



TERMS OF REFERENCE

International and National Consultants to conduct Final Evaluation of the Moldova Energy and Biomass Project

This Project is financed by the European Union,
co-financed and implemented by United Nations Development Programme

Job title:	Team of 1 International and 1 National Consultants to undertake the Independent Final Evaluation of the Moldova Energy and Biomass Project
Reference to the project:	“Moldova Energy and Biomass Project”
Contract type:	Individual Contract (IC)
Contract duration:	September - November 2014
Expected Workload:	International Consultant – 25 days of consultancy, incl. 2 missions to Moldova National Consultant – 20 days of consultancy

A. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Moldova is highly dependent on energy imports. Over 95% of Moldova’s energy needs are ensured through imports. The dependency on the external sources of energy has led to a constant rise in price for energy and to accumulation of large debts for external provider. The energy sector is a key sector for the economy of the Republic of Moldova, being vital for the successful implementation of the national economic development program.

The Government has committed itself to reform the energy sector by increasing the energy security of the country, attracting investments in infrastructure, and participating in an energy market based on equitability principles and mutual advantages. The Republic of Moldova has a great potential to produce energy from renewable sources, which at the present time has not yet been harnessed. Studies show that one of the most secure and easy to access alternative sources of energy is straw and other agricultural wastes, called biomass. In particular, wheat straw waste is the Republic of Moldova's renewable energy source with the biggest short- to medium-term potential.

The Moldova Energy and Biomass Project (MEBP) is a 4 years, 14.56 M EUR project that started in January 2011 with the purpose to significantly increase the use of renewable energy technology through fuel switching and energy efficiency. The project primarily focuses on improving heating comfort levels in rural public sector buildings including schools and community centers by using readily available agricultural wastes supplied from local agricultural enterprises and solid biofuel producers. The project is also stimulating local markets for improved household heating; piloting industrial cogeneration, and biomass-based briquetting/pelleting, as well as raising local capacity in the biomass sector, and promoting the benefits of biomass energy and the project.

Brief description of the project to be evaluated

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to a more secure, competitive and sustainable energy production in the Republic of Moldova through a targeted support to the most viable and readily available local source of renewable energy, namely biomass from agricultural wastes.

The project consists of four inter-related outputs as follows:

Output 1: Municipal biomass heating and fuel supply markets established.

Activities under the output 1 aim to improve municipal heating of public buildings in rural areas and establish related fuel supply markets. Under this output, about 130 thermal heating systems primarily burning straw and other types of agricultural wastes for the provision of heating for public buildings in rural communities in Moldova (activity 1.1) were built. Supporting this, market mechanisms were used to support the involvement of local fuel suppliers to prepare, store and supply the fuel needed for the installed heating plants (activity 1.2). Very focused low-cost actions on policy, regulation, and contracting to support the market environment are making a third, minor output under this component (activity 1.3).

Output 2: Foundations laid for establishment of efficient household heating, industrial cogeneration and biomass briquetting markets.

Under this output three emerging technology options for biomass energy in Moldova, are to be assessed, developed, and piloted. Activity 2.1 focuses on domestic heating in rural areas, addressing the need for improved efficiency of heating and possibly cooking. Activity 2.2 has to support the deployment of industrial cogeneration based on feed stocks from agri-industry. Activity 2.3 pilots and demonstrates biomass briquetting.

Output 3: Capacity for growth of biomass markets at regional and local levels is built in Moldova

Output 3 aims to ensure that the benefits of biomass energy demonstrated and deployed under outputs 1 and 2 are delivered in a lasting and long-term way and that local capacities for further replication are ensured. For each stakeholder type to be reached under output 3, the first step was the development of training materials, to be placed in the public domain. These materials, updated and improved each year, provide an accessible repository of key information, and are used either in the training to be delivered under outputs 1 & 2 or in sub-activities under output 3. The stakeholders targeted include: municipal management including mayors, civil servants, and teachers; boiler operators; fuel suppliers; and school children as detailed below. Given the significant budget support and cooperation between the EC (and other donors), and the national authorities in the energy sector, including in policy and legislation for renewable energy, this project is not seeking to address renewable energy policy and related capacities directly, apart from the very specific and targeted activities that have been described under Activity 1.3 above.

