

## Focal Points (FP) – Terms of Reference

### A: Background

In 2006, the Hellenic Government and UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC), through the project *Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform (RCPAR)*, entered into a partnership to advance public sector reform in the region of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This joint venture is based on substantive convergence in terms of programmatic objectives and obvious complementarities in terms of operational infrastructure and capacities.

The RCPAR aims to act as the hub of a regional network of Public Administration Reform (PAR) practitioners and experts from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). As launched at its first meeting in Alexandroupolis, Greece on 20-21 November 2006, the network consisted of the Focal Points inherited from the United Nations Thessaloniki Centre for Public Service Professionalism (UNTC), as well as of the members of UNDP's Regional Community of Practice on Public Administration Reform and Anti-Corruption (UNDP staff members). The Meeting succeeded in initiating a dialogue on a number of issues, which were subsequently addressed in the "*First Survey of Potential Assistance Needs in the Participating Countries*", administered to the network in January 2007. Twenty-four out of thirty countries in the region provided their input, and the survey was completed at the end of March 2007. The recommendations resulting from the survey are available on [http://www.rcpar.org/public/rw/resource/RCPARdocuments/3\\_20070730\\_cpar\\_survey\\_report.pdf](http://www.rcpar.org/public/rw/resource/RCPARdocuments/3_20070730_cpar_survey_report.pdf) and have also been distributed (in August 2007) to network members for comments.

### B: The Structure of the Network: National Coordinators and Focal Points

In the project's second phase, starting in January 2008, the Project aims at further enhancing regional cooperation and supporting transfers of knowledge in the region, among other to enable the development of a demand-driven program. In order to achieve these goals, the RCPAR relies on a considerable expansion of its current network of PAR practitioners and experts, in government, academia and non-governmental organizations throughout the region.

In each country, there will be a National Coordinator, normally a government institution with an actual mandate to coordinate PAR efforts. In short, the National Coordinator will have an overall responsibility for coordinating inputs and ideas for activities, and ensure that proposals emanating from the country are in line with government priorities.

In addition to the National Coordinator, RCPAR aims to establish a number of Focal Points in each country, with a mandate and/or proven expertise in one of the four thematic clusters: [a]

policy-making and coordination; [b] financial management; [c] organisation and staffing; and [d] service delivery.

For each of the four clusters, RCPAR seeks to identify up to 10 individuals – two per topic - representing relevant government departments, and minimum one representative of non-governmental organizations, including academic institutions and think tanks. All Focal Points are expected to coordinate their input with the National Coordinator, with the aim of reaching an agreement on proposals for activities put forward on behalf of the country.

For a full list of topics under each thematic cluster, as well as a description of the type of potential focal point sought for each topic, see appendix 1.

### **C: Tasks**

Specifically, the tasks of the Focal Points shall be as follows:

- Participating in the relevant thematic knowledge network - the so-called Community of Practice (CoP) - and actively engaging in discussions on topics of shared interest, conducted through virtual forums, electronic mail groups and annual face-to-face meetings. Specifically, the FPs are encouraged to:
  - suggest and/or provide input to the formulation of specific program activities or substantive knowledge products within their specific area of expertise;
  - post online requests for advice or assistance from other members of the network or from the RCPAR secretariat, and contribute to responding to other members' requests where relevant;
- Assisting in the collection of data and other background material on public administration reform in their specific area of expertise, in particular for the annual RCPAR regional survey and the online documentation centre;
- Participating in the preparation and implementation of relevant project activities such as workshops, training seminars and conferences organized by RCPAR in their areas of competence; and
- Contributing to the development and maintenance of the RCPAR Electronic Roster of Experts by forwarding names and profiles of suitable candidates to the RCPAR and vet the application of these candidates upon request;
- Assisting in continually promoting and enhancing the knowledge networks, with the aim of making them as effective as possible in promoting technical cooperation and exchanges among countries in the region.

In carrying out the above tasks, the Focal Points will contribute to shaping the program and activities of the RCPAR and ensuring their relevance vis-à-vis the needs identified in the respective countries and in the region as a whole. The Focal Points will furthermore have

privileged access to information from neighboring countries. They will benefit from multi-directional communication and exchanges, both in terms of learning from the experiences of other institutions and countries, and in marketing own success stories and their specialized expertise.

#### **D: Profile/Qualifications**

A Focal Point shall per definition be a governmental, academic or non-governmental institution with sound knowledge and proven expertise in one or more topic within of the four thematic clusters: [a] policy-making and coordination; [b] financial management; [c] organisation and staffing; and [d] service delivery.

