

## Mid-term evaluation of the project “Inform, Empower, Act! Civil Society for good budgetary governance in Moldova”

### *Terms of reference*

#### 1. General information

**The Independent Analytical Centre „Expert-Grup”**, from its lead partner position in the consortium with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS, Germany), the Eastern European Studies Centre (CSEE, Lithuania) and the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE, Moldova) is implementing, as of February 2019, the EU grant project „Inform, Empower, Act! Civil Society for good budgetary governance in Moldova”. For additional details on the project, please access the Expert-Grup webpage at: <https://www.expert-grup.org/en/activitate/proiecte/item/1751-informeaza-abiliteaza-si-actioneaza-societatea-civila-pentru-o-buna-guvernanta-in-procesul-bugetar/1751-informeaza-abiliteaza-si-actioneaza-societatea-civila-pentru-o-buna-guvernanta-in-procesul-bugetar?category=6>

**The general objective of the project** seeks to enhance civil society contribution to a higher level of transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of overall budget creation and execution at the local level through society participation and oversight.

#### **Specific objectives:**

1. To increase the level of information, awareness and motivation among the population and civil society at the local level about the budgetary process: importance of analysing the local budgets, discussing spending priorities, monitoring the budgetary execution, with emphasis on procurements for large investment projects;
2. To empower the population and civil society at the local level with appropriate knowledge, tools and frameworks to take a more active role in consultations, contribution and oversight of the local public policies and budgets;
3. To enhance involvement of the population and civil society in public policy development, budgetary processes monitoring and oversight activities of the public spending.

#### **The main project activities** are as follows:

- Creating the local coalitions (25 local coalitions in 25 localities from across the territory of the Republic of Moldova (please see Annex 1 for the list of localities)  
Launching the information, awareness and visibility campaign  
Developing the instruments for participatory budgeting
- Capacity building for 5 local implementing partners and the members of the local coalitions for participatory budgeting
- Promoting the improvement of the budgetary process at the local level  
Stimulating the participation of local coalitions in the budgetary process
- Promoting changes in the budgetary processes at the central level



- Analysing the political clientelism phenomenon in what concerns the financial allocations
- Organising annual forums dedicated to budgetary transparency

### **Target groups and project final beneficiaries**

The main target group of the project is the civil society organizations active at local level as well as the local activists. Particularly, the project targets the members of local coalitions from 25 LPAs, created and led by 5 regional CSOs acting as key local implementing partners in North, Centre, South, Gagauzia and Transnistria regions (on average, 5 municipalities (urban/rural) per implementing partner). It is estimated that each local coalition will include around 30 members (CSOs and local activists, as well as representatives of the local public authorities), making a total of 750 persons that are direct beneficiaries of the project. The entire population of beneficiary localities will be the final beneficiaries of the action reaches about 400 – 500 thousand persons.

**Annex 1** reflects the list of all local public authorities that are project partners.

## **2. Evaluation objective**

The evaluation purpose is to present the project management team with an estimated mid-term level of results achievement (outcome), the project impact on December 31, 2020 and to elaborate recommendations for ensuring that the objectives are achieved by project end.

## **3. The activities of the evaluator**

During the evaluation process, the following activities will be undertaken: at first stage the evaluator will become familiarised with the project documents and the project implementation structure. As well, during this stage, the questions that need to be answered will be drafted and the evaluation methodology will be presented. After the preliminary stage, the evaluator will start the evaluation activities at objectives' achievement level. In this regard, he/she will seek to answer the following questions:

**Objective no. 1:** *To increase the level of information, awareness and motivation among the population and civil society at the local level about the budgetary process: importance of analysing the local budgets, discussing spending priorities, monitoring the budgetary execution, with emphasis on procurements for large investment projects*

- How much has the level of information, awareness and motivation of the population and the civil society at local level increased in regard to the budgetary process and its components?
- What were the specific topics for which the level of information of the population, civil society and business representatives has increased?
- What were the specific topics for which the level of information of the population, civil society and business representatives has not increased, but it should increase?
- What were the most efficient communication means?
- Information on which topics were most embraced by the LPAs?
- What are the information constraints of the LPAs in regards to the budgetary processes?



**Objective no. 2:** *To empower the population and civil society at the local level with appropriate knowledge, tools and frameworks to take a more active role in consultations, contribution and oversight of the local public policies and budgets*

- What were the results of the capacity building activities for the local coalitions and local public authorities members on improving their understanding, knowledge and skills in what concerns their participation in the budgetary process?
- How, in practice, have these knowledge and skills helped the local coalitions and local public authorities' members in enhancing the level of information and participation in the budgetary process?
- What are the current constraints in enhancing the level of participation and involvement of the citizens in the budgetary processes?
- What were the most useful topics and instruments discussed and presented during the training program for involving the citizens and the civil society and business representatives in the budgetary processes?
- What role does the project webpage play in the process of empowering the local population and civil society?
- What were the actors involved in the empowering process and how is their role appreciated?