Output 4: The opportunities and benefits of biomass energy for Moldova are well known locally, and visibility of project results promoted

Output 4 facilitates widespread dissemination on the general and specific advantages and impacts of using biomass energy in Moldova and promotes the visibility of the partnership and impact of the action. Under activity 4.1 a media campaign is implemented at national and local levels focusing on raising awareness on benefits and best practices related to the use of renewable energy. An annually organized National Awards on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, under activity 4.2., rewards the most active and valuable promoters and beneficiaries of energy produced from renewable sources and encourages new initiatives on renewable energy and energy efficiency. It operates on an annual basis during the project lifetime, and afterwards will be taken over by the designated Government institutions, under high-level patronage, and with the support of external sponsors. Special emphasis is put on continuously communicating and giving publicity to the results obtained within the project, and on promoting the impact of joint actions of Government of the RM – UNDP – EU and national/ local partners.

B. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the Evaluation is to review the progress made by the project in fulfilling its agreed objectives through the planned activities and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used to generate results and achieve project objectives with special emphasis on impact and sustainability.

The *overall objectives* of evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, help identify and critically analyze the relevance of the project activities, as well as, the effectiveness of the implementation. The comprehensive evaluation will examine whether the activities, outputs and objectives outlined in project document have been achieved, and underlying factors affecting either positively or negatively the

implementation of the project, draw lessons and make forward-looking recommendations for improvement of the sustainability of benefits obtained from the project.

The UNDP Country Office (hereinafter UNDP CO) accordingly will make use of the exercise as a learning opportunity for the office and key partners and stakeholders, as inclusively and practically possible. In particular, the findings and recommendations generated by the evaluation should inform the implementation and targeting of activities planned for the next stage of the project (planned for October 2014 – September 2017).

C. GENERAL TERMS OF EVALUATION AND PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation of project will be conducted by one International Consultant and one National Consultant, working together as a team. The International Consultant will take the leadership and assume overall responsibility for the quality and timeliness in the performance of this assignment.

The Evaluation should mainly concentrate on the following categories of analysis and evaluation criteria: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.**

Relevance: the degree to which the purpose of the MEBP remains valid and pertinent.

Efficiency: the productivity of the implementation process - how good and how cost efficient was the process of transforming inputs into outputs and outcomes.

Effectiveness: a measure of the extent to which the MEBP has contributed to achieve its results through an effective use of resources.

Sustainability – to what extent are the MEBP project results sustainable, taking into consideration the existing capacity, structures and political context in the country?

Impact: to what degree did the project contribute to the development of sustainable energy production market in the country?

In principal, the evaluation is expected to address the following issues:

I. Project outcome status:

Project outcome Analysis – what and how much progress has been made towards the achievement of the outcome (including contributing factors and constraints)?

Underlying factors: Analyze the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influenced the outcome. Distinguish the substantive design issues from the key implementation and/or management capacities and issues including the timeliness of outputs, the degree of stakeholders and partners' involvement in the completion of outputs, and how processes were managed/ carried out.

II. Outputs status:

Output Analysis – Were the outputs (project components) relevant to the overall project outcome? Were the outputs achieved? What are the factors that affected either positively or negatively the accomplishment of the outputs?

III. Activities status:

Analysis of activities - Were the activities to achieve the outputs effective and efficient?

How well the activities were planned and implemented? Were key methodologies and approaches that facilitate the success of the project and delivery of necessary outputs appropriate? Were gender equality principles taken into consideration in the delivery and of key project outputs, i.e. were both men and women involved in design, implementation and ensuring the sustainability of project results in target localities, did women and men benefit equally from the project interventions?

IV. Inputs status:

Inputs Analysis - what contribution has been made by UNDP and implementing partners to the progress towards the implementation of activities and achievement of the output and outcome? How appropriate were the inputs? Were the inputs sufficient to achieve the results? How cost effective they were?

