

Terms of Reference

Preliminary assessment for phase II of the UNESCO JFIT project

“Support for Ukrainian Refugees through Media”

1. Background

1.1 UNESCO defends and promotes freedom of expression, media independence, and pluralism, and the building of inclusive knowledge societies underpinned by universal access to information and the innovative use of digital technologies. Within its mandate to foster media development, UNESCO's Section for Media Development and Media in Emergency supports media in crisis preparedness and response.

1.2 The “Support for Ukrainian Refugees through Media” project (hereinafter referred to as “the project”) funded by the Government of Japan is a UNESCO initiative developed within the UN-wide Regional Refugee Response Plan. The project supports Ukrainian refugees in three neighbouring countries of Ukraine (i.e., the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia) and the host governments in their refugee response through media. It aims to increase refugees' access to reliable information on key topics of interest and concern, to enhance their self-reliance and resilience, and create favourable conditions for peaceful albeit temporary co-existence of refugees and host communities.

The project encompasses the following 2 key Outcomes:

- i. Targeted host-country broadcasters (national and local TV and/or radio) serving public interest reinforce news segments or create programmes in Ukrainian with content designed for Ukrainian refugees.
- ii. Media help improve reciprocal knowledge and understanding between Ukrainian refugees and host populations.

2. Activities:

2.1 Under the authority of the Chief of the Section for Media Development and Media in Emergency (CI/FMD/MDE), and the direct supervision of the Senior Project Officer, the Contractor shall undertake tasks related to the needs assessment of the project's expected next phase starting in 2024. The objective is to furnish essential information that facilitates decision-making regarding the final selection of countries for the implementation of project activities in Phase II and forms part of the rationale for the new phase. More specifically, the Contractor will:

- a. Assess the needs related to refugee media coverage in the host countries, encompassing the perspectives of both host country media outlets and the refugee community, in at least three countries (i.e., Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland) included in the 2024 UN Interagency Regional Refugee Response Plan for the Ukraine Situation, which are under consideration for UNESCO project expansion.
- b. Identify and map entities for potential partnerships or sub-contracting in the forthcoming project phase including national organizations specialized in media development, broadcasters, broadcasting organizations, media associations, journalists' unions, and key duty bearers, such as media regulators and national and local authorities related to media policy or practice.

2.2 More specifically, the Contractor will implement the following activities:

- a. **Examination of the media landscape** in each of the countries under consideration for project expansion (i.e., Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland) in regard to:
 - i. Level of editorial independence and pluralism of the media sector;
 - ii. Popularity and preference of media of different types (i.e. print, broadcast, and digital media) and reach (i.e. national, regional, and local) among host populations;
 - iii. Professionalism of local media in locations with large refugee populations;
 - iv. Presence or absence of media-related legislation and regulation set in place in response to the refugee flow from Ukraine;
 - v. Other areas that the Contractor deems important for the project.

- b. **Assessment of needs of host-country media related to refugee media coverage.** The assessment should include at least 7 key informant interviews in each country with public service broadcasters, broadcasting organizations, key media outlets, media associations, media regulators, and media development organizations with a track record of implementing successful media development projects within the country, to identify the current state, including barriers or challenges, in regard to:
 - i. Current initiatives of host-country media outlets, in particular public service broadcasters, in the refugee response, considering language services, representation of refugees in editorial content, monitoring of presence or absence of misinformation and bias, in media coverage of refugee-related issues, including:
 1. Ongoing interventions or mechanisms set in place to strengthen media policies or practices to report on refugees;
 2. Presence of regular media programmes or news segments targeted specifically for refugee population to address their information needs and foster understanding with host population;
 3. Integration of displaced media professionals from Ukraine in production teams or operational capacities of host country media;
 - ii. Development of editorial policies for inclusive and ethical media coverage on refugee matters;
 - iii. Other areas that the Contractor deems important for the project.

