**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Consultancy Services for supporting the RAPID Project** **implementation on promoting stakeholders’ identification and engagement to ensure that the awareness campaign and knowledge transfer activities lead to behavioral change**

**Behavioral science specialist (Individual Consultant)**

1. Background

The Government of Romania has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to support the implementation of the Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project (RAPID Project).

RAPID Project is an initiative aimed at addressing environmental challenges in the rural areas of Romania. Focused on mitigating pollution and promoting sustainable practices, the project seeks to safeguard the country's rural landscapes, preserve natural resources, and enhance the overall well-being of local communities.

The Loan 9505-RO for the Project was ratified by Romania by the Law no. 332/2023 on November 7th 2023 and it became effective on December 13th, 2023. The Project closing date is June 30th, 2028.

The objectives of the project are to strengthen the institutional capacity of selected public entities, monitor pollution in agriculture, and transfer knowledge on agricultural pollution reduction to participating farmers. The project consists of three components:

1. **Modernization of Public Institutions:** Enhance the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests (MEWF) to monitor, evaluate, and report investments, including those related to environmental aspects of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). This involves increasing the national capacity for monitoring, prevention, and reduction of pollution from agricultural sources in rural areas, including the National Administration "Romanian Waters" (NARW), the National Phytosanitary Authority (NFA), and the Directorate for Land Consolidation and Land Fund (DÎFFF) within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).
2. **Knowledge Exchange and Awareness:** Facilitate knowledge exchange, awareness, and information/innovation transfer to participating farmers. This includes establishing model farms to promote best agricultural practices for pollution prevention and reduction. The project also involves creating national knowledge transfer networks and conducting information and awareness campaigns for the public regarding project activities, including other environmentally-focused interventions funded under the NRRP.
3. **Project Management:** Ensure effective project management to oversee and coordinate the various components and activities outlined in the project.

The project aims to create a comprehensive framework for addressing agricultural pollution in Romania, involving institutional capacity building, knowledge dissemination, and active participation of farmers in adopting sustainable practices.

As presented above, Component 2 is centered around awareness raising among farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs about new technologies and innovations that reduce pollution and propose effective measure to tackle agricultural waste, with the aim to achieve behavioral changes. In achieving this, stakeholder identification and engagement to ensure that the knowledge transfer activities lead to behavioral change and that there is equitable access to the opportunities remains vital.

The awareness campaign will be implemented at national level, targeting various rural and urban stakeholders, while trainings shall be delivered through farmer discussions groups. A grants scheme will support farmers to invest in farms environmental infrastructure, aiming at setting-up a network of demonstration farms, while other champion farmers will be identified by the Knowledge Transfer Networks that will be created through the RAPID Project. Thus, with the aim to achieve behavioral changes, the awareness campaign will offer informational support on pollutants from agriculture and climate-smart agricultural practices, promoting farmers to provide, and encouraging consumers to choose, high-quality, safe and nutritious food. The information and awareness campaign will take into consideration the interests of women and national minorities and will include specific communication channels, ensuring there is equitable access to the opportunities to participate in and benefit from the networks, technologies, innovations and demonstration farms. Furthermore, trainings participating farmers will be encourage to adopt good farming practices. Surveys on the level of adopted practices, knowledge, attitudes, and behavior will be expanded to allow for qualitative data collection and the consolidated results of the surveys will be shared with participating communities in a user-friendly format.

As part of the Project Operational Manual, document of which provisions stay as effectiveness conditions for the RAPID Project, was agreed that”*a behavioral science specialist shall be hired as a consultant not later than 90 days after the Effective Date, and thereafter maintained as needed during Project implementation*”. The effective date of the RAPID Project is 13th of December, 2023.

The Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, as implementing institution, through the Project Management Unit for the "Prevention and Reduction of Pollution in Rural Areas Project" (PMU "RAPID") (named hereafter The Client) intends to use part of the "RAPID" Project’s funds for purchasing consultancy services (Individual Consultant) of a Behavioral science specialist to contribute to and facilitate stakeholders’ identification and engagement to ensure that the awareness campaign and knowledge transfer activities lead to behavioral changes.

**Definitions of terms:**

The Project – represents the Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project, referred to as the "RAPID" Project

MEWF – Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests

PMU – Project Management Unit – represents the unit established within the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, that manages the implementation of the Rural Pollution Prevention and Reduction Project

The Contract – represents the contract to be signed with the awarded Individual Consultant

The Client – is the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests through the PMU for RAPID.