Partnership strategy: Ascertain whether UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. What were the partnerships formed? What was the role of UNDP? How did the partnership contribute to the achievement of the outcome? What was the level of stakeholders' participation?

Cross-cutting issues - Sustainability: assess the likelihood that the projects results will endure after the active involvement of UNDP would end. To what extent the changes (and benefits) brought by the project can be expected to last after its completion. The evaluation team should provide recommendations for potential follow-up interventions, how feasible the follow-up actions would be, what alternatives can be identified and/or what components can be added to it, what knowledge products could be developed.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. An overall guidance on project evaluation methodology can be found in the *UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results (Annex A)*. The evaluators should come up with a suitable methodology for the evaluation of this intervention based on the guidance given therein.

During the evaluation, the evaluators are expected to apply the following participatory and consultative approaches for data collection and analysis:

- Desk review of relevant documents (project documents with amendments made, review reports - midterm/final, donor-specific, etc.);
- Discussions with the Senior Management and programme staff of UNDP Country Office;
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP, EU Delegation and the Government, as well as with other donors and partners;
- Interviews with partners and stakeholders (including gathering the information on what the partners have achieved with regard to the outcome and what strategies they have used);
- Field visits to selected project sites and discussions with project beneficiaries;
- Consultation meetings.

Interviews will be held with the following key partners, organizations and individuals at a minimum:

- *EU Delegation to Rep. of Moldova*
- *UNDP Moldova CO*
- *Ministry of Economy*
- *Energy Efficiency Agency*
- *Ministry of Agriculture*
- *Ministry of Education*
- *Energy Institute, (Academy of Science)*
- *Local Public Authorities*
- *Managers of public institutions*
- *NGO "Alliance for Energy Efficiency and Renewables"*
- *Biofuel producers*
- *Academia, independent experts*
- *International organizations active in the Energy Efficiency and Renewables sector*

D. COMPOSITION OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The International Consultant will be assisted by a National Consultant in fulfilling the assignment. Members of the evaluation team must not have been associated with the project's formulation, implementation or monitoring.

The International Consultant will undertake two visits to Moldova of minimum 5 days and 2 days respectively. During the first visit the International Consultant will undertake project site visits and interviews with the relevant stakeholders, will collect all necessary evidence and by the end of the visit will present the key findings to UNDP CO. During the second visit, the International Consultant will hold a debriefing session presenting the outcome of the evaluation to UNDP CO and project Implementing Partners. The National Consultant will provide substantive feedback and support to the International Consultant in the construction of the evaluation report and in conducting field missions to Moldova (including field visits to the MEBP project sites).

E. EVALUATIONS'S ETHICS

Evaluations (the review) in UNDP are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (Annex B). The Evaluation team will take every measure to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of key information providers in the collection of data.

F. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

International Consultant

- Lead the evaluation and assume overall responsibility for its quality and timeliness;
- Desk review of documents, development of draft methodology, detailed work plan and Evaluation outline;
- Briefing with UNDP CO, agreement on the methodology, scope and outline of the Evaluation report prior to the first mission;
- Interviews with project implementing partners, relevant government bodies, NGO, independent experts, beneficiaries and donor representatives;
- Field visit to the project site and interviews with local stakeholders;
- Elaboration of a summary key findings based on interviews and site visits performed;
- Debriefing with UNDP and project implementing partner;
- Development and submission of the first Evaluation report draft. The draft will be shared with the UNDP CO, and key project stakeholders for review and commenting;
- Finalization and submission of the final Evaluation report through incorporating suggestions received on the draft report;
- Supervision of the work of the national expert (during entire evaluation period).

