

# MOLDOVA RURAL CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

## Terms of Reference

### SOCIAL SPECIALIST

#### A. Introduction and Background

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is: (i) to improve climate-resilient road connectivity in selected rural communities; (ii) to enhance road transit through selected border crossings with Romania; and (iii) in case of an Eligible Crisis or Emergency, to respond promptly and effectively to it.

#### B. Project Description

##### 1. Project Components

**Component A: Linking local communities with economic opportunities, EUR 134.85 (IBRD EUR 69.99 million; IDA EUR 5.6 million; GOM EUR 58.78 million)**

A.1: Climate resilient local road links, EUR 124.60 million (IBRD EUR 60.75 million; IDA EUR 5.60 million; GOM EUR 58.25 million): This subcomponent will finance the rehabilitation and upgrading of approximately 95 km of three priority local roads with climate resilient design to improve reliable, all-weather connectivity to markets, schools, health, and other social and economic centers. The works include road safety measures in the proximity of schools and settlement areas. Project roads will be under maintenance contracts (including winter maintenance and emergency repairs) to ensure that investments are sustained over time. One of the three contracts will be tendered following the Design and Build Contract methodology.

A.2: Community inclusion & accessibility (IBRD EUR 1.85 million): This subcomponent will finance: (i) interventions complementary to the road works in (A.1) including those requested by communities along the roads, and (ii) Non-Motorized Transport (NMT) infrastructure along and adjacent to Project roads.<sup>1</sup> These community requested road works are located along or in the proximity of the three road corridors to be rehabilitated under Component A.1 and will similarly integrate climate change considerations to the extent possible.

A.3: Safer roads for Moldova (IBRD EUR 3.69 million): This subcomponent will finance: (i) Remediation of road safety "black spots" at up to 6 priority locations.; (ii) Road safety educational and informational campaigns which aim to raise awareness and educate the public about road safety measures and practices. The campaigns will be designed to target specific audiences and address key road safety issues relevant to the Moldovan context.

A.4: Project Supervision related to A.1, A.2 and A.3 (IBRD EUR 3.71 million): This subcomponent finances consultancy services for the supervision of activities in A1, A2 and A.3.

**Component B: Facilitating trade and expanding Solidarity Lanes, EUR 37.98 million (IBRD EUR 18.99 million; GOM EUR 18.99 million)**

This subcomponent will enhance capacity and improve the functionality of the Border Crossing Points (BCPs) between Moldova and Romania. These investments include upgrades to access roads with

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<sup>1</sup> The approach to consider community requested works will be linked to the Project's citizen engagement activities and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. Examples of community requested works could include additional sidewalks and others as will be indicated in the Project Operation Manual

climate resilient design and will be complemented by simultaneous modernization investments on the Romanian side of the BCPs that will be implemented by the Romanian Government.

*B.1. Construction and Road access to BCPs (Ungheni) (IBRD EUR 7.42 million; GOM EUR 7.42 million):* A new access road to the BCP will be developed at Ungheni to climate resilient standards and with modern customs processing, weighting, and scanning facilities and truck terminal. The BCP will be connected through a 0.5 km access to the national road network, for which a feasibility study is already available.<sup>2</sup> The subcomponent also finances consultancy services for feasibility studies, supervision, and monitoring services. The MCS will be responsible for the procurement and installation of equipment.

*B.2. Solidarity Lane customs facilitation & BCP upgrades (Giurgiulesti) (IBRD EUR 2.30 million; GOM EUR 2.30 million):* This subcomponent will encompass the following activities: (i) carry out a feasibility study for traffic management; (ii) Expansion of the capacity of the existing parking/waiting facility in Giurgiulesti area and improving basic services such as toilets and water supply points for truckers; (iii) Procurement and installation of scanning equipment and software at the BCP facility; (iv) Supervision services.

*B.3: Road access and modernization of Leuseni/Albita BCP (IBRD EUR 9.26 million; GOM EUR 9.26 million):* This subcomponent will finance the upgrade of the BCP at Leuseni and expansion and improved climate resilience of the access road to the BCP.

*B.3.1 Upgrade of BCP at Leuseni:* The BCP upgrade will take place in two stages. Stage 1: full refurbishment of the existing freight entry facility and the passenger car exit facility; Stage 2: construction of a new freight exit facility. The subcomponent also finances procurement of fixed and mobile customs equipment and consultancy services for feasibility studies, supervision, and monitoring services.

*B.3.2 Access Road to Leuseni BCP:* The works involve: (i) using climate resilient design to widen the existing 1 km two-lane access road to four lanes, in line with the standards of a similar access road on the Romanian side; (ii) consultancy services for feasibility studies, supervision and monitoring services.