The Behavioral Science Specialist – the Individual Consultant that will be selected, based on the present Terms of Reference, for the scope of services and tasks as required herein;

KTNs – Knowledge Transfer Networks.

1. Objectives of the assignment

The overall objective of the consultancy services is to support the PMU for RAPID on promoting stakeholders’ identification and engagement to ensure that the awareness campaign and knowledge transfer activities are socially inclusive and lead to behavioral changes.

The specific objectives are:

* To identify and propose specific communication channels, as part of the awareness campaign, knowledge transfer networks and grants manual, ensuring there is equitable access to the opportunities to participate in and benefit from the awareness campaign, networks, and investments in technologies;
* To identify the awareness campaign stakeholders and to propose means for their proper engagement, considering the interests of women, Hungarians, Roma and other national minorities;
* To identify and to propose actions leading to adoption of good farming practices, as part of the knowledge transfer networks;
* To promote women participation at the farmer discussion groups and leadership delivering trainings;
* To promote access of minorities to grants, trainings, workshops and conferences;
* To propose specific activities for ensuring a wide consultation of the Grants manual and along grants implementation, with a view at engaging women and minorities and other vulnerable groups;
* To develop surveys for monitoring the level of adopted practices and changes in knowledge, attitudes and behavior, analyze the results and propose corrective / remedial actions.

1. Scope of the Services:

The Behavioral Science Specialist will closely coordinate his/her activity with the representatives of the PMU.

With a view at meeting the overall objective and specific objectives of the assignment, the Behavioral Science Specialist will support PMU by engaging in the following tasks and having the following responsibilities:

* + 1. Support in preparation/consolidation of the awareness campaign strategy, including the elaboration of the ToRs for the national awareness and communication campaign;
    2. Support for the consolidation of the Grants manual and in its consultation process (including the subsequent consolidation of the Grants manual);
    3. Support for the elaboration of the ToRs for KTNs and during KTNs implementation (including for ensuring proper social inclusion of minorities and women participation at the delivered trainings, as well promotion of women as host farmers and facilitators);
    4. Support in preparation of ToRs for tracking the level of adopted practices and changes in knowledge, attitudes and behavior, as well as providing support during the selection process, including for the evaluation team, and further for the reception, during the reception and acceptance of consultancy services and related deliverables;
    5. Support the PMU’s social specialist in all his/her job duties, as needed;
    6. Participate at the PMU meetings with the World Bank representatives;
    7. Support PMU in elaborating various regular and ad-hoc reports, as requested by the World Bank or needed at the PMU/ministry level;
    8. Participate at various workshops / conferences;
    9. Other tasks and activities leading at social inclusion and adoption of good practices, as requested by the PMU.

The Behavioral Science Specialist will deliver monthly reports that will include all the deliverables submitted and description of implemented activities, accompanied by time-sheets with the daily time actually spent and the associated deliverables.

All documents delivered will be submitted for the approval of the Client.

The Behavioral Science Specialist will closely coordinate his/her activity with the staff members of the PMU nominated for the related activities under the Project, throughout the entire duration of the implementation of the assignment.

The RAPID PMU will ensure contract coordination.

1. Consultant’s Profile:

In order to be able to charge the Client for the activities performed under these terms of reference, the expert must either

1. **Be a person authorized under the Law no. 300/2004 regarding the authorization of individual persons and family associations to carry out independent activities or**
2. **act under a limited liability company or another form of organization that enables him/her to issue invoices for the services provided.**

**In any of the cases, the Consultant should be aware that the services will be provided only by the selected Individual Consultant and n**o substitution of any individual who was initially selected will be permitted**.**

**The qualifications and experience required:**

* At least 10 years’ experience in social sciences/behavioral changes;
* At least 5 years of specific experience in identification and/or promotion of social inclusion activities and/or good practices;
* Proven experience in rural social studies/implementing social projects involving rural communities on topics related to agriculture or environmental protection will be considered an advantage.

The Consultant shall have the following qualifications:

* + - Bachelor degree/Master degree in a social / behavioral / anthropology field or in any other relevant field.

Experience in implementing projects on social behavior of farmers will be a strong advantage.

In the case that the Contract for this assignment shall be awarded to a company that provides an individual for this assignment, only the qualification and experience of the individual shall be evaluated, not the company’s experience. All the services/activities provided/delivered under this Assignment shall be delivered exclusively by the individual proposed by the company.

