



## INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date: 14 July 2015

**Country:** Republic of Moldova

**Description of the assignment:** Team of 1 International and 1 National Consultants to conduct two evaluations:

1. Sustainable local and regional development Outcome Evaluation and
2. Final Evaluation of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme

**Period of assignment/services:** August - October 2015 (International Consultant – 36 days of consultancy, incl. 1 mission to Moldova; National Consultant – 33 days of consultancy)

Proposal should be submitted online by pressing the "Apply Online", no later than July 26, 2015. When applying, please specify the position for which you are submitting your application.

Requests for **clarification only** must be sent by standard electronic communication to the following e-mail: [valeria.ieseanu@undp.org](mailto:valeria.ieseanu@undp.org). UNDP will respond by standard electronic mail and will send written copies of the response, including an explanation of the query without identifying the source of inquiry, to all applicants.

### A. Overall contextual background

Moldova is a low middle-income country in transition with real GDP growth at 4,7 percent during January-September 2014, despite the continued global economic and financial crisis. Moldova's economic growth remains mostly consumption-based, with benefits mainly concentrated to the capital and couple of other cities. This growth is mostly driven by recovering remittances and expanding exports. However, this performance is yet to transform into sizable gains for the whole society. In 2014 however, growth slowed down due to increased economic pressures. The Russian Federation, absorbing almost 30% of Moldovan exports and accounting for over 50% of migrants' remittances, temporarily blocked Moldovan wine and fresh fruit exports, and restricted labour migration contributing to a significant decline of economic growth from 8.9% in 2013 to 4.6% in 2014. The significant depreciation of the Russian ruble contributed to the instability in the volume of remittances in 2014.

This recent growth did little to alleviate the urban-rural divide, as more than 70% of the country's poor reside in rural areas, while the labor market remained stagnant. Rural population is, therefore, the most vulnerable segment of the society in terms of welfare and security. Moldova displays a significant economic polarization coupled with disparities between regions and a widening development gap between rural and urban areas. According to Ministry of Economy data, the South remains the poorest (eight times poorer than Chisinau), followed by Center, North and Gagauzia regions. While economic activity and qualified labour force are concentrated in the capital, socio-economic development of rural areas is weak, focused predominantly in the agriculture sector with a poverty ratio outside the capital around 23-30%. In 2014, the average disposable income of a rural inhabitant was 29% lower than an urban one and 7% below the average national subsistence level (MDL 1,627.1). Poverty levels are further

compounded by non-monetary dimensions, such as limited access to water and sanitation. This, coupled with stagnant decentralization reform and low employment rate, contributes to a high level of labor migration.

Moldova moved from 55.9 in 2006 to 64.5 in 2014 on the World Bank's Doing Business Distance to the Frontier indicator, measuring how far a country is from global best practice. Reforms in business registration, business regulation, licenses, authorizations, tax administration, insolvency and other areas have reduced the time spent by management on meeting regulatory requirements from 17% in 2005 to 10.7% in 2013.

The existing macroeconomic framework is considered broadly adequate, even though macroeconomic risks associated with the financial sector, vulnerabilities to external and climatic shocks, institutional weaknesses and related slippages in the implementation of macroeconomic and structural reforms will continue to be substantial over the medium-term. European integration anchors the Government's policy reform agenda, but political tensions and weak governance pose risks to reforms. Given the regional geopolitical climate the prospects for substantial progress in the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict remain dim.

The evolving geopolitical context and political instability affected the re-integration of the breakaway Transnistrian region. The region's de-facto administration avoided any serious engagement with Moldova's EU association process, opting for the Eurasian Union instead. Despite the resumption of dialogues between Chisinau and Transnistrian leadership, little progress was seen in the 5+2 confidence building talks. Positive changes were observed on the non-political side, where civil society actors established joint initiatives and cross-river partnerships. A positive signal was also the adoption by Transnistrian leadership of an action plan following the release of the first UN human rights report on the Transnistrian region.