**Component C: Building sustainability, delivery capacity and project management support, (IBRD EUR 3.42 million)**

*C.1. Project audit (EUR 0.92 million):* This subcomponent will finance: (i) annual project audits; and (ii) Monitoring consultants for the Design and Build contracts as well as supervision consultants for the remaining civil works under Component A.1.

*C.2: Output and Performance Based Roads Contracting (OPBRC) system; and Road Asset Management System (RAMS) (EUR 0.92 million).* Specific activities include: (i) an assessment of the enabling environment for adopting OPBRC, (ii) develop a strategy and implementation plan to guide its adoption; (iii) the development of a strategy and implementation plan to guide the adoption of OPBRC; (iv) training and capacity building on OPBRC matters. The subcomponent also supports the enhancement and full operationalization of the existent RAMS, to include climate resilience and road safety modules and will be interlinked with other systems such as meteorological data. Training and capacity building will be provided.

*C.3. Female internship program (IBRD EUR 0.18 million).* This Sub-component will help promote female employment in the transport sector, where women are underrepresented by designing and

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<sup>2</sup> Simultaneously, Romania will construct a bridge across the Prut River with a new BCP and 0.5 km access road of the same standard as the Moldovan side access road to the BCP.

implementing jointly with academia a female internship program to open career opportunities in the sector.

*C.4. Incremental operating costs, project management and staff development (IBRD EUR 1.38 million):*  
This subcomponent will include: (i) consultancy support and (ii) incremental operating costs for each implementing entity.

***Component D: Contingent emergency response (EUR 0 million)***

Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) (US\$0). This component will enable the reallocation of loan/credit proceeds from other components to provide immediate recovery and reconstruction support following an eligible crisis, as needed. Due to the vulnerability to natural disasters and the precarious regional security situation with potential repercussions on Moldova's stability, the GoM has opted to include a CERC that can be activated in case of an eligible emergency event. Following such an event, the GoM may request the World Bank to reallocate uncommitted project funds to emergency response. The CERC design will be contingent on the impact and type of emergency and will not be a-priori limited to any sectors, regions, or specific activities. CERC- financed activities will be demand- and event-driven and will be detailed in a GoM Action Plan of Activities. An eligible emergency, conditions for triggering the CERC, and a positive list of financed activities will be defined in the project's legal documents, and mechanics of the decision-making process and implementation will be reflected in the CERC Operations Manual, prepared as part of the overall Project Operations Manual (POM).

**C. Scope and Objective**

This Terms of Reference (TOR) is for the recruitment of a Social Specialist who will provide essential support to the existing social, environmental, occupation health and safety and resettlement specialists within the NRA and enhance their capacity within the scope of the Project. The Social Specialist will be engaged at the NRA level to assist in the project's implementation, specifically to oversee and ensure the effective social management, as well as the monitoring of all social aspects associated with the project. Specifically, the Social Specialist will ensure that the sub-projects are carried out by NRA with due regard to appropriate social standards and practices, and in accordance with the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) instruments (Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labor Managements Procedures (LMP), prepared for the project and as per the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

The Social Specialist will be responsible for the impacts and risk mitigation plans and monitoring of all social aspects of Bank financed loans and grants in line with the provisions of Environmental and Social (E&S) documents required under the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and referred to in Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), such as Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), Labor Management Procedures (LMPs), and Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEPs), and the timelines specified in those E&S documents. Additionally, the Social Specialist will support supervising and monitoring activities related to social risks.

Social Specialist in the NRA will work in close collaboration with the other relevant specialists in the NRA such as social specialist, environmental specialist, occupation health and safety specialist, resettlement specialist, procurement specialists, financial management specialists, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) specialists, etc. The Social specialist also will coordinate with specialists from Custom Services on social aspects, if needed. The specialist is expected to keep the Project Coordinator fully informed of all social-related matters, providing monthly performance reports on these topics.

#### **D. Qualifications and Skills**

- University degree in social science (anthropology, sociology, political economy, social development, etc.) or related fields;
- A minimum of 7 (seven) years of relevant work experience in social assessments, social surveys, public consultations, land acquisition processes and resettlement planning;
- Proven experience in working with private or public sector to identify social risks, develop mitigation measures to ensure compliance with good international practice and preparation of Social Assessments / Management Plans for governmental organizations, NGOs and/or local communities;
- Previous experience working with international organizations; working experience in social assessment for development projects, and familiarity with the World Bank's ESS and procedures is considered an advantage;
- Understanding of Moldovan legislation on land acquisition and resettlement, access to information, public consultation, grievances, and social protection etc.;
- Core experience in infrastructure projects e.g. large constructions, roads, public civil works projects with experience in oversight and monitoring of implementation of social risk management plans at the project level;
- Strong analytical skills, ability to think strategically and synthesize diverse socially related data and information;
- Experience in planning and conducting public consultation meetings with different stakeholders;
- Willingness to undertake regular field visits and interact with different stakeholders;
- Proficiency in English and Romanian languages;
- Computer skills (MS Office and familiarity with project management software, such as MS Project).

