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Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises
Male', Maldives

Terms of Reference

Media & Communications Lead (National)

Invitation Number: (IUL)13-PMU /13/2026/133

Project: Maldives Competitiveness and Growth Project (P179286)

Loan No./Credit No./ Grant No.: IDA-73050, IDA-E1690

Reference No: MV-MOF-MV-563825-CS-INDV

A. Background

The Maldives Competitiveness and Growth Project (MCGP, “the project”) is a 5-year investment project financed by the World Bank for the Government of Maldives (GoM) through Investment Project Financing (IPF) with Performance-Based Conditions (PBCs), declared effective on 23 June 2023 and implemented by the Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises (Ministry).

The overall Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen private participation in and financial sustainability of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), and the support mechanisms for the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Successfully navigating these complex fiscal reforms requires addressing deep political economy challenges and public skepticism regarding privatization and subsidy frameworks.

The Ministry is embedding a **Media and Communications Lead** within its core structure to serve as the principal communications lead across key reform and fiscal policy areas. Working alongside the Media Unit and relevant departments, the Specialist will drive both project-specific and broader institutional communication strategies for the Ministry.

Objectives

The broad objectives of this assignment are as follows:

- 1- Reform & Strategic Communications: Assist in the development and implementation of a strong communications program on private participation, subsidy reform, and other

SOE/fiscal reforms to mitigate public misperceptions, foster understanding, and build public trust.

- 2- Public Relations & Media Footprint: Develop, oversee, and implement public relations (PR), marketing, digital, and media outreach strategies in accordance with Ministry and World Bank branding guidelines.
- 3- Ministerial Communication Support: Provide high-level communication support to the Minister and senior officials, ensuring complex policy and financial content is translated into clear, accessible public-facing narratives.
- 4- Capacity Building & Leadership: Lead and coordinate the Ministry's media initiatives as per guidance received from Head of Department/Policy Executive, training and mentoring internal staff to enhance the GoM's long-term digital footprint and communications capabilities.
- 5- Digital Monitoring: Oversee the Ministry's social media and digital communications channels to maximize outreach, while maintaining a comprehensive media monitoring system and producing regular insight reports to guide Ministry leadership on public sentiment and engagement success.

B. Scope of Work

Building upon the foundational tasks executed during the initial tenure, the Specialist will undertake an expanded, higher-level scope of work integrating strategic leadership and ministerial-level communication functions:

1. Strategic Leadership & Departmental Capacity Building

- Lead and coordinate the Ministry's media unit in long-term communication strategy development and execution.
- Actively train, mentor, and build the technical capacity of media unit staff specifically regarding sensitive fiscal policy and macroeconomic reform communications.
- Coordinate and align communication efforts across relevant agencies to ensure institutional consistency in reform messaging.

2. Advanced Ministerial & Fiscal Communications

- Serve as the principal media and communications resource across the relevant departments and agencies to communicate complex policy changes.
- Translate complex financial, macroeconomic, and fiscal policy content into clear, accessible public-facing narratives.

- Lead the development of ministerial speeches, remarks, briefing notes, and strategic talking points, ensuring consistency with policy objectives, fiscal priorities, and the Ministry's communication strategy.
- Lead and support communications preparation for the annual national budget cycle and major fiscal policy announcements.

3. Media Relations & Press Management

- Manage day-to-day media relations with national outlets, cultivating proactive channels for fact-based reporting.
- Prepare and quality-assure press releases, media advisories, official statements, and opinion editorials.
- Coordinate, script, and manage press conferences, briefings, and exclusive media interviews for the Minister and senior officials.
- Maintain and leverage an established network of contacts within local and international media houses, CSOs, Island Councils, and Women's Development Committees.

4. Digital Oversight & Media Sentiment Monitoring

- Oversee the Ministry's social media accounts and digital communications channels to ensure unified corporate and project branding.
- Maintain a robust media monitoring system to track national news, social media alerts, blogs, and public discourse daily.
- Produce regular media insights and public sentiment reports directly for Ministry leadership to guide policy rolling and public engagement.

C. Deliverables

The Specialist will be responsible for providing the following deliverables:

- Departmental Capacity Building Plan & Reports:

A comprehensive training schedule and quarterly reports detailing mentoring interventions and capacity milestones achieved for the Ministry's internal media staff.

- Ministerial & Fiscal Communication Packages:

High-quality speeches, talking points, and customized stakeholder messaging toolkits prepared for the national budget cycle and major fiscal policy announcements.

- Institutional Media Reports:

Regular, structured public perception and media tracking reports submitted directly to Ministry leadership and the PMU.

- Public and Stakeholder Consultations:

Facilitate and document engagements with key stakeholders including annual consultation sessions regarding the public finance reforms.

D. Working Arrangements

- Reporting Line: The Specialist will report directly to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry or his/her designate, with strategy and update meetings held at least once a week (physically or virtually). The Specialist will also regularly deliver updates, strategic communication plans, and media reports to the Project Director, the Project Steering Committee, and Ministry leadership as required.
- Working Arrangement: The Specialist will be stationed at a dedicated workstation within the Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises. To ensure seamless coordination, the Specialist will work directly across relevant departments as assigned by the Permanent Secretary or his/her designate.
- The Specialist is expected to report to the Ministry by 08:00 hours on official working days and provide services during standard government working hours. Working hours during the month of Ramadan will be adjusted according to working hours prescribed by the government. Due to the operational requirements of the position, the Specialist may be required to work extended hours to complete assigned tasks, without additional payment.

E. Duration of Services and Payment Terms

The services of the Specialist are required until 30th June 2028, which includes an initial probationary period of 3 months.

The Specialist will be paid a lump sum of between **MVR 38,000 to 43,700** per month for the full contract duration. The remuneration package is aligned according to the National Pay Commission's Circular (number 13-NPC/CIR/2018/5) issued on 22nd March 2018.

F. Qualifications & Experience Requirement

- Education: Master's degree in Communications, Public Relations, Journalism, or an equivalent field.
- Experience: Minimum of 7 years of experience in media management, public relations, or strategic communications.

- Core Competencies:
 - Demonstrated experience leading and coordinating media departments/units or teams within a governmental or corporate context.
 - Proven capability to translate complex economic, fiscal, and financial policy content into accessible public messaging for various media platforms.
 - Substantial experience drafting high-level executive speeches and managing press strategy for major national announcements or budget cycles.
 - Strong existing networks within national media houses, alongside deep familiarity with the Maldivian socio-political and economic environment.

G. Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the consultancy position will undergo evaluation in two stages. During Evaluation Stage I, applicants will be evaluated using a "pass" or "fail" method to determine if they meet the necessary qualifications and experience. Applicants who pass Evaluation Stage I will proceed to Evaluation Stage II, where they will undergo further appraisal based on the added advantages and other competencies through an interview process, if required. Following the interviews, the applicants will be ranked accordingly and selected based on the points received.

H. Required Documents

Interested candidates must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications, experience, and responsiveness to this TOR.

- i. Cover Letter
- ii. CV with information demonstrating that they are qualified to perform the services (description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.)
- iii. Writing samples (e.g., drafted media statements, speeches)
- iv. Academic Certificates
- v. Relevant Reference Letters, covering the Key Qualifications listed in the Terms of Reference