In the case of governmental Focal Points, the institution shall preferably have a clear mandate to work directly on one or more topic within the relevant thematic cluster (See also appendix 1).

The Focal Point shall appoint a contact person and a deputy who will both function as ex-officio members of the network.

The contact person(s) and his/her deputy shall hold positions relevant to the given thematic cluster, and they shall have a sound knowledge of one or more of the topic within the relevant cluster. In addition, they must be able to commit to participation on behalf of their institution. In case the contact persons change position, or are no longer able to participate in the network, an adequate replacement from the same institution shall be proposed in advance.

Ideally, the Focal Point's position within government or society will allow for interaction and consultation with other institutions or colleagues working in related fields. Ability and willingness to network with others, to solicit and provide information, to exchange views and to engage in cross-institutional and cross-country communication are important qualities for all Focal Point.

English is the vehicular language of RCPAR, and although efforts are currently underway to include a Russian language facility, all interaction shall primarily take place in English. The contact person(s) representing the Focal Point must have a good command of the language, both written and spoken. Experience from participating in virtual forums and on line discussions are an additional advantage.

## Appendix 1: Overview of thematic clusters, topics and potential Focal Points

1.	NATIONAL COORDINATOR	2	A representative and a deputy from the authority responsible for PAR coordination (central unit of ministry, if any)
2.	POLICY-MAKING & COORDINATION	1	A representative from a non-governmental organisation/academic institution/think tank with overall expertise in this thematic cluster
2.1	Policy-making & Strategic Planning	2	Two representatives from policy units (or legislative offices) in ministries, ideally one from a horizontal, and the other from a line ministry
2.2	Policy Coordination	2	A representative and a deputy from the Government Secretariat (if there is a policy analysis/ policy coordination unit, from that unit)
2.3	Policy-making in EU integration	2	A representative and a deputy from the CoG structure/Ministry responsible for coordinating EU integration
2.4	Policy Coordination (other areas)	2	A representative from any authority in charge of coordinating national development or anticorruption strategies.
3.	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	1	A representative from a non-governmental organisation/academic institution/think tank with overall expertise in this thematic cluster
3.1	Budget Preparation	2	A representative and a deputy from the budget department of the Ministry of Finance, Treasury or the like)
3.2	Budget Execution	2	A representative and a deputy from the budget execution/Treasury department at the Ministry of Finance, Treasury or the like)
3.3	Public Internal Financial Control	2	A representative and a deputy from the central harmonization unit/budget inspectorate (usually at the Ministry of Finance, Treasury or the like)
3.4	Public Procurement	2	A representative from the authority in charge of setting procurement policy and standards; the same from the procurement review body
3.4	External Audit	2	A representative and a deputy from the Supreme Audit Institution of the country, if it has been established
4.	ORGANISATION & STAFFING	1	A representative from a non-governmental organisation/academic institution/think tank with overall expertise in this thematic cluster
4.1	Organization	2	A representative and a deputy from the Ministry in charge of the legislative bases of the PA (PA or Justice portfolio, could also be the same under point 1)
4.2	Civil Service System	2	A representative and a deputy from the central personnel unit (civil service agency, unit at a ministry of public administration, interior or finance)
4.3	Human Resources Management	2	Two representatives from the HR units (or general services sector) of two of the largest ministries or other organizations
4.4	Human Resources Development	2	A representative and a deputy from the national training institution (if there is none, could be the same as under point 11)
4.5	Integrity Frameworks (for PA)	2	In principle, these should be the same persons under points 4 and 11. A representative and a deputy from an ombudsman institution could be added.
5.	SERVICE DELIVERY	1	A representative from a non-governmental organisation/academic institution/think tank with overall expertise in this thematic cluster
5.1	Administrative Procedure	2	One representative of the ministry responsible for general public administration (e.g. an administrative inspector), and an administrative judge or equivalent
5.2	Administrative Simplification	2	If there is a central unit dealing with general policy at the CoG or a ministry, two staff from that unit. Otherwise, two relevant persons from the economy portfolio
5.3	Total Quality Management	2	If there is a central unit dealing with general policy at the CoG or a ministry, two staff from that unit. Otherwise, two persons from institutions implementing TQM
5.4	e-Government	2	A Government IT unit representative (if there is one) or ministry responsible for ICT infrastructure, and from any Information Society or similar institution
5.5	Decentralization	2	A representative and a deputy from the ministry in charge of supervision over local government (e.g. ministry of local government, interiors, etc.)
5.6	Public Private Partnerships	2	Two representatives from the main line ministries in charge of national infrastructures (e.g. Transport, Communications, Health, etc.).