National Consultant

- Collection of background materials upon request by International Consultant;
- Provision of important inputs in developing methodologies, work plans and Evaluation report outlines upon request by International Consultant;
- Assistance to the International Consultant in desk review of materials;
- Assistance to the International Consultant in developing the mission agenda and establishing meeting with relevant stakeholders;
- Participation in debriefings with UNDP CO representatives;
- Assistance to the International Consultant in conducting interviews with relevant stakeholders;
- Arranging field visits and assistance to the International Consultant in interviewing local stakeholders at project sites, provision of interpretation in communication with beneficiaries when required;
- Assist the International Consultant in elaboration of a summary matrix of the project implementation key findings based on interviews and site visits performed;
- Participation in briefing with UNDP and project implementing partners;
- Assistance to the International Consultant in developing the first draft of the Evaluation report. The draft will be shared with the UNDP CO, and key project stakeholders for review and commenting;
- Assist the International Consultant in finalization of the Final Evaluation Report.

G. TIMEFRAME

It is expected that the evaluation would be conducted during September - November 2014, over a period of up to 45 days from the commencement of the assignment.

Activity Timeframe:

Activity / Deliverable	Timing
Evaluation methodology and work plan agreed. All relevant input documents reviewed (<u>home based</u>)	7 days after commencement of assignment
<u>First visit to Moldova</u> . Project site visits, interviews with partners and key stakeholders conducted. Summary key findings presented to UNDP CO.	14 days after commencement of assignment
Drafting of the evaluation report (<u>home based</u>)	Period between the first and the second visit to Moldova
<u>Second Visit to Moldova</u> . Presentation of Draft Report. Briefing with UNDP and implementing partners.	35 days after commencement of assignment
Finalization of the evaluation report. Final evaluation report submitted and approved (<u>home based</u>)	45 days after commencement of assignment

H. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The key product expected from this evaluation is a comprehensive analytical report in English that should, as a minimum, include the following contents:

- Executive summary;
- Introduction;
- Description of the evaluation methodology;
- Analysis of the situation with regard to the outcome, the outputs and the partnership strategy;
- Analysis of opportunities to provide guidance for the future programming, incl. concrete recommendations for the second phase of the project;
- Key findings (including best practices and lessons learned);
- Conclusions and recommendations;
- Annexes: ToRs, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL SETTINGS

On operational level, the Consultants will work under the guidance of UNDP CO and under the supervision of the Project Manager for Project-related documentation, administrative and financial aspects.

The payment for services provided by the Consultants will be made according to deliverables completed, and approved by the UNDP.

The International Consultant shall bear all the travel related and subsistence expenses in Moldova. In-country transportation shall be provided by UNDP.

J. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

The International and National Consultants must possess the following qualifications:

International Consultant:

- Master's degree or equivalent in Management, Business Administration, Economy, Engineering, Local Development and/or other relevant fields;

- At least 8 years of work experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (economic, regional and local development, consulting services, private sector and business development, energy efficiency and renewable energy, participatory and sustainable development);
- At least 5 years experience in conducting monitoring and/or evaluation of development projects in the field of economic and energy efficiency/renewable energy field;
- Knowledge and experience with programming development, monitoring and evaluation;
- Excellent analytical and writing skills;
- Excellent spoken and writing skills in English. Knowledge of Russian or Romanian is an advantage;
- Familiarity with development approaches in the energy sector in the region is a strong advantage.

National Consultant:

- University degree in Natural Resource Management, Environmental management, Engineering, Energy, or other related areas;
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience/technical knowledge in providing management or consultancy services to the preferably in Environment, Engineering or Energy sectors;
- Good understanding of Moldovan Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy policies and programmes;
- Previous experience with practical use of monitoring and evaluation methodologies;
- Experience in managing, monitoring and evaluating projects for UN or other international development agencies in the region will be an asset;
- Fluent in English and Romanian both written and spoken. Knowledge of Russian is an advantage

K. REFERENCE MATERIALS

The following documents should be studied by the evaluators:

1. UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results (Annex A)
2. Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (Annex B)
3. UNDP Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) for Moldova (2011, 2012, 2013)
4. MEBP Project Document (Description of Action), draft Project Document for the second phase and relevant progress reports
5. Other official documents and materials related to the domain from the government, donors, etc.

Background documentation is available on www.undp.md; www.gov.md; www.biomasa.md;