بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology
Male', Republic of Maldives

Eliminating Persistent Organic Pollutants Through Sound Management of Chemicals

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Number: (IUL)438-HRU/438/2023/113

1. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Maldives is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) which faces sustainable development challenges such as small but growing populations, land scarcity, vulnerability to climate change impacts (and other natural disasters) as well as economic development problems due to high transportation costs, lack of adequate infrastructure and lack of industrial development incentives. The Maldives is an archipelago comprised of 1,190 coral islands in 26 atolls over an area of about 750 km on a North-south axis and 120 km on an east-west axis. The land area of the Maldives accounts for about 1% of the Country's territory. The Maldives islands are low lying land areas with an average height above sea level of 1.8 meters (m).

The country's population of approximately 400,000 people dispersed across 187 inhabited islands. An additional more than 166 islands have tourist resorts. Waste generation is estimated to be 324,000 tons annually with consisting of approximately 0.5 to 11% of hazardous chemicals and of approximately 3-9% of plastics depending on location and size of the island. The fact that (chemical) waste is being generated on 278 island presents the country with an incredible challenge, as land is very scarce, low lying and transportation of chemicals and waste from island to island is costly and complicated. The inadequate storage options and current disposal practices of hazardous chemicals and waste, especially open burning of waste at dumpsites or disposal near the coastline, make it very likely that these toxic chemicals and waste will end up in the waters and oceans. In the Republic of Maldives, the tourism sector accounts for more than 28% percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the economy. Tourists to the Maldives are seeking a pristine environment, not one with polluted waters, degraded coral reefs, waste dumps which are openly burning or waste floating in the ocean. Therefore, the Sound Management of Chemicals and waste, especially the environmentally sound management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (hereinafter referred to as POPs) and hazardous waste, is an important element to achieving environmental sustainability. Further, given the economic importance of tourism to the Maldives, implementing environmentally sound chemical and waste management systems would help decouple growth in the tourism sector from environmental degradation.

To tackle these environmental and human health risks, the Government of the Republic of Maldives through the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology (MECCT) has already taken some steps to try to manage its growing chemicals and waste management problems. Maldives has ratified the Stockholm Convention (SC) on 17 October, 2006 and in accordance to Article 7 of the Convention has submitted its National Implementation Plan (NIP) to the Stockholm Convention Secretariat (SCS) on 18 July, 2017, which covers the initial POPs as well as the new POPs added at the 4th and the 5th Conference of the Parties.

According to this NIP the highest-ranking national Priorities are the following:

1 First Priority: The Implementation of measures to strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework; which includes the (i) developing legislation for chemicals management; (ii) strengthening institutional capacity; (iii) improving data collection and management systems and (iv) conducting research on the effects of POPs;
2 Second Priority: Developing an action plan to eliminate PCB-containing equipment and its waste by 2025, which includes the (i) identification, labelling and mapping where PCBs and equipment potentially-containing PCBs are located in the country); (ii) putting in place labelling mechanism for all PCB-containing equipment; (iii) establishing adequate storage facilities for replaced equipment containing PCBs; (iv) formulating guidelines for disposal of equipment-containing PCBs; and (v) disposing safely of equipment containing PCBs.
3 Reducing the incineration and open burning of wastes (including medical and hazardous waste), which is the source of 98.6% of U-POPs releases in the country- totaling 153.4 g-TEQ/year;
4 Raising awareness through the development of education curricula and targeted awareness campaigns; establishing a standard Chemical Management System, including chemical labelling in multiple languages.

In order to address the above-mentioned barriers, the project will focus on addressing regulatory/policy barriers, technical and capacity and knowledge barriers so that the Maldives has a better foundation to establish a nationwide environmentally sound Management system to address POPs and highly hazardous chemicals, with the adequate coordination of key public, private and community stakeholders, regulatory departments, and centers of expertise, and the enhanced capacity of all involved, for the Environmentally Sound Management of Chemicals.

The Government of Maldives has received funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the project "Eliminating Persistent Organic Pollutants through the Sound Management of Chemicals". The project is implemented by UNDP as GEF´s Implementing Agency and MECCT as national executing agency. The project is expected to support implementation of the developmental targets and priorities of the Government, set out in the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for five-year period 2019-2023.

At the start of the project, a communication/awareness raising is planned to be developed and subsequently implemented over the duration of the project. This communications/awareness raising plan will focus on changing behavior and attitudes towards Sound Management of Chemicals (SMC) and waste management, targeting policy makers, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private sector entities managing hazardous wastes and recyclers and so on. Depending on the means of communication most appropriate, various avenues for information dissemination is planned to be incorporated into the plan.

For this purpose, the project is seeking a qualified communications specialist to implement communication strategy of the project and to assist advocacy and knowledge management of the project.

The communication specialist is expected to provide implementation support for Component 3 of the project; Monitoring and learning, adaptive feedback, outreach and evaluation.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The tasks to be undertaken by the communication expert are to be undertaken in close collaboration with the PMU, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Technology, and relevant stakeholders as necessary, and include the following.

1. Draft content relevant to the project for the Ministry website and maintain as needed.
2. Implement activities outlined in the project communications strategy.
3. Develop advocacy instruments and materials for creating visibility of the project and prepare press releases as and when required by the project in coordination with the project manager.

4. Research and literature reviews in relevant topics and drafting social media posts.
5. Maintain a communications monitoring system.
6. Conduct Periodic feedback surveys to monitor the effectiveness of the awareness initiatives undertaken by the project and to understand awareness level of the public towards hazardous chemicals and wastes.
7. Support and facilitate the organization of awareness workshops, forums, webinars, and meetings.
8. Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework to assess the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project activities.
9. Assist in other relevant tasks to support implementation of Component 3 of the project as requested.

3. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

The communications specialist will report to the Project Manager. On a day-to-day basis, s/he will work in close coordination with the PMU team.

4. KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. Academic degree, preferably in social sciences, e.g. Bachelor degree in Communication, Journalism, Environmental management, Public Health, Project management or a related field.
2. Minimum 3 years of relevant work experience in project management, public relations, communications and/or advocacy or a related field.
3. Previous experience in development assistance or related work for an international agency or donor organization is desirable.
4. Knowledge and understanding of technical aspects related to pollution control/waste management is preferred.
5. Must be result oriented and proactive
6. Strong communication skills in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues
7. Excellent time management skills and ability to manage multiple priorities, deadlines, and tasks efficiently.

6. DURATION OF WORK

The duration of the consultancy is **12 months** with a possibility for extension based on the need and performance of the candidate. The successful candidate must be available to commence the position in **March 2023.**

7. FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT

The Client shall make available to the Consultant, office space and other facilities such as computers at MECCT. Local transport, food and accommodations for the official trips will be covered by the project.

8. PAYMENT

Successful candidate will be paid an all-inclusive remuneration of **MVR 22,400**

9. EVALUATION

Evaluation of candidates will be performed according to the criteria and scoring detailed below:

- Education (degree) - (20%)
- Relevant professional experience (level, number of years) - (30%)
- Technical/special skills - (15%)
- Experience of working in donor-aided projects - (5%)
- Interview - (30%)