Employment rates in Moldova are among the lowest in Europe and Central Asia due to a significant decrease in Labor Force Participation (from 53% to 41% compared to 60-70% for countries in Europe and Central Asia). The general unemployment rate was 3.9% in 2014, however unemployment among youth aged 15-24 was 9.8% and a cause of concern. According to government statistics in 2014, 15.5% of men and 7.8% of women of working age were working abroad or looking for work abroad. The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family undertook considerable steps to ensure the protection of migrants' rights to social security outside the country. The UN system supported the signing of two and the negotiation of four agreements focusing on equal treatment and social security rights of all migrants in the destination country.

Local governments in Moldova play a significant role in the provision of public services and bear primary responsibility for water supply, sanitation, local roads construction, and maintenance and heating. Currently, the local governments are left fragmented, underfinanced and providing services that are inadequate and of poor quality and in many cases are inaccessible for women and men representing vulnerable groups of population. Following the basic principles set up in the Moldovan Constitution which guarantee equal human rights throughout the country, access to quality education, health and social services, as well as the access to clean water, environment and basic infrastructure; it is clear that there is no alternative to implementing the local governance reform, financial autonomy and fiscal decentralization; that may clarify roles and functions, and provide sufficient financial resources to meet those development and societal objectives. The continuous delay of these improvements, as well as maintenance of the current level of inequalities have a great impact on human rights in Moldova and will only deepen if no concrete steps are taken to overcome this. The improvement of the much-needed public service in rural areas will depend on the ability of the government to fast track local governance reform.

## **B. Specific background**

Against this background United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Programme Document (CPD) 2013 – 2017 response is aimed at contributing to the establishment of a modernized public administration system properly capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country's priorities and European integration objectives and is also integrated into the United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) "Towards Unity in Action". Results achieved

with the UNDP and relevant UN Agency's assistance will contribute to the achievement of CPD Outcome 2 which refers to Access to more equitable sustainable regional development, economic opportunities - innovation and agriculture in particular - and decent work. The assistance is provided through UNDP programmes and projects, as well as through the joint projects implemented in cooperation with the other UN Agencies – UN Women, UNICEF, WHO with co-funding by Donor partners, such as the EU, Governments of Sweden, Denmark, Swiss and Romania, and in collaboration with the national partners, such as the State Chancellery, line Ministries, Parliament, Bureau of Reintegration, other central Government institutions and the local authorities. To review the progress achieved in the above-mentioned Outcome and within the Joint Integrated Local Development (which contributes to the Outcome achievement), UNDP in partnership with UN Women are commissioning 2 evaluations, according to the Evaluation Plans.

## I. Sustainable local and regional development outcome evaluation

### I. a. Brief description of the Outcome to be evaluated

Results achieved with the UNDP and relevant UN Agency's assistance will contribute to the achievement of the Country Programme Document Outcome 2 which refers to Access to more equitable sustainable regional development, economic opportunities - innovation and agriculture in particular - and decent work. The assistance is provided through UNDP programmes and projects, as well as through joint projects with other UN Agencies – UN Women, UNICEF, WHO. These are co-funded by various development partners, such as the EU, Governments of Sweden, Denmark, Swiss and Romania, being implemented in collaboration with the national partners, such as the State Chancellery, line Ministries, Parliament, Bureau of Reintegration, other central Government institutions and the local authorities.

For the Outcome evaluation, the following Outputs falling under this Outcome, as stated in UNDP CPD 2013 – 2017, are to be part of this evaluation:

CPD Outcome	Outputs	Indicator/Baseline/Target	Programmes/Projects
People have access to more equitable sustainable regional development, economic opportunities - innovation and agriculture in particular - and decent work.	LPAs ensure sustainable development and access of vulnerable to public services by empowering communities, promoting PPPs and inter-municipal cooperation	<b>Indicator:</b> Deprivation Index; <b>Baseline:</b> North 472, South 455, Center 462; <b>Target:</b> increase by 10 % per region;	Joint Integrated Local Development Programme
	2. Labour force competitiveness (focused on women and vulnerable) improved, by vocational education and job opportunities	<b>Indicator:</b> Gender wage gap; <b>Baseline:</b> 76.4%; <b>Target:</b> reduce by 2 p.p ;  <b>Indicator:</b> Employment Rate, disaggregated by urban/rural, geographical areas, gender and age <b>Baseline:</b> General: 41.9%, women 48.1%; <b>Target:</b> increase by 10 p.p	Innovative business for local development Innovative Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Employment
	3. Partnerships created between communities, businesses, CSOs across Nistru River for better services/business infrastructure.	<b>Indicator:</b> # of projects in Transnistria (incl. gender sensitive); <b>Baseline:</b> 36 <b>Target:</b> 125	Confidence Building Measures II & III Strengthening Human Rights in TN

## **II. Final Evaluation of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme**

### **II a. Brief description of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme to be evaluated**

The Government of Moldova explicitly acknowledges that decentralization represents an essential item on the reform agenda of the country. The goal is to provide quality services to women and men equitably - including the rights of persons from vulnerable groups - through building autonomous and democratic local governments, able to manage efficiently their responsibilities. Thus, on April 5, 2012 the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted the National Decentralization Strategy that represents the main policy document in the field of local public administration and establishes the national mechanisms to ensure genuine local autonomy.

The Development Objective of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme, implemented by UNDP and UN Women, is to support better and equitable service provision and sustainable local development, facilitated by the improved legal and institutional framework resulting from the implementation of the National Decentralization Strategy.

The Immediate Objectives of the Programme are: (1) To support the Government in improving the policy and legal framework as mandated by the National Decentralization Strategy to ensure local autonomy, availability of resources, and more effective local management for better and equitable service provision, and (2) To improve the capacity of LPAs to deliver efficient, equitable and accessible local public services, to facilitate sustainable development and foster social inclusion.

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

Output 1: Policy and legal frameworks to support autonomous, efficient and financially-sustainable LPAs developed and implemented.

Activities under the output 1 aim to support for the elaboration of sector-specific strategies and the assistance to different central government institutions to actually implement the NDS. From 2014, financial resources for the JILDP activities under this output were not available, except for some interventions on specific topics that were financed from UNDP's and UN Women's TRAC funds, as well as by other donors and with the active involvement of the JILDP team. In 2014-2015 JILDP activities was limited in the assistance to the rayons piloting the new local public finance system and the elaboration of the sectoral decentralization strategies for communal services. Another important activity was providing assistance to Government in developing a public policy document on the territorial administrative reform in the Republic of Moldova.

Output 2: Capacities of LPAs and communities strengthened to deliver better services to citizens and create models of LPAs - in line with changes brought by the Decentralization Strategy.

Under Output 2, the interventions at the local level aimed at developing models of operational local governments - 'champions of change' - by providing support to implement changes in the operation and structure of local governments in line with the changes brought by the Decentralization strategy. JILDP assisted LPAs in improving their capacity and operations and support 30 pilot target communities and their local authorities to provide quality public services to achieve sustainable economic and social development, in the main areas affected by the Decentralization strategy. The quality of life of local communities as well as empowerment of the most vulnerable women and men, increased through further supporting to implementation of the projects (in 20 communes and 10 clusters of communities) using innovative tools such as inter-municipal cooperation, private-public partnerships and e-governance, among others, to serve as best examples of decentralized arrangements for service provision at local level. To ensure an integrated approach to local governance and development, support for the development of an enabling environment for local business development and identification, implementation of innovative income generating activities with a particular focus on vulnerable women and men was provided.

### **1. SCOPE OF WORK, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ANALYTICAL WORK**

Both the *Mid-term evaluation of the Outcome 2 of the UNDP Country Programme Document* and the *final evaluation of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme* 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.

### **I. b. Purpose of the Sustainable local and regional development Outcome Evaluation**

The evaluation will put the major focus on assessing the progress achieved within the Outcome 2 “People have access to more equitable sustainable regional development, economic opportunities - innovation and agriculture in particular - and decent work” and the impact produced so far under the area of intervention, as well as draw conclusions and recommendations for eventual adjustments, and, to extend possible, lessons learnt for further programming and implementation of programme. The evaluator shall also give importance to assessing efficiency and to a possible extent effectiveness of the CPD Outcome 2, whether the size of resources, both financial and human, and partnership strategies continue to be cost-effective and may be applied in continuation and/or revised/changed.