- c. **Assessment of needs of refugees from Ukraine on access to reliable and relevant information through host-country mainstream media.** The assessment should include at least one focus group discussion (5-6 people) in each country with refugees from Ukraine, with participating groups being disaggregated by sex, age, and displacement status, to gather insights on any issues or challenges related to accessing relevant and reliable information, particularly through mainstream media. A full-scale baseline study and survey on information needs and media habits of Ukrainian refugees will follow during the project's implementation phase. Thus, this assessment is intended to serve as a preliminary hearing on:
 - i. Changes in their media habits before and after leaving Ukraine;
 - ii. Main barriers to host-country media consumption;

- iii. Key information and topics of their concern as well as their presence or absence in mainstream media.

The Contractor shall refer to, where relevant, the methodology/questionnaire developed for the current implementation phase.

- d. **Assessment of reception of the project.** One key informant interview should be conducted with the relevant section in the National Commission for UNESCO in each of the prospective project countries to solicit feedback on the project's relevance, feasibility, and added value in the current context.
- e. **Mapping of project stakeholders:** Identify and examine entities for potential partnerships or sub-contracting in the forthcoming project phase through desk research and interviews:
 - i. **Implementing partner:** At least 2 potential implementing partners in each country for the project from national organizations, broadcasting organizations, media associations, or organizations specialized in media that has the capacity to identify and engage with other media, is knowledgeable on media pre-production and production processes and tools and is acquainted with the broadcasting high demanding production environment. The organization should be assessed against these criteria.
 - ii. **Beneficiary media:** A preliminary listing of at least 5 potential independent media serving public interest in each country (national, regional or local; public, commercial or community) to be considered as beneficiary media for the project, taking into account the media's profiles and the locations (if it is a regional or local media outlet) where they are situated vis-à-vis refugee populations in those locations.
 - iii. **Key duty bearers,** such as media regulators, national and local authorities related to media policy or practice.

2.3 Prepare and submit to UNESCO a report on the "Preliminary assessment for phase II of the JFIT project – Support for Ukrainian Refugees through Media." The report shall comprise of approximately 6-page (1,600 words minimum and 2,500 words maximum) Word document, excluding annexes and attachments, written in English, at proficiency level. UNESCO has the right to request two rounds of feedback and revision of the complete report.

3. Deliverables and Timeline:

3.1 To this end, the Contractor shall submit:

- a.) A report (following specifications in section 2.3) summarizing the results of the assessment activities (listed in section 2.2) with formatted sections as follows, structured by country:
 - Media landscape
 - Assessment of host-country media and its refugee media coverage
 - Evaluation of information needs and accessibility for Ukrainian refugees
 - Feedback on the project's reception
 - Stakeholder mapping: This list should feature the name of each entity along with a concise description of their portfolio, including the rationale for selection based on 2.2 e.
- b.) Annex with list of institutions the Contractor engaged with for the assessment and their contact details (name of focal point, title, organization, phone number, and email.).

3.2 The work shall be conducted within 6 weeks from the signature of the contract.

3.3 The report should be submitted by 8 January 2024.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Deadline:

Interested organizations should send the documents below in one email mentioning "Preliminary assessment for phase II - Support for Ukrainian Refugees through Media" in the subject, to masprojects@unesco.org on or before 14 November 2023, 6 p.m. CEST.

1. A short proposal for the assignment, of a maximum of 800 words including the following elements:
 - a. Organization's capacity and expertise to conduct the assessment;
 - b. Relevant experience in the organization of similar activities;
 - c. Profiles of researchers to be involved;
 - d. Proposed approach and schedule of activities;
 - e. Proposed budget expressed in USD for the assignment.
2. Samples or Links to previous work of similar type

Only applications providing the above-requested information will be considered.

Please note that until the Contractor has been selected and the contract formally signed by UNESCO, the Organization is not subject to any commitment towards any potential contractor.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.