

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

ROMANIA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH - PMU

Project name: Additional Financing to the Health Sector Reform – Improving Health System Quality and Efficiency Project

Loan no.: 9253-RO

Assignment Title: Consultancy services for developing communication strategy, public relations and awareness campaign for Health Sector Reform Project and Romania Health Program-for-Results

Reference No.: CS/B/2

The Ministry of Health, through the Project Management Unit (PMU), is implementing the Health Sector Reform – Improving Health System Quality and Efficiency Project (the Project), financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), Project no. 8362RO, ratified by Romanian Law no. 179 of Dec. 16th, 2014, with subsequent amendments.

The main objective of the Project is to contribute to improving access to, and quality of selected public health services.

The Project was approved on Mar. 28th, 2014 and became effective on Jan. 22nd, 2015. The project amount is EUR 250.00 million and the closing date is Dec. 31st, 2024.

To achieve the main objectives of the Project, the Romanian Government, through the Ministry of Finance, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, signed on June 11th, 2021, the Loan Agreement no. 9253-RO, for the purpose of providing additional financing for activities related to the Project. The Loan no. 9253-RO was ratified by the Romanian Parliament by law no. 298/Dec. 14th, 2021.

Also, the Ministry of Health, through the Project Management Unit (PMU), is implementing the Romania Health Program-for-Results (PforR) that was approved on Sep. 17th, 2019, and the Loan Agreement was signed and countersigned by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Romania Ministry of Public Finance representatives on Sep. 23rd, 2019. The Loan Agreement was amended in July 2020 to support Government's response to the COVID-19 epidemic. The PforR became effective on Jan. 12th, 2021. The total amount of the project is EUR 500 mil. (USD 557.20 mil.).

The objective of the Program is to increase the coverage with primary health care for the underserved populations and to improve the efficiency of health spending, by addressing underlying institutional challenges.

The Ministry of Health intends to apply part of the Additional financing to the Health Sector Reform – Improving Health System Quality and Efficiency Project proceeds (Part. B) for consulting services.

The objective of the assignment is the provision of consultancy services to the Ministry of Health for developing and implementing communication strategies, public relations and awareness campaigns for both Operations (the Project and the Program-for-Results) and to ensure timely and qualitative services for achieving the projects objectives.

The provided work will be based on a unitary communication concept that will be used throughout the entire project implementation and that will result in creating communication deliverables. Contract duration is from the signing date until the project activities are concluded, 31.12.2024.

COMMON SCOPE OF WORK UNDER BOTH OPERATIONS (PROJECT AND PROGRAM-FOR-RESULTS)

- 1) Raise awareness of operations in the context of reforming the healthcare system;
- 2) Increase awareness and knowledge of key issues in and solutions for the health system and people's health;
- 3) Inform on key aspects of operations (e.g., vision, health reform intended, components, milestones, stakeholders and beneficiaries)
- 4) Prompt action to (i) gain support for/increase ownership of the reform among reform implementers; (ii) increase number of beneficiaries of the reform, including among vulnerable categories;
- 5) Promote results of projects, champions of change, and benefits among targeted audiences
- 6) Influence perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors to increase (i) accountability of reforms, (ii) transparency of reforms, (iii) demand and support for enhanced public health services; and to enhance people's behaviors towards tackling individual health issues with a focus on prevention.

SPECIFIC SCOPE OF WORK UNDER THE PROJECT

- 1) Inform and raise awareness on project milestones and respective opportunities for the overall population, and, when strategic, for targeted beneficiaries under the project (e.g., increased screenings options, rehabilitation works for medical units, adoption of new standards and protocol in hospitals, new trainings available for medical staff) to increase participation in project components and encourage adoption of new behaviors.
- 2) Inform specific stakeholders that are interested in health reforms, investments made in civil works, technical assistance, equipment, and professional training, in order to ensure a high-level of understanding of reform and project objectives, timeline, areas of collaboration, and benefits to be unlocked, as well as participation in relevant initiatives/activities and adoption of new behaviors, tools, protocol etc.
- 3) Inform and raise awareness on project accomplishments, key changes in the health system, and benefits for stakeholders and beneficiaries, in order to ensure transparency, particularly over sensitive aspects of the reform (e.g., investments in hospital infrastructure), a regular flow of information in a proactive way, and traction for the reform.

SPECIFIC SCOPE OF WORK UNDER THE PROGRAM-FOR-RESULTS

- 1) Inform the target public categories, the beneficiaries/patients and the stakeholders that are interested in the extension of the minimum package of primary medical assistance services for the uninsured. Use strategic communication to encourage actions to be taken by targeted public categories.
- 2) Inform the target public categories, the beneficiaries/patients and the stakeholders that are interested in the community healthcare services. Support efforts in upgrading the amcmsr.gov.ro platform and extending the collaboration between community healthcare and primary health care. Use strategic communication to encourage actions to be taken by targeted public categories.

- 3) Use strategic communication to increase ownership of reforms, including on sensitive components (e.g., enhancing health expenditure) and communicate clearly over reform objectives, benefits, and results.
- 4) Use creative communication to enhance reform implementation on selected project components (e.g., increase reach out to underserved populations).
- 5) Inform and raise the level of understanding for key reform components (e.g., changes in the minimum package of primary health care services) among the general population, but also relevant public segments through more targeted and intense efforts.

The Contract is expected to be signed in December 2022. The commencement date is planned to take place in 15 days after the contract signing date, based on the Administrative Order issued by the MoH-PMU.

The assignment should be carried out by a qualified Consultant with in-depth experience in communication services.

The Consultant shall provide the adequate staff (in terms of qualifications and time allocation), as well as the needed equipment to complete efficiently all the activities required under the scope of contract and to finally achieve the specific and the overall objectives of the contract.

The Ministry of Health – Project Management Unit would like to contract a consulting firm with experience in communication field with adequate staff, at least the following key-experts: team leader, communication (2 experts), graphic designer, copywriter, social media communication, media planner, website development and other experts (non-key experts) considered for the project implementation.

The consultant is responsible for organizing the activities of the experts, the composition of the team of experts, their profile and the estimated effort. The project team experts were set at a minimum by reference to the contractual conditions.

The Consultant must prove the experience of at least 3 such media partnerships with publications/TV stations/news, business or general Romanian websites – by submitting letters of commitment. The firms will propose the type of materials that they consider appropriate for promotion within the partnerships.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the assignment are attached to this request for expressions of interest.

The Ministry of Health – Project Management Unit now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The shortlisting criteria are:

1. *General qualifications of the consulting firm (maximum 40 points)* - Company profile, core business, registration, certifications, turnover in the last 5 years, staffing levels relevant for the assignment.
2. *Specific experience of the consulting firm in the field of the assignment (maximum 60 points)* - The company must prove that in the last 5 years (calculated by the deadline for submission of expressions of interest) they have provided similar services in complexity and size, to those intended to be contracted through this selection procedure, under at least 3 media partnerships with publications/TV stations/news, business or general Romanian websites;
Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage.

The presentation of the references for similar experience shall include at least: short description of the contracts and related value; information about the Employer/Client; description of the provided services in last 5 years with clear information about the starting and ending dates (in the case of references started earlier than the last 5 years, or for the references on going) and the corresponding value.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" November 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours (i.e. 10:00 to 17:00 hours).

Expressions of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail), in English, **by August 3rd, 2022, 16:00 hour's local time**

Ministry of Health – Project Management Unit

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