

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST	
Project title and Identification:	Project Location:
Legal and social assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers	Republic of Moldova
Brief Background of the Project:	
<p>The Republic of Moldova has generally been perceived as a country of origin and transit for migrants and persons in need of international protection. The country has also become a country of destination in particular for Syrians, Ukrainians, Iraqis and Afghanis. In contrast to 2015 whereby a total of 276 persons applied for asylum, in 2017 the numbers have dropped to 120. Asylum-seekers face numerous challenges, including formal employment, access social and health services. Numerous refugees seek to move onwards to EU Member States due to family links and higher living standards.</p> <p>As of 1 July 2017, there were 408 refugees registered in Moldova, whereas 70 asylum-seekers were awaiting first instance or court decisions.</p> <p>The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has worked closely with the Moldovan authorities since the country ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention. While significant improvements with regard to legislation and judicial review have been achieved, the asylum system has room for progress in the quality of Refugee Status Determination (RSD), and in developing and implementing legal, social and economic policies that would increase self-reliability and be more conducive to local integration.</p>	
Goal/Objective, Expected Outcome and Main Activities:	
<p>UNHCR is mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the world-wide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems. UNHCR's primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. UNHCR strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another state, or to return home voluntarily in dignity.</p> <p>UNHCR's overall strategy in Moldova is to support the authorities in developing a national asylum system in line with international and European standards.</p> <p>UNHCR's strategic goals in Moldova reflect the multi-year objectives of UNHCR in Central Europe endeavouring to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve authorities' capacities to process asylum claims in line international standards and increase the protection space for asylum seekers, refugees and beneficiaries of humanitarian protection; - Maintain and further improve access to territory, the asylum procedure and reception conditions; - Reduce the detention of asylum-seekers and end the detention of children; - Promote refugees' integration; - Promote positive public attitudes towards UNHCR's persons of concern; - Improve relevant national capacities to support Refugees and asylum seekers. <p>The project will contribute to the overall strategy of UNHCR by addressing the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to the territory 2. Access to the asylum procedure 3. Due process in the asylum procedure 4. Fair outcomes in the asylum procedure 5. Observance of social and economic rights 6. Detention of asylum-seekers 7. Access to free legal aid and representation in court 8. Monitoring readmission cases 9. Security of persons of concern (including tolerance building) 10. Counselling on durable solutions, including local integration, voluntary repatriation, and resettlement. <p>In 2018, UNHCR will continue to provide assistance to the most vulnerable persons of concern.</p>	

The project will assist UNHCR in its advocacy efforts at the national level and with individual cases to ensure access of refugees and asylum seekers to national welfare services. Efforts will be made to promote and ensure self-reliance whenever possible.

Objective 1: Access to the territory improved and risk of refoulement reduced

The law provides for access to the territory and asylum procedure. While the right to apply for asylum, along with access to the territory, are observed by the authorities, there is a continuous need to monitor the access to the territory and build the capacity of the law enforcement and border authorities and improve access to protection information, legal counselling and interpretation services.

Output 1.1: Systematic and independent border monitoring established or conducted

- Minimum 72 border monitoring visits to prevent push backs or *refoulement* from occurring and ensure access to territory and RSD.
- Access to protection information is provided and available at all major border entry points.

Output 1.2: Advocacy conducted

- Build capacities in asylum related matters of at least 40 border police personnel and 100 students of the Border Police National College.

Objective 2: Law and policy developed or strengthened

According to the findings of the participatory assessments, access to social assistance, health, education, employment have room for improvement. While the inter-institutional foreigners' integration mechanism offers opportunities and integration perspectives to persons of concern, it requires more coordination and communication among stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Output 2.1: Advocacy conducted

- Organize 1 training for 20 guardianship authorities' personnel on good practices, tools and protection of unaccompanied and separated children.
- Organize at least 1 targeted training with 20 social and medical staff as well as 20 police officers on the state SGBV response and prevention system.
- Conduct minimum 48 monitoring visits to relevant detention facilities.
- Organize 2 events to advocate for the reduction of cases of detention of asylum-seekers by applying alternatives to detention and to ensure that children are not detained.
- Organize 2 trainings for 20 migration officers involved in public custody and detention aiming at improving their knowledge on human rights standards and non-discrimination.
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Objective 3: Access to and quality of status determination procedures improved

Staff turnover, underdeveloped state induction and continuous training programs, rather weak quality assurance mechanisms and Country of Origin (COI) research, coupled with lack of basic knowledge about RSD among interpreters, impacts on the quality of the refugee status determination (RSD).

