

0. Terms of Reference

Support for the implementation of the Project “Georgia - Water and Health” by a Local Representative of the implementing partners

1. Financing

Funder: European Union (700001965)

Co-financing: Expertise France

2. Procedure

EF procurement rules

3. Contracting authority

International Office for Water (OiEau)

4. Nature of contract

Fee-based service contract

5. Indicative period of implementation

2 December 2024 – 31 July 2027

6. Service Parameters

Maximum number of working days for the overall period:480

Estimated budget for the service: 120 000 €

7. Background information

Context

Water especially is a key resource for sustainable economic and social development in Georgia. Effective water management is critical for economic resilience, people's well-being and sustainable livelihoods. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted water's significant role in ensuring health and future economic recovery. Growing pressures on water resources and poor water use efficiency increasingly affect the availability of water and its quality.

With support from the European Union (EU), its Member States and other donors, water management in Georgia has increasingly integrated climatic, environmental, economic, and social considerations. Several Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries are in the process of aligning their water sector policies and practices with the general principles and more specific requirements of the European Union (EU) Water Framework Directive (WFD), as well as other water-related directives and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Georgia has good water resources fed by mountain rivers draining from the Greater and Lesser Caucasus and there is no systemic shortage of water. However, these resources are unequally distributed between the western and eastern parts of Georgia (the Black Sea Basin Rivers having more abundant overall flows and a denser river network).

Still, the country struggles with a variety of water-related challenges: insufficient water supply and sanitation systems, industrial pollution (particularly downstream of Tbilisi and of the industrial district of Rustavi and Gardabani), coastal pollution of the Black Sea, flood risks and growing water demand from the agriculture (irrigation) and energy sectors. In addition comes the impact of climate change, which shows changes in precipitation (e.g. less snow, more frequent floods and droughts). Georgia has committed to reform water policies and practices as part of the Association Agreement signed with the European Union that entered into force in July 2016. In 2023, Georgia has been granted candidate status.

As a new Georgian water law passed in summer 2023, necessary by-laws and organisational analysis will be needed to facilitate its implementation. As such, thematic issues related to health and environment in bathing and drinking water will need to be specifically addressed in coherence with the Association Agreement and taking into account EU acquis in these sectors.

Georgia is a Party to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and carries out works to bring the legislation and administrative mechanisms in line with the principles established by the Convention and other international obligations.

The government, in cooperation with UNECE, is taking active steps to develop a national system to apply Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures. The work on the Health Impact Assessment is ongoing; the development of the third phase of the Environment and Health Action Plan 2022-2027 (NEHAP) is expected to start. One of the remaining challenges, which requires further support, is the efficiency of the healthcare system in tackling environmental health issues. The country is missing a comprehensive national plan for lead containing substances necessary for ensuring safety for human health and environment. If the magnitude of the issue is now well-known, a comprehensive policy to tackle this issue is still missing. In particular, public action is needed for linking efficient early systematic detection, preventive actions and a robust public health tracking system.

Objectives and outputs

The project "Georgia - Water and Health" aims to operationalise several key mechanisms to preserve natural resources, thus improving people's wellbeing in the partner countries while enabling countries' green growth in line with the European Green Deal and a post-COVID-19 green recovery. This will contribute towards longer-term environmental, climatic, and socio-economic resilience, and improved human health and wellbeing, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Project's specific objectives are:

- SO1 – Better capacity to monitor, analyse and regulate water quality and quantity
- SO2 – Efficiency of the healthcare system reinforced in tackling environmental health issues

These specific objectives will be addressed in different sub-chapters, which are detailed as follows:

Specific objective 1

- Development of ground water quality and quantity monitoring programme (expansion of monitoring network and installation of monitoring stations);
- Supply of chemical and biological laboratory equipment necessary for better analysis of water quality and relevant trainings provided;
- Upgrading of Water Information System of Georgia;
- Enhancement of regular water flow measurements through deployment of automatic water level monitoring system and field expeditions;
- Development of gender equality and social inclusion checklist to improve water resources management;
- Strengthen gender equality and social inclusion awareness of the NEA and other involved agencies on the impact of water quality on people's health. Conduct capacity building on gender mainstreaming in environmental programmes;
- Development of environmental public health tracking capacities, which could include surveillance of lead poisoning/lead biomonitoring, waterborne diseases and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) in child care, education and medical facilities;
- Activities to strengthen the health and environment sector capacities for effective implementation of EU acquis in the field of bathing and drinking water quality monitoring, assessment and management;
- Support in the implementation of the Marine Environment Strategy including in the framework of the 4th National Programme of Environmental Protection Actions of Georgia for 2022-2026 (NEAP-4);
- Support in the preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for projects of Basin Management Plans that have been / will be developed;
- Support in the development of the methodology on water protection strips and updating of relevant by-laws

Specific objective 2

- Development of national programmes/plans for lead containing substances to ensure safety for human health and environment.

Organisation of implementation

The project is financed by the European Union Delegation under the EU Green Connectivity Programme for Georgia. It will be implemented by Umweltbundesamt GmbH (also called "UBA" or "Environment Agency Austria"), Expertise France (EF) and International Office for Water (OiEau, France).

The main target group of the Project in the country is composed of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA), the National Environmental Agency (NEA), the National Food Agency (NFA), the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoH) and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

The planned implementation period for the project is 2nd December, 2024 until 31st July, 2027.

The International Office for Water (hereinafter – the Contracting Authority) shall contract an experienced expert (hereinafter – the Contractor) as the Local Representative of the Implementing Partners' team in the country for the implementation of the Project.

8. Scope of works

Purpose

The expert will act as the Local Representative of the Implementing Partners' team in the country for the Project and will support the implementation of the Project by providing water, environment and environmental health management expertise on substantive strategic and operational matters. He/she will assist national and international experts in the preparation and during their missions, support preparation of ToR for national activities, prepare and organise specific high-level events, and supervise contracts. The Contractor will ensure close cooperation with the Implementing Partners (project managers and thematic leads) and with the EU Delegation. He/she will liaise closely with the beneficiaries and other national authorities, in particular with the National Focal Points (NFP), as well as relevant national and international stakeholders. The Contractor will coordinate with other national and international water sector projects, and thereby contribute to the successful implementation of the Project.

Scope of work

Task 1: Provide support to the Project management and coordination in the country:

- Represent the implementing partners in the country, by liaising with the EU Delegation and establishing links with the beneficiaries and other national authorities, in particular with the National Focal Points (NFP) and Beneficiaries' Thematic Leads, as well as relevant national and international stakeholders.
- Assist in the organisation, including participation of national representatives, of any physical or virtual meetings, workshops, trainings or webinars, national or local, and thereby contribute to the execution and efficiency of the Project.
- Assist in the substantive and strategic conceptualisation and organisation of relevant meetings in the country, including support to the determination of appropriate timing, focus areas, agenda development, speakers and participants. Additionally, provide support to preparation of appropriate press release and communication, and summary record development and approval.
- Ensure proper coordination with projects and activities in the country led by other actors and donors in the water and the environmental health sectors.
- Attend meetings outside the country at the request of the Implementing Partners.

Task 2: Provide support to the implementation of all activities under both Specific Objectives. To implement this task, the Contractor will in particular:

- Liaise regularly with, and provide substantive and strategic advice and logistical and technical support to the beneficiaries via the Ministries' National Focal Point (NFP) and other stakeholders.
- Provide assistance to, and cooperate with the Project and project managers, thematic leaders, international experts of the EU MS consortium before, during and after their missions and online meetings.
- Provide input to the formulation of technical specifications for service or supply contracts.
- Support the contracting of national experts or companies and coordinate, supervise and support their work, including carrying out quality checks and needed corrective action.
- Contribute to assuring good quality of analytical studies, data collection and field work.
- Support the organisation of national and international missions, workshops, training courses, etc.
- Provide substantive and strategic reviews and comments, providing a local-context on key documents produced by the beneficiary and Implementing Partners or their sub-contractors.