For detailed information, please refer to the Terms of Reference, chapter I. b-e.

## **II b. Purpose and Objectives of the Final Evaluation of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme**

This evaluation has a twofold purpose:

- 1) Review the progress made by the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme 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.
- 2) Gather findings, lessons learned and recommendations for potential follow-up interventions, for the expansion of JILDLP interventions beyond 2015, which UN Moldova can offer as support to the Government in view of advancing with the implementation of the decentralization reform.

The UNDP Country Office and UN Women Country Office accordingly will make use of the exercise as a learning opportunity for the offices 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 development.

The overall objectives of evaluations 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.

For detailed information, please refer to the Terms of Reference, chapter II. b-f.

## **3. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The International and National Consultants must possess the following qualifications:

### **International Consultant:**

#### **Education**

- Master’s degree or equivalent in Management, Business Administration, Economy, Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Development and/or other relevant fields.

#### **Experience**

- At least 8 years of work experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (decentralization, regional and local development, economic, consulting services, participatory and sustainable development);
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting monitoring and/or evaluation of development projects in the development field.

#### **Competencies**

- Knowledge and experience with programming development, monitoring and evaluation;
- Excellent analytical and writing skills;
- Familiarity with development approaches in the decentralization in the region is a strong advantage;

- Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations, in particular, respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status.

UNDP Moldova is committed to workforce diversity. Women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, as well as refugees and other non-citizens legally entitled to work in the Republic of Moldova, are particularly encouraged to apply.

#### **Language**

- Excellent spoken and writing skills in English. Knowledge of Romanian or Russian is an advantage.

#### **National Consultant:**

##### **Education**

- University degree in Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Development, or other related areas.

##### **Experience**

- Minimum 5 years of professional experience/technical knowledge in providing management or consultancy services to the preferably in local development and decentralization fields;

##### **Competencies**

- Good understanding of Moldovan decentralization policies and strategies;
- 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;
- Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations, in particular, respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status.

UNDP Moldova is committed to workforce diversity. Women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, as well as refugees and other non-citizens legally entitled to work in the Republic of Moldova, are particularly encouraged to apply.

#### **Language**

- Fluent in English and Romanian both written and spoken. Knowledge of Russian is an advantage.

#### **4. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS**

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Proposal: Explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including information on previous similar assignments;
2. Financial proposal;
3. Personal CV or P11 including past experience in similar projects and at least 3 references.

#### **5. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL**

The financial proposal shall specify a total lump sum amount, and payment terms around specific and measurable (qualitative and quantitative) deliverables (i.e. whether payments fall in installments or upon completion of the entire contract). Payments are based upon output, i.e. upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR. In order to assist the requesting unit in the comparison of financial proposals, the financial proposal will include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (including travel, per diems, and number of anticipated working days).

#### **Travel**

All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel. In general, UNDP does not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources.

In the case of unforeseeable travel, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between UNDP Moldova and the Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

The International Consultant will have one mission of 10 working days to Moldova under this assignment.

## 6. EVALUATION

### International Consultant:

Initially, individual consultants will be short-listed based on the following minimum qualification criteria:

- Master's degree or equivalent in Management, Business Administration, Economy, Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Development and/or other relevant fields;
- At least 8 years of work experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (decentralization, regional and local development, economic, consulting services, participatory and sustainable development);
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting monitoring and/or evaluation of development projects in the local development field.

The short-listed individual consultants will be further evaluated based on the following methodology:

### Cumulative analysis

The award of the contract shall be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- a) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
- b) having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

\* Technical Criteria weight – 60% (300 pts);

\* Financial Criteria weight – 40% (200 pts).