Output 3.1: Advocacy conducted

- Building capacities on RSD standards for 15 government staff within 3 national EASO trainings, 30 judges (2 trainings), 20 public defendants (2 trainings), 20 interpreters (1 training), and 10 intelligence staff (1 training).
- Deliver timely high-quality protection information, counselling, assistance and representation at all stages of asylum procedure, to all newly-arrived asylum-seekers.
- Operationalize Android and IOS apps for information, basic counselling services and contacts of relevant institutions piloted in 2017.
- Initiate 6 strategic litigation cases to address systemic issues.
- Monitor, report and influence developments pertaining relevant pieces of legislation including asylum, citizenship, foreigners, and integration.
- Monitor RSD jurisprudence.

Objective 4: Potential for integration realized

Refugees are not always aware of their entitlements, are not empowered to claim them or do not have the skills and knowledge to improve their quality of life. Persistent wage differentials with European labour markets, high unemployment rate and corruption create a harsh integration environment. While

all children have free access to primary and secondary education, refugee children have difficulties as educational inclusion programmes do not always help them overcome barriers. Social workers, teachers and other school staff do not always have the necessary skills and knowledge to meet these children's needs.

Output 4.1: Advocacy conducted

- Deliver at least 2 trainings to 25 social workers and school staff on addressing refugee needs.
- Organize minimum 10 capacity building interventions on social assistance, employment and education with relevant Central and Local Public Authorities.
- Provide at least 6 individual info sessions for family doctors.

Objective 5: Services for persons with specific needs strengthened

Underfinanced social security, medical care systems and state legal aid lead to numerous persons of concern being greatly dependent on UNHCR's assistance. The participatory assessment revealed most of them are in need of medical assistance and that numerous vulnerable persons are not included in the national social assistance and security systems. Over 50% of the refugee population claimed for UNHCR medical aid including 20% chronically ill. Beside access to urgent medical services, asylum seekers do not have access to a family doctor, access to secondary and tertiary medical services, complex gynaecological and obstetrical care for women and girls. Asylum seekers do not have the right to purchase medical insurance except for the case of formal employment. In absence of an insurance, they do not have access to compensated medication. The most vulnerable (pregnant, elderly, disabled, clinical cases with public health impact, including non-immunized persons, oncological patients, TB, contagious diseases, and HIV/AIDS et al) face exacerbated risks. Critically low employment opportunities and income (sometimes below \$5 per month), particularly for the most vulnerable refugees (elderly, pregnant, disabled, oncological) makes it extremely difficult for them to pay the costs of the medication not covered by the insurance.

Output 5.1: Support to persons of concern with specific needs provided

- Establish and run a community centre providing legal, social and cultural counselling and activities to raise UNHCR persons of concern's awareness about their rights, entitlements and duties.
- Provide, where state cannot, emergency assistance, including medicine, and identify solutions for urgent cases for persons with special needs (mobility impairments, diabetes, cancer, mental impairments, heart disease, and serious dental problems).
- Refer persons of concern to secondary and tertiary state medical care.
- Refer all pregnant women and new born children to state medical care.

Intended Population of Concern:

Asylum-seekers, refugees and beneficiaries of humanitarian protection in the Republic of Moldova.

Eligibility criteria:

Expressions of Interest shall be submitted by any non-profit civil society actor in the Republic of Moldova. This excludes politically affiliated organizations, businesses, media organizations.