1. Duration of the assignment

The services under this Contract shall be provided until the end of April 2028, or any other period mutually agreed by the parties, as may be necessary. The contract may be extended, in terms of both time duration and inputs in case the RAPID Project Closing date is extended or in case it is otherwise necessary. The total input under the assignment is estimated at 1,632 working hours (at an average of 2 hours per day during 48 months, considering 17 working days per month).

This initial total input will be agreed during contract negotiations subject to Consultant’s availability and the date of the commencement of services.

The contract will include a probationary period of 30 days, after which it may be terminated through a notification issued by the Client.

The input duration/working day may range between 0 – 12 working-hours, including during weekends and national holidays, as agreed between the Consultant and the Client, and depending on Client’s necessary workload dictated by the Project activities. Thus, the weekly work-schedule will be established in agreement with the Client, depending on the Client’s priorities regarding the project and the Consultant’s availability. The Work-schedule may include time periods with full-time input (8 hours/working-day, or even 12 working hours, as needed) and time periods with higher or lower than the 8 hours/working day time-input (including 0 working hours).

The consultant is expected to commence performance of the services within maximum 10 working days after contract signing.

1. Reporting

**Monthly Progress Reports:** During this Assignment, the Individual Consultant shall deliver monthly progress reports of an entire month which he/she has worked. The monthly progress report will contain at least, but will not be limited to, a list and description of the tasks and activities planned and delivered during the reporting period (as per Chapter 3 – Scope of services), their progress toward the targets, results of the activities and will also include deliverables either included as annexes or with indication / links to the deliverables, in case the deliverables are uploaded on the Client’s server), and a corresponding time-sheet. The time-sheet records daily inputs of the Consultant and it needs to be cleared by the Client’s Representative(s). In case of sensitive activities, the Reports should give general recommendations for potential solutions and approaches for improving or speeding up the processes.

The Monthly Progress Reports will be submitted within the following five working days as from the end of the reporting month, both in editable version and one hard copy, each containing a description of the work carried-out

All the Reports shall be transmitted in one copy, in Romanian language, signed by the Individual Consultant, together with the electronic versions (by electronic mail). The deliverables shall be in Romanian or English, as needed / indicated by the PMU.

All the Reports that need approval shall be submitted to the authorized representative of the Client, for analysis and approval by the Acceptance Committee named by the Client.

The Individual Consultant shall modify or complete the Reports as requested by the Client / Acceptance Committee, in maximum 2 working days from receiving such requests or during a longer period as agreed by the Consultant and the Client’s authorized representative, if the situation requires.

The Acceptance Committee shall decide upon the acceptance of the reports and deliverables submitted under the present assignment.

Based on the acceptance documents issued by the Acceptance Committee, the Individual Consultant shall issue the invoices and the Client shall pay, according to the Contract provisions.

1. Institutional arrangements, Data, Local Services, Personnel and Facilities to be provided by the Client

The Client and the Beneficiary will provide access to all relevant information, documents and stakeholders’ contact points to facilitate the implementation of the activities under this assignment.

The Behavioral Science Specialist:

* Will liaise with RAPID PMU for guidance on contract implementation;
* Will work under the direct supervision of the PMU Director and the designated Project Coordinator;
* Will cooperate closely with Component 2 Coordinator on Knowledge Transfer.

The Consultant will not at any time communicate to any person or entity any confidential information acquired in the course of the assignment.

All documentation prepared by the Consultant in the course of the assignment will remain the absolute property of the Client. The Consultant will, not later than upon termination or expiration of the contract for the current assignment, deliver all such documentation to the Client.

The Client will not pay or reimburse the Consultant for any other costs outside of the fees agreed for in the contract. The costs associated with Consultant’s participation at workshops, conferences or various meetings (e.g., with direct and indirect beneficiaries and stakeholders under Component 2 of the RAPID Project) are reimbursable, . Thus, any related costs incurred by the Consultant as for travel, accommodation, per-diem and as such, will be invoiced by the Consultant and paid by the Client against supporting documents (as for travel and accommodation) and at the level and in line with the thresholds approved for public administration (similarly as for the PMU staff).

The Client shall provide to the Individual Consultant all the information necessary, concerning the purpose of this Assignment and that will be reasonably requested by the Individual Consultant in order to complete this Assignment.

The Client will provide access to all relevant information, documents and stakeholders’ contact points to facilitate the implementation of the activities under this assignment, and if needed, equipment and working capital to carry out the tasks included in these Terms of Reference.

For the occasional situations in which the Consultant will carry out activities at the Client's premises, the Client will provide a furnished and equipped office space at PMU’s premises, including access to the Internet and to PMU’s network resources.