**Terms of Reference for communication expert**

**to elaborate the Behavior Change Communication Strategy and Action Plan Framework on reducing dietary risk factors (salt, sugar and trans-fat) of main non-communicable diseases**

# **General data**

The Healthy Life project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and is implemented by the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) in Moldova. The first phase of the Healthy Life Project took place during the years 2016-2020. In the second phase, the project is continuing to support the Ministry of Health and, in close collaboration with national partners to prevent the major non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through modern health promotion and improvement the quality of medical services for NCDs patients. The second phase of the project was initiated in October 2020 and will last until 2024.

The vision of the “Healthy Life Project to Reduce the Burden of NCDs” is that Moldova achieves its 2030 UHC and health related SDG targets, and that its people enjoy greater health and wellbeing. Following this vision, the goal of the project is to contribute to the improvement of the health status of the Moldovan population, especially in rural areas through the reduction of the burden of NCDs.

Three outcomes are defined to archive this goal:

* **Outcome 1:** National health institutions promote WHO best buys and work in an evidence-based and multisectoral manner to increase health literacy of the population
* **Outcome 2**: Quality integrated services, underpinned by regulations and education of service providers, improve the prevention and management of NCDs
* **Outcome 3**: People take responsibility for their own health, demand their rights, and hold decision-makers to account for reaching even the most vulnerable NCD patients

The Republic of Moldova still ranks among the countries with the highest burden of NCDs, expressed by the high overall morbidity and mortality of the population, which is the highest in the European region. Major noncommunicable diseases (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer) are responsible for 87% of all deaths. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of NCDs prevention, given that 90% of people who died from this infection suffered from NCDs.

NCDs are associated with the four known risk factors: behavioral, physiological, genetic, unchangeable. Strategies to reduce behavioral risk factors can prevent up to 80% of premature deaths from cardiovascular disease and diabetes and up to 40% from cancer. The estimates made by the Institute for Health Metric Sand Evaluation (IHME) show that the highest burden of disease in the Republic of Moldova is caused by high systolic blood pressure, dietary risks or unhealthy diet and tobacco use, followed by high BMI, alcohol, and higher fasting plasma glucose.

To date the Healthy Life Project in partnership with the National Agency for Public Health (NAPH) and other national partners facilitated the development and supported the running of three Communication Campaigns on nutrition titled "Choose what you eat!". These campaigns addressed the following issues: in 2019 the excessive salt consumption, in 2020 – the excessive consumption of trans fats, and in 2021 – the excessive sugar consumption, and their damage to health, especially its contribution to the emergence and development of NCDs.

The three communication campaigns were of an informative and sensitizing nature and were carried out at national level for the general public. The main communication channels that were emphasized were the national media and social networks. However, as the Healthy Life Project also facilitates health promotion activities at community and individual level, it is important that these CCs are also implemented at these levels, involving the relevant local actors (e.g. the health sector, education, industry, HoReCa, trade, etc.).

In this regards, the HLP is looking for the communication expert, with experience in social marketing, to develop a Behavior Change Communication Strategy (BCCS) on reducing dietary risk factors of the main NCDs (salt, sugar and trans-fat) at raion/community level as an extension of the 3 national information campaigns titled "Choose what you eat!", a three year (2022-2024) Action Plan Framework for its implementation, and a training/capacity building component.

**General objective:**

To develop a Behavior Change Communication Strategy and Action Plan Framework, as well as the contents for a training workshop, on reducing dietary risk factors of the main NCDs (salt, sugar and trans-fat) at raion/community level with the generic "Choose what you eat!". To work in an iterative manner with NAPH (central and decentralized structures), District Public Health Councils, inclusively LPA and other local actors, and the Healthy Life Project.

**Specific objectives:**

1. To develop the BCC Strategy titled “Choose what you eat!”, based on the principles of social marketing, to share it with the actors concerned for feedback and then finalise.
2. To develop the Action Plan Framework for the BCC Strategy implementation for years 2022 – 2024 with the following key characteristics (4P):
3. product (key benefits, service / behavior change);
4. price (costs of stopping unhealthy behavior or adopting a healthy one, which can be in the form of money, time, opportunity, energy, effort, psychological factors, etc.);
5. place, time (situations in which the target audience can adapt the behavior of changes for health or obtain any other tangible goods / services necessary for the newly adapted behavior);

d) promotion channels and techniques.

1. To strengthen the National Agency for Public Health and Territorial Public Health Councils Members capacities on developing the Action Plans based on the BCCS in 8 districts as a component part of the District NCD Prevention Action Plans based on Heath Profiles.

**Deliverables:**

1. The BCCS strategy titled “Choose what you eat!”, based on the principles of social marketing comprising description of techniques (ex: public relations, events, sponsors, interactive marketing (social-media), sales promotion (samples, contests, discount coupons. etc.) and communication channels (traditional and non-traditional channels), suggestions for adapting existing messages and new messengers. (5 days).
2. The Action Plan Framework of the BCCS strategy implementation comprising 4P (product, price, place, promotion) in connection with the National Program on NCDs. The Action Plan Framework of the BCCS strategy should allow the adaptation for 8 Action Plans for each district, based on the District Health Profiles. (5 days)
3. Teaching materials and implementation of five training workshops to strengthen the National Agency for Public Health and Territorial Public Health Councils Members capacities on developing District NCD Prevention Action Plans based on Heath Profiles for staff from the 8 districts in question. (5 days)

**Timeline and level of effort:**

It is anticipated that up to 15 work days will be required for this assignment. The work should be completed by the end of Q1 of 2022.

**Required profile:**

* University degree in communication, sociology, public health or related field.
* At least 10 years’ experience in development and implementation communication campaigns.
* At least 1 experience in the elaboration strategy and plan communication based on social marketing principles.
* At least 1-year experience in teaching materials development experience.
* Analytical, synthetical skills and ability to produce high quality strategy, plans and reports.
* Experience in monitoring and evolution of communication programs.
* Knowledge of the field of health sector or public health, in particular the health promotion.
* Strong interpersonal, teamwork and organizational skills.

**Reporting Arrangements:**

The consultants will work closely with the Communication and Health Promotion experts (Mrs. Lilia Onea and Mr. Constantin Rimis) and will report to the local project manager (Mrs. Ala Curteanu) and to the Swiss TPH in Basel (Mrs. Helen Prytherch and Mrs. Florence Secula).