More specifically, the candidate should be familiar with its country's institutional arrangements, strategic priorities and organisation and with European principles regarding the topics supported, for example:

- Strategies and participative planning development and implementation at national, basin (districts and transboundary), and local scales.
- Monitoring and related laboratory analysis.
- Economic analysis and financing.
- Shared Environmental Information Systems.

Task 3: Provide support to stakeholder involvement and public communication:

- Work with and support the communication and visibility team, notably the C&V Leader, of the Implementing Partners to ensure adequate implementation of the Project's Communication and Visibility Plan, and facilitate the visibility of the EU, the Implementing Partners in line with EU communication and visibility requirements and national-level priorities.
- Assist in the organisation of local and international events and participate there, if requested by the Project Manager.
- Support public relations and recurrent visibility measures by:
 - taking photographs and videos with e.g. own mobile phone;
 - selecting pertinent information to be shared on social networks;
 - drafting short briefs for e-news;
 - ensuring visibility of the EU, the implementing partners, and the donors of the Project, in line with EU communication and visibility requirements.
- Share information online on the country specific areas dedicated to the project.

Task 4: Project organisation and administration:

Regularly interact and coordinate with the Project and project managers of the implementing partners and thematic leads.

- Provide regular reports to the Contracting Authority through:
 - monthly activity reports with time sheets;
 - substantive inputs to, and comments on work package development, work plans, the Project's progress and final reports.
- Ensure trustful relationships and clear receipts vis-à-vis financial issues, including petty cash.
- Support project registration, where required, with public authorities in the country.
- Provide occasional interpretation and translation between the local language and English:
 - for international experts during technical meetings;
 - quality assurance of any translation that may be requested into or from the national language.
- Provide support to the project's sub-regional administrative assistant and those of the Implementing Partners, as needed.

9. Working modalities

Location of services

The Project will be based in Tbilisi, but national and international travel is expected and required according to project requirements and rules, including on its reimbursement.

Assignment schedule

The assignment is expected to start in December 2024 and will end in July 2027. All final documents, reports, time sheets, invoices, etc. must be provided by 31 August 2027.

Input

The Consultant will be contracted on a part-time basis for an average of 12- 15 work days per month with a maximum of 480 days over the entire project period.

Management

The Local Representative will work under supervision of the Project Manager (UBA) and coordinate with the Implementing Partners' Project Managers and thematic leaders towards a sound implementation of all outputs in Georgia. The Contracting Authority will guide contract administration.

The main counterpart on the side of the beneficiary are the National Focal Point(s) (NFP) at the concerned Ministries. On the side of the Implementing Partner it is the Project Manager.

All correspondence and documents related to these services must be written in English.

The Local Representative must personally provide the services. Subcontracting one or more parts of the contracted services is not allowed.

Work environment

The Local Representative must provide all means and technical equipment (e.g. hardware like laptop and mobile phone, software) necessary for the successful implementation of the services. She/he can also use office room and equipment at sub-regional offices.

Deliverables

The contractor will contribute inter alia to the progress reports of the Project and will produce monthly activity reports with time sheets.

Other deliverables may be defined on an ad-hoc basis by the implementing partners.

Payment

Payment will be made by the Contracting Authority to the Consultant in regular intervals after successful execution of the work and will be subject to acceptance of the results. Payments will be made by OiEau upon receipt of invoices with supporting documents/time-sheets.

10. Application

Interested parties (both individual and legal entities) are invited to download the full tender dossier free of charge from our website at <https://eu-oieau.synapse-consult.com>. This platform should be used for all communications with OiEau.

Your Proposal, consisting of the technical offer and the financial offer must be submitted on the digital platform for tender submissions at <https://eu-oieau.synapse-consult.com> no later than 12.00 noon (CET) on 15 November 2024.

For any assistance in using the platform, please contact support@synapse-consult.com.

This tender follows Expertise France's procurement rules. The contract will be awarded based on the best price-quality ratio.

11. Award of the contract

This invitation does not commit OiEau to contract the services announced. OiEau can withdraw from this call at any given time. In no event shall OiEau be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a tender procedure.

The awarding or non-awarding of the contract does not preclude the application or (non-)awarding for any similar tender under this Project.