People in Need (PIN), Moldova Country Programme

October 21, 2024

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Advocacy Expert/Consultant

Position:	**Advocacy Consultant/Expert**
Type of Contract:	**Service Contract**
Modus operandi:	**Develop an advocacy paper on social services in Moldova by identifying the gaps and conducting activities which will later be used for advocacy**
Country:	**Moldova**
Evaluation type:	**Mixed (Technical terms, Financial terms, Interview)**

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1. Expression of Interest

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Context

The advocacy paper will focus on addressing the gaps in social inclusion in Moldova, with a specific emphasis on marginalized groups and the barriers they face in achieving equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities. This paper is designed to highlight the current challenges in social inclusion and propose actionable recommendations to improve the situation. The advocacy effort is being carried out by People in Need (PIN) with a planned release for October/November.

Moldova's marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and low-income families, are often excluded from vital social and economic opportunities. These populations encounter structural barriers such as inadequate access to quality education, healthcare, social services, and employment. Furthermore, existing policies and interventions, although present, are not always effectively implemented or adapted to meet the needs of these vulnerable groups. Consequently, this creates a gap in social inclusion, which threatens both social cohesion and the equitable development of Moldova's communities.

The goal of this advocacy paper is to collect primary data at the community level in three key localities (Orhei, Cahul, Chisinau) where SOS Ukraine operates, to identify and analyze the key challenges and barriers faced by refugees and marginalized groups in Moldova. In addition, the paper aims to assess the effectiveness of current policies and interventions and provide evidence-based recommendations that will contribute to closing the gaps in social inclusion.

This project will utilize a combination of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to collect qualitative data from community members and stakeholders in the identified regions. The data collection will be conducted using a standard questionnaire, followed by in-depth analysis to identify common themes, challenges, and barriers to social inclusion. Alongside this, a comprehensive desk review will assess Moldova's current legislation, policies, and programs aimed at social inclusion, identifying both their achievements and shortcomings.

The primary beneficiaries of this initiative are Moldova's marginalized populations, but the advocacy paper will also be shared with key stakeholders, including local public authorities (LPAs), policymakers, community leaders, and civil society organizations. The recommendations made in the paper will aim to foster a more inclusive society by enhancing awareness of social inclusion issues, promoting policy changes, and increasing the participation of marginalized groups in decision-making processes.

The findings from this initiative will serve as a valuable tool to inform future interventions and policy formulations, as well as to advocate for greater social inclusion, ensuring that marginalized communities are integrated into Moldova's social and economic fabric.

1.2. Introduction to Methodology and Purpose

The advocacy paper aims to address the gaps in social inclusion within Moldova, as outlined in the section "1.1. Background and Context," focusing on marginalized groups across several regions. This paper, alongside its findings and recommendations, will serve to:

- Identify and assess the key challenges and barriers that marginalized groups face in accessing social, economic, and political opportunities within Moldova, particularly in regions such as Orhei, Cahul, and Chisinau.
- Analyze the effectiveness of current policies, programs, and interventions aimed at promoting social inclusion and evaluate their alignment with national and international frameworks on social equity and inclusion.
- Gather input and feedback from marginalized groups, community members, local stakeholders, and relevant authorities to understand their perspectives on social inclusion and to assess the accessibility, quality, and timeliness of existing support and services.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations that will guide future policy-making processes, ensuring that the needs and rights of marginalized groups are adequately addressed and integrated into national development strategies.
- Develop lessons learned from both community feedback and the assessment of existing interventions, which can be used to inform future advocacy efforts, improve the design and implementation of inclusive policies, and enhance collaboration among stakeholders.
- Identify gaps in communication, coordination, and cooperation between government agencies, local public authorities (LPAs), civil society organizations, and marginalized communities, and provide recommendations on how to improve synergies among these actors to achieve more effective social inclusion.

The outputs and recommendations of this advocacy paper will be shared with relevant stakeholders, including government authorities, civil society organizations, community leaders, and donors. The findings will serve as a valuable tool for advocating for greater inclusion, influencing policy revisions, and supporting the development of future interventions aimed at creating a more inclusive society in Moldova. By raising awareness and providing practical insights, the advocacy paper seeks to contribute to an improved social inclusion agenda that benefits all members of society, particularly those currently marginalized.

2. Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) for the advocacy paper on social inclusion in Moldova centers on identifying gaps in social inclusion for marginalized groups. The initiative aims to ensure that "Social inclusion for marginalized groups in Moldova is improved by addressing key barriers and promoting inclusive policies." To achieve this, the intervention will focus on the following outcomes: **Outcome 1: Key challenges and barriers to social inclusion are identified,** and **Outcome 2: Effective policy recommendations are developed and disseminated to stakeholders.**

One pathway towards **Outcome 1** involves collecting primary data from key localities (Orhei, Cahul, Chisinau) through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to identify social inclusion gaps.

Another pathway towards **Outcome 2** includes conducting a desk review of existing policies and developing practical recommendations based on data analysis, which will be shared with stakeholders to advocate for improved social inclusion policies and interventions.

3. Advocacy Paper Questions

The advocacy paper on social inclusion in Moldova should aim to answer the following key questions:

Identification of social inclusion gaps
(1) To what extent have marginalized groups in Moldova been excluded from social, economic, and political opportunities? What are the main barriers and challenges they face in accessing essential services and participating in decision-making processes?
· This question will be assessed through the criteria of *Relevance* and *Effectiveness*.

Assessment of existing policies and programs
(2) How effective are the current policies, programs, and interventions aimed at promoting social inclusion in Moldova? What are their strengths, and where do they fall short in addressing the needs of marginalized groups?
· This question will be assessed through the criteria of *Efficiency* and *Effectiveness*.

Community and stakeholder engagement
(3) To what extent are community members, civil society, and local authorities involved in addressing social inclusion issues? What mechanisms exist for the involvement of marginalized groups in policy-making and program implementation?
· This question will be assessed through the criteria of *Participation* and *Engagement*.

Policy recommendations and improvements
(4) What policy changes or interventions are needed to address the gaps and barriers in social inclusion? How can existing programs be adapted or improved to better serve marginalized groups and enhance their inclusion in society?
· This question will be assessed through the criterion of *Sustainability*.

Awareness and advocacy impact
(5) To what extent do stakeholders, including government agencies and the general public, understand the importance of social inclusion? What actions can be taken to raise awareness and promote the benefits of an inclusive society?
· This question will be assessed through the criterion of *Impact*.

Unintended effects of exclusion
(6) What unintended effects or consequences have emerged from the current lack of social inclusion for marginalized groups in Moldova? Have there been any secondary positive or negative impacts on society, particularly regarding social cohesion or community relations?
· This question will be assessed through the criterion of *Impact*.

These questions will guide the analysis and development of recommendations for the advocacy paper, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of social inclusion challenges and the pathways for addressing them.

4. Stakeholder Selection

The following stakeholders will be involved in the development of the advocacy paper on social inclusion in Moldova. Depending on the data collection methods outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and further detailed in the Inception Report, the roles of these stakeholders will be clarified. Below is an initial overview of the stakeholders and their roles in the advocacy initiative:

Stakeholder	Role
Marginalized groups	Main target group whose experiences and barriers will be the focus of the data collection efforts.

Local communities in Orhei, Cahul, Chisinau **SOS Ukraine and partner organizations** **Local public authorities (LPAs)** **Civil society organizations (CSOs)** **Ministry of Labor and Social Protection** **National Employment Agency** **Community leaders** **PIN implementation team**	Provide primary data through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) on social inclusion gaps. Implement and facilitate the data collection process at the community level and support advocacy efforts. Collaborate in data collection and provide insights on the implementation and effectiveness of social inclusion policies. Engage in policy discussions, advocacy activities, and provide expertise on social inclusion. Key governmental stakeholder responsible for overseeing social inclusion policies and collaborating in policy recommendations. Provides insights on employment challenges and barriers for marginalized communities. Act as key informants during data collection and assist in engaging local marginalized groups in the advocacy process. Facilitation and coordination of the advocacy initiative, including data collection, analysis, and dissemination of the paper.

5. Deliverables and timeline

Deliverable	Estimated deadline
Inception Report, including methodology	**5 days since the signing of the contract**
Data Collection, analysis and paper drafting	**14 days since the signing of the contract**
Draft of the advocacy paper	**24 days since the signing of the contract**
Review and report finalization	**31 days since the signing of the contract**
Presentation of Evaluation Report	**33 days since the signing of the contract**

The workload for the whole consultancy is estimated at 20-22 working days.

6. Criteria

The Consultant must meet the following criteria:

- At least three years of proven experience in conducting advocacy papers or research related to social inclusion, marginalized communities, and policy recommendations.
- Demonstrated expertise in social inclusion frameworks, human rights, or relevant social policies is required.

