the Applicant in accomplishment of the present assignment; This staff will be included in the Coordination Team (created for the purpose of coordinating this assignment),
- Provide necessary informational and logistical support;
- Provide the Selected Institution with a number of relevant background documents available related to the purpose of envisaged assignment, results of previous work, information and materials, etc. Such papers are to be used solely for this activity and are not for other purposes unless permission is granted by NBS;
- Provide the necessary assistance and guidance at the request of the Applicant related to the objectives and purpose of the work;
- Promptly endorse the materials submitted by the contracted Applicant;
- UN Project will assist the Selected Institution in design and printing of teaching materials for students.