**Objective no. 3:** *To enhance involvement of the population and civil society in public policy development, budgetary processes monitoring and oversight activities of the public spending.*

- How is the need to participate in the budgetary process perceived by the citizens and representatives of the civil society and the business environment?
- How do the local public authorities perceive the need to have citizens, civil society and business representatives participate in the budgetary process?
- How do the local public authorities evaluate the level of participation in the budgetary process in the year 2020, compared to the previous years?
- How do the citizens, the civil society and business representatives evaluate the participation level in the budgetary processes in the year 2020, compared to the previous years?
- What are the best participation forms, in the citizens' and local public authorities' opinions?
- What are the constraints (including material and financial ones) of the local public authorities in enhancing the participation level in the budgetary process?
- What are the constraints of the citizens, civil society and business representatives in enhancing the participation level in the budgetary process?

In the final stage, the evaluator will present a report with the findings and recommendations for enhancing the achievement level of the project objectives. As well, the report will reflect an analysis on the weak and strong points of the implemented activities, general information about the project successes, the difficulties encountered and failures as well as about the achievement level of the project objectives. Moreover, the evaluator will present the project team and the project partners a set of recommendations for ensuring the medium and long term project sustainability, taking into account the identified constraints, challenges and opportunities.

#### 4. Reporting requirements

The report will be presented in English or Romanian language (upon the convenience of the evaluator), in line with Expert-Grup editing requirements.

#### 5. Assignment implementation period

The period for implementing this assignment starts 11 January 2021 and ends on 20 February, 2021. The final report will be presented no later than 20 February, 2021.

#### 6. Evaluation criteria

The proposals received will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Professional experience in evaluating similar projects, financed by international institutions (at least 5 years of experience)
- Knowledge and expertise in collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative data, including conducting interviews, elaborating monitoring indicators and using data for formulating causal links;
- Understanding participatory budgeting and citizens' involvement mechanisms;
- Knowledge on the context in which the level 2 local public authorities are operating in the Republic of Moldova.

The points awarded (maximum 100 points) after the evaluation will represent an accumulation of the points obtained by the technical proposal (maximum 70 obtainable points) and the financial proposal (maximum 30 obtainable points). The selection process will be carried out in 2 stages. During the first stage, the technical proposals submitted by each applicant will be evaluated according to the above-mentioned criteria. The minimum qualifying score for the proposal – 70 points.

#### 7. Application process

**The application set** will be presented in Romanian or English and will contain the technical and financial proposals at the email address: [procurari@expert-grup.org](mailto:procurari@expert-grup.org)

Please take notice that only complete applications will be evaluated.

The technical proposal will contain the following:

- The CV of the bidder, including previous experience in evaluating similar projects;
- The detailed timeline of activities, indicating the deadlines for completing the tasks and submitting the expected deliverable, according to this ToR;
- References and recommendations.

The financial offer will be presented in MDL and will include all taxes, including the contributions of the employer for paying salaries/fees for providing services in the Republic of Moldova.



## Annex no. 1

The list of partner municipalities in the project „Inform, Empower, Act!” and the regional partners

| Local public administration                                                                                         | Rayon             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Development Region „Nord”, regional partner AO Caroma Nord, Balti municipality</b>                               |                   |
| Mun. Balti                                                                                                          | Mun. Balti        |
| Town Drochia                                                                                                        | Rayon Drochia     |
| Town Sîngerei                                                                                                       | Rayon Singerei    |
| Town Florești                                                                                                       | Rayon Florești    |
| Town Riscani                                                                                                        | Rayon Riscani     |
| <b>Development Region „Centru”, regional partner: AO the Agency for regional development „Habitat”, town Rezina</b> |                   |
| Mun. Straseneni                                                                                                     | Rayon Straseneni  |
| Town Calarasi                                                                                                       | Rayon Calarasi    |
| Town Rezina                                                                                                         | Rayon Rezina      |
| Town Telenesti                                                                                                      | Rayon Telenesti   |
| Town Soldanesti                                                                                                     | Rayon Soldanesti  |
| Commune Pirlita                                                                                                     | Rayon Ungheni     |
| <b>Development Region „Sud”, regional partner: AO Azi, Cahul municipality</b>                                       |                   |
| Mun. Cahul                                                                                                          | Rayon Cahul       |
| Town Cimislia                                                                                                       | Rayon Cimislia    |
| Town Leova                                                                                                          | Rayon Leova       |
| Town Cantemir                                                                                                       | Rayon Cantemir    |
| Commune Salcuta                                                                                                     | Rayon Causeni     |
| <b>Development Region ATUG<sup>1</sup>, regional partner: ON „Institutul pentru Inițiative Rurale”</b>              |                   |
| Townhall of Ceadir Lunga municipality                                                                               | ATU Gagauzia      |
| Townhall Vulcănești                                                                                                 | ATU Gagauzia      |
| Townhall Baurci                                                                                                     | ATU Gagauzia      |
| village Tomai,                                                                                                      | ATU Gagauzia      |
| village Gaidar                                                                                                      | ATU Gagauzia      |
| <b>Special region, regional partner: Contact Centre, Mun Chisinau</b>                                               |                   |
| Commune Boscana                                                                                                     | Rayon Criuleni    |
| village Dubasarii Vechi                                                                                             | Rayon Criuleni    |
| Town Criuleni                                                                                                       | Rayon Criuleni    |
| village Gura Bicului                                                                                                | Rayon Anenii Noi  |
| village Talmaza                                                                                                     | Rayon Stefan Vodă |

<sup>1</sup> Administrative Territorial Unit Gagauzia