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 210 points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points Obtainable
<b><u>Technical</u></b>		
Master's degree or equivalent in Management, Business Administration, Economy, Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Development and/or other relevant fields	<i>(MSc-20 pts, PhD-30 pts)</i>	30
At least 8 years of work experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (decentralization, regional and local development, economic, consulting services, participatory and sustainable development)	<i>(8 years – 40 pts; &gt;8 years – 2 pts for each additional year up to max. 50 pts)</i>	50

<p>Interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 5 years of experience in conducting monitoring and/or evaluation of development projects in the local development field</li> <li>Knowledge and experience with programming development, monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>Excellent analytical and writing skills</li> <li>Familiarity with development approaches in the decentralization in the region is a strong advantage</li> <li>Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations</li> <li>Excellent spoken and writing skills in English. Knowledge of Romanian or Russian is an advantage</li> </ul>	<p>(5 years - 40 pts; &gt;5 years - 50 pts)</p> <p>(to some extent - 30 pts, strong yes - 50 pts)</p> <p>(max 20 pts)</p> <p>(max 50 pts)</p> <p>(max 20 pts)</p> <p>(Romanian and/or Russian – 5 pts each; English – 20 pts)</p>	220
<b>Maximum Total Technical Scoring</b>		<b>300</b>
<b><u>Financial</u></b>		
<p>Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula:</p> <p><b><u><math>S = F_{min} / F * 200</math></u></b></p> <p>S – score received on financial evaluation;</p> <p>Fmin – the lowest financial offer out of all the submitted offers qualified over the technical evaluation round;</p> <p>F – financial offer under consideration.</p>		<b>200</b>

### **National Consultant:**

Initially, individual consultants will be short-listed based on the following minimum qualification criteria:

- University degree in Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Development, or other related areas;
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience/technical knowledge in providing management or consultancy services to the preferably in local development and decentralization fields;
- Previous experience with practical use of monitoring and evaluation methodologies.

The short-listed individual consultants will be further evaluated based on the following methodology:

### **Cumulative analysis**

The award of the contract shall be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
- having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

\* Technical Criteria weight – 60% (300 pts);

\* Financial Criteria weight – 40% (200 pts).

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 210 points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.



Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points Obtainable
<b>Technical</b>		
University degree in Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Development, or other related areas	<i>(under MSc-30 pts; MSc-40 pts)</i>	40
Minimum 5 years of professional experience/technical knowledge in providing management or consultancy services to the preferably in local development and decentralization fields	<i>(5 years – 50 pts; &gt;5 years – 2 pts for each additional year up to max. 60 pts)</i>	60
Interview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good understanding of Moldovan decentralization policies and strategies</li> <li>• Previous experience with practical use of monitoring and evaluation methodologies</li> <li>• Experience in managing, monitoring and evaluating projects for UN or other international development agencies in the region will be an asset</li> <li>• Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations</li> <li>• Fluent in English and Romanian both written and spoken. Knowledge of Russian is an advantage</li> </ul>	<i>(to some extent - 30 pts, strong yes - 50 pts)</i>  <i>(each year of such work – 10 pts; up to max. 50 pts)</i>  <i>(each year of such work – 10 pts; up to max. 50 pts)</i>  <i>(max 20 pts)</i>  <i>(Romanian – 10 pts; English – 15 pts; Russian – 5 pts)</i>	200
<b>Maximum Total Technical Scoring</b>		<b>300</b>
<b>Financial</b>		
Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula: <b><math>S = F_{min} / F * 200</math></b> S – score received on financial evaluation; Fmin – the lowest financial offer out of all the submitted offers qualified over the technical evaluation round; F – financial offer under consideration.		<b>200</b>

### **Winning candidate**

The winning candidate will be the candidate, who has accumulated the highest aggregated score (technical scoring + financial scoring).

### **Important notice**

The applicant who has the statute of Government Official / Public Servant, prior to appointment will be asked to submit the following documentation:

- a no-objection letter in respect of the applicant received from the government, and;
- the applicant is certified in writing by the government to be on official leave without pay for the duration of the Individual Contract.

A retired government official is not considered in this case a government official, and as such, may be contracted.