#### **E. Duties and Responsibilities**

- Providing targeted training and capacity-building support to the existing social specialists within the NRA.
- Facilitate knowledge transfer related to the World Bank's ESF standards, focusing on enhancing the skills of the NRA team in managing and mitigating social risks.
- Work closely with the responsible NRA staff who will be assigned as the social, environmental, OHS and share all information with them and ensure that the process continues.
- Providing support to the NRA social, environmental, OHS specialists in ensuring, monitoring and reporting on Project implementation in accordance with the requirements of Moldovan Legislation and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and other Project documents, as well as in accordance with all ESF documents prepared for the project; site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), Labor Management Procedures (LMP) Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEPs), and any other sub-management plans.
- Carry out E&S screening of the project activities including assessment of project's social impacts and preparation of risk mitigation plans, preparing the site specific E&S assessment and SEP documents, their review and approval, conducting ESMPs supervision and monitoring for activities.
- Prepare social risk management measures of sub-project specific ESMPs, ESMP Checklists, SEPs, and in case of other instruments as necessary, (including Waste Management Plans (WMP), Hazardous Waste Management Plan, Community Health and Safety Plan (CHSP), Traffic Management Plans (TMP), Occupational Health and Safety Management Plans (OHSMP), Chance Find Procedure, project level Pest Management Plan (PMP) and any other instruments,

before the commencement of bidding works for the relevant activities, and update and ensure implementation of those documents/plans/procedures during the implementation of the Project.

- Carry out periodic site visits in order to evaluate the compliance of the activities with the social risk management requirements laid down in the documents prepared for this Project, and report findings and suggest and monitor corrective measures in case of non-compliance.
- Conduct social risks and impacts reviews, internal supervision of project operations to ensure compliance with ESMF, ESCP, LMP, SEP procedures, applicable laws, regulations and standards, and the WB's requirements for social standards.
- Ensure that procurement documents include all necessary requirements including site specific ESMPs/ESIAs to be consistent with ESF requirements, with special focus on environmental risk related elements.
- Incorporate the social risk management requirements of the approved ESMPs, LMPs, and other relevant E&S documents and/or plans into the Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) specifications of works. Thereafter, carry out continuous monitoring of construction works to ensure that the contractors and supervising firms comply with the requirements of these documents as well as ESHS specifications of their respective contracts.
- Work closely with the responsible staff who will be assigned as the social expert of the works contractors, and share all information with them and ensure that the process continues.
- Provide guidance and direction to NRA, management and personnel for achieving compliance with all applicable ESF social standards and requirements.
- Assist the NRA in consulting with communities to gather and prioritize community-driven requests for the implementation of Project Component A.2: Community Inclusion & Accessibility.
- Plan, organize, and implement stakeholder engagement activities, including public consultations, ensuring that feedback from affected communities and other stakeholders is incorporated into project planning and implementation.
- Assist NRA in maintaining and managing the project's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), ensuring that grievances related to social issues are effectively addressed and documented.
- Assist the NRA Team in establishing Social Impact Monitoring Committees (SIMCs) and coordinating their work. Plan, organize and implement stakeholder engagement activities including stakeholder consultation meetings, as per SEP in a timely and effective manner.
- Inform NRA about the need to update ES instruments when/if necessary, in the course of implementation of the Project, as well as in case of the domestic legislation changes.
- Ensure that relevant social procedures in line with national legislation and the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) are conducted in case of any change in the design of the sub-projects, if deemed necessary, and follow up on their implementation.
- Contribute to the preparation of six-monthly progress reports to the World Bank on the monitoring activities conducted, and the status of E&S compliance and any issues encountered during project implementation.
- Ensure that all approvals/licenses are in place prior to carrying out the project activities and make sure all the records are kept accurately including the permits collected by the Contractor/s.
- Assist in the revision of the Project Operations Manual (POM) in collaboration with the NRA, ensuring that it reflects the latest E&S requirements and best practices.
- Perform other duties assigned by NRA Project Coordinator (or the like) emerging in the frame of this Terms of Reference.

## **F. Duration and Location of Employment**

The Social Specialist will be based in Chisinau as an NRA’s independent consultant on a full-time basis. The Social Specialist will be expected to travel to the Project implementation sites and other relevant sites throughout project implementation. The project has a 5-year duration. The services of the social specialist are required for the full project duration. Initially, the contract with the Social Specialist is foreseen to be signed for one year and to start in the fourth quarter of 2025 and have two-month probation. Depending on the need of the NRA, satisfactory performance of the consultant and the availability of the Project funds, the contract period may be extended annually through mutual agreement.