- Proven experience with data collection methods such as Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and desk reviews is an asset.
- Prior experience working in the Republic of Moldova or with similar socio-political contexts is mandatory.
- Excellent knowledge of English, Russian and Romanian is required; proficiency in Russian is mandatory, proficiency in Romanian is a distinct advantage.

7 Communication Process

The communication process for the development of the advocacy paper will involve close cooperation between the consultant, the Protection and Social Inclusion team, and relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the issues surrounding social inclusion in Moldova. The following mechanisms will be established to facilitate effective communication and coordination:

- For day-to-day communication and coordination, a **PIN Focal Point** from the Protection and Social Inclusion team will be responsible for liaising between the consultant and PIN. The Focal Point will ensure smooth collaboration during the planning, data collection, and analysis phases of the advocacy paper.
- A **team member** from the Protection and Social Inclusion team will accompany the consultant during the data collection phase. The team will assist with organizing and facilitating Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community members, stakeholders, and marginalized groups in key localities (Orhei, Cahul, Chisinau).
- The group will review the initial findings, provide recommendations on the advocacy content, and support the organization of fieldwork and logistics.
- This communication structure will ensure that all relevant stakeholders' knowledge and perspectives are considered in the advocacy paper, and the final product will effectively address the needs and expectations of both the communities involved and the wider audience engaged in social inclusion efforts in Moldova.

7. Application Process

Interested Candidate's Application shall contain the following documents:

1. CV or Resume;
2. Cover letter;
3. Copy of Diplomas;
4. One example of document, study or report, scientific article on similar scope of work conducted;
5. Three professional references;
6. Financial offer for the requested services (all taxes inclusive) filled in and signed as a Quotation Form (attached).

Applicants are requested to submit an expression of interest at the latest **by extended deadline of October 25, 2024** COB at tender.moldova@peopleinneed.net Subject: "Advocacy paper - name and surname".

PIN will review all submitted applications and subsequently choose the most suitable candidate based on their qualifications, experience, and the financial proposal presented.

Only short-listed applicants will be contacted, women and men are equally encouraged to apply.

8. Selection process

The selection process will proceed as follows:

The applicants will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee against the criteria listed in the section 6. PIN reserves the right to enter into a negotiation with the candidates on the financial offer proposed by them, before finalizing the selection process. The technical offer will be weighted with 70%; the financial offer will be weighted with 30%. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Instructions on the technical and financial offers are available in Annex 1 – Instructions to bidders.

Cumulative analysis

The award of the contract shall be made to the consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

a) responsive/ compliant/ acceptable, and

b) having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

* Technical Criteria weight – 70% (70 pts);

* Financial Criteria weight – 30% (30 pts).

Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points Obtainable
Technical evaluation		
Master's degree in Social Sciences, Development Studies, Public Policy, or a related field. At least three years of proven experience in conducting advocacy papers or research related to social inclusion, marginalized communities, and policy recommendations.	Master's degree – 5 pts Bachelor's degree – 4 pts	5
Collaboration or professional experience with international organizations, national civil society organizations;	Yes – 5 pts, No - 0	5
At least 3 years of experience in conducting advocacy papers or research on social inclusion or related fields. Demonstrated expertise in social inclusion frameworks, human rights, or relevant social policies is required.	3 years – 5 pts., each additional year of experience – 1 pt., up to a maximum of 10 pts.	10

Experience working with marginalized groups or social inclusion in Moldova or similar contexts	Yes – 15 pts., No– 0 pts;	15
Experience in conducting qualitative research, including Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	Yes – 15 pts., No– 0 pts;	15
Interview evaluation		
Oral and written fluency in Romanian, English, and Russian;	Yes – 5 pts, No – 0 pts;	5
Excellent organizational and coordination skills, ability to prioritize and communicate effectively, strong ethical standards;	Yes – 10 pts, No– 0 pts;	10
Familiarity with the Moldovan context, including legal, social, and cultural aspects affecting social services.	Yes – 5 pts, No– 0 pts;	5
Maximum Total Technical Scoring		**70**

Minimum Technical Threshold: The minimum competency level for the technical evaluation is for Applicants to reach at least 70% out of maximum possible 70 points on the technical evaluation.

Financial	
Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula: **S = Fmin / F * 30** **S – score received on financial evaluation;** **Fmin** – the lowest financial offer out of all the submitted offers qualified over the technical evaluation round; **F – financial offer under consideration.**	**30**