Project Period:

1 January – 31 December, 2018

Submission Deadline:

27 September 2017

Date Decision Results to be Communicated to Applicants:

31 October 2017

Selection Criteria

Choose relevant criteria	Criteria Description	Assigned Weighting (optional)
X	Sector expertise and experience: the required specific skills, sector specialists, knowledge and human resources, demonstrated knowledge and experience implementing refugee legislation, standards and practice.	20%
X	Project management: at least two years' experience in implementing projects, ability to deliver project objectives, accountability mechanisms in place and sound financial management, taking into	10%

	account available audit results and past performance, where applicable.	
X	Local experience, presence and community relations: relevant experience in working with public institutions; understanding of the needs of the Persons of Concern; existence of an ongoing programme in the area of operation; knowledge of the local legal and social environment; capacity to engage refugees and other persons of concern into Project activities; confidence from local communities; local presence; partner policy on community relations;	15%
X	Contribution of resources: evidenced and documented contribution of resources to the Project in cash or in-kind (e.g. premises, human resources, supplies and/or equipment) by the partner that are presently available (or potentially mobilized by the partner) in order to supplement or complement UNHCR resources.	15%
X	Cost effectiveness: proportionate level of direct costs and administrative costs imposed on the Project in relation to project deliverables.	30%
X	Experience in working with UNHCR: global and/or local partnerships including knowledge of UNHCR policies, practices and programs, including an understanding of and ability to work within UNHCR's funding limitations and associated inherent risks. Partners that have three consecutive qualified audit opinions may not be considered.	10%

Assessment process:

Expressions of Interest will be assessed against the selection criteria specified above by a special Committee. Each applicant will be informed in written form about the decision taken.

At this stage of the Call, the shortlisting of an expression of interest does not constitute a binding commitment – either implicit or explicit – on the part of the UNHCR to finance proposed activities.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to develop more detailed proposals.

Procedure for submission of expressions of interest

Organizations interested in submitting a Concept Note of the present Call for Expressions of Interest, may choose one or more of those Objectives, Expected Outputs and Main Activities for which they deem they have the expertise, knowhow and ability to implement a successful project. UNHCR would prefer that the expressions of interest/Concept Notes address all the objectives, or as many as possible.

Prospective partners must submit the following documents within the aforementioned deadline:

1. Annex D - Brief **concept note** as per the template attached in English.
2. Annex A - Filled in and signed attached **Partner declaration** (for the prospective partners not yet registered with UNHCR Headquarters)
3. Copies of the **Registration documents**.
4. The **Charter of the organization**.
5. Copy of previous **audit report or the previous year's bank statement**.
6. Details of **separate bank account or a commitment letter to open a separate bank account**.
7. Confirmation of registration under the UNHCR Partner Portal (<https://partner.unhcr.org>)

The documents listed above shall be uploaded in the UNHCR Partner Portal (<https://partner.unhcr.org>) and also submitted to the contacts indicated below.

Please send your Concept Notes to the below indicated contacts.

- **The Concept Note** shall not exceed 5 pages (Single spaced Times New Roman 12):
- **Contacts and profile:** organization's name and registration details, office and mailing addresses, telephones, email, webpage, composition of the board, name and contacts of the Executive Manager, name and contacts of the contact person, organization's background, history, experience, expertise, completed list of projects during past 5 years with donor names and project values in US Dollars, 2016 annual budget, fiscal year duration, number of personnel employed in 2017, any other additional information that you may deem necessary and useful for the decision making – maximum 2 (two) pages;

- **Implementation strategy:** brief description of the concept, strategies, tactics, approaches - maximum 1 (one) page;
- **Project staff:** describe the estimated number and functional profile of the positions and personnel to be recruited under the UNHCR funding – maximum half-a-page;
- **Contribution of resources:** describe other than UNHCR sources that organization will be able to mobilize in order to supplement the UNHCR funded project, explain type and value of the intended contribution, is it in cash or in-kind (e.g. human resources, supplies and/or equipment), or both – maximum 1 (one) page;
- **Any additional comments that you may find useful for decision-making** – maximum half-a-page.

The documents quoting above project title should be sent either electronically to mdach@unhcr.org or by post in a sealed envelope directly to the following address:

UNHCR Moldova
68, Mateevici str.
MD-2009, Chisinau, Moldova

Expressions of interest submitted after the deadline of this call will not be considered.

For queries: contact Mr. Marin Dolinta, Senior Administrative/Programme Associate, at dolinta@unhcr.org or +373 22 27-18-53

Issuing UNHCR Office

Contact Address

Signature, Head of Office

Full name and title, Head of Office

Name of UNHCR Office

Date

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

68, Mateevici str., 2009, Chisinau, Moldova

Traian ȚURCANU

National Office

27 September 2017