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Terms of Reference (TOR)

Post title:	Three thematic national consultants to provide analytical and consultative support to the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the participatory and inclusive development of the 2020 Voluntary National Review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Republic of Moldova
Project title:	Moldova Social Innovation Lab (TBC)
Type of contract:	Individual Contract
Duty Station:	Chisinau, Moldova
Duration:	January – May 2020 Estimated 25 working days for each thematic expert

BACKGROUND

In September 2015, along with the other 192 Member States, Moldova endorsed the new Sustainable Development Agenda – the 2030 Agenda, with 17 goals and 169 targets. A very important part of the follow-up process is the Voluntary National Review (VNR), to which countries sign up voluntarily and report on their progress on implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Moldova intends to present its first VNR Report in July 2020 at the High-Level Political Forum in New York, USA.

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Moldova is very well positioned to support the Government's efforts to take stock of the progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Moldova and provide technical assistance for the preparation of the first VNR Report.

The United Nations provides its support to Governments around the world in preparation of the VNR Reports. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) offers guidance through regional and global workshops – dates to be specified at later stages. The UNCTs globally offer a variety of tools and methodologies designed to assess progress in implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs that might feed into the VNR process and the Report. These tools and methodologies include e.g. Rapid Integrated Assessment, SDG Complexity Analysis, and others.

Therefore, to support the Government in the preparation of the VNR, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Moldova seeks to contract three national experts to support the State Chancellery in the organization of the VNR process and drafting of the VNR report.

SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The scope of the consultancy is to support the State Chancellery in the development and drafting of the VNR report to be presented by the Republic of Moldova at the HLPF in July 2020.

The UNCT is looking to contract three national consultants specialized as follows:

- One national consultant specialized in economic policies;
- One national consultant specialized in social policies (education, health and social protection);
- One national consultant specialized in environment and energy policies.

One of the consultants with proven records and experience to lead teams and coordinate analytical products is expected to serve as the Lead Consultant, with additional tasks on integrating thematic parts into one coherent report.

The VNR process and production of the VNR Reports are guided by 6 key principles, including:

- **Voluntary:** Countries voluntarily agree to report on the progress of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
- **Country-driven:** Reviews of progress at national and sub-national levels are country-driven.
- **Platforms for partnerships:** Reviews ensure participation of all relevant stakeholders, with focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- **Learning experience:** Reviews facilitate consolidation of experience, including successes, challenges and lessons learnt, part of a process.
- **National circumstances:** Reviews are guided by national circumstances, policies and priorities, and informed by partners.
- **Open, inclusive, transparent and participatory:** Reviews facilitates communication and engagement with stakeholders, with focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized.

The VNR process will include several different components:

- I. **The development of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan** to describe the multi-stakeholder consultative process, to be coordinated by the Steering Committee, including 1) all stakeholders involved in the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs implementation process in the country to get inputs for the VNR Report; 2) a platform for continuous stakeholder engagement for the post-VNR period; and 3) raise further awareness on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The consultations are to include the line Ministries, Government bodies and agencies, academia, civil society, private sector, as well as engage the vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the consultations may be organized around thematic areas (e.g. four areas: social development, economic development, environment, and governance, which were the organizing principle for previous SDG nationalization processes). The SEP might also discuss setting up of working groups as forums for discussions, updates, and drafting of the VNR Report. It is also recommended to strike the balance between offline and online consultations. Therefore, the SEP might also envisage the creation of an online outfit collecting contributions for the VNR Report.
- II. **Stocktaking** of the ongoing and past work that has been done in terms of implementation and alignment to SDGs at various levels through desk research, interviews, and public consultations. Additionally, in liaison with the National Bureau of Statistics, the consultants will assess the availability of data for monitoring SDGs and readiness to use alternative sources of data to measure progress;
- III. **Analysis of the implementation of the SDGs in the Republic of Moldova, including:**
 - a) Updating the Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) analysis conducted with the support of the UNCT in 2017 by excluding the strategic planning documents that have expired since 2017 and including the newly-developed ones;
 - b) conduct a SWOT analysis: identifying the strengths and weaknesses, possible threats and opportunities for Moldova in achieving the SDGs;
 - c) conduct a general analysis of the availability of data, both official and alternative, for measuring SDG indicators, reflecting the quality of data, availability, timeliness, etc., and analyse the dynamics of SDG indicators, as well as national indicators corresponding to the objectives of the SDGs;
 - d) identify the most significant contemporary challenges and trends for Moldova, as well as the assessment of their impact on the achievement of the SDGs in Moldova;
 - e) integrate the above analyses into the draft VNR and conduct the comprehensive discussions of the draft VNR with various stakeholders to get the VNR finalized;
 - f) develop the recommendations on the implementation of the SDGs in Moldova; present the key recommendations to the Steering Committee.

Language requirements

All communication and documentation related to the assignment should be in Romanian and English. The documents will be presented in both electronic and hard-copy format. The deliverables in electronic form should be submitted in a format that would enable beneficiaries to further edit and use these deliverables.

KEY OUTPUTS

The consultancy will have several major outputs:

- (1) Integrated workplan on all four thematic areas of the SDGs, coordinated by the Lead Consultant;
- (2) Stakeholder Engagement Plan;
- (3) Rapid Integrated Assessment, assessing the degree to which SDGs are included in the current national strategic planning framework;
- (4) Public consultations;
- (5) Draft and final VNR report;

Deliverables and tentative framework

Preparatory work		
1.	Contribute and provide sector inputs to the integrated workplan for the VNR, the methodology for the analytical support provided, and the timelines; thematic consultants in the 4 identified sectors will provide their inputs to the integrated workplan.	Within a week from contract date
2.	Contribute to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan by contributing with methodological and content-related inputs for the consultative process; support the Lead consultant in the identification of key target groups to be consulted; thematic consultant to provide sub-plans/sector plans to then be integrated by the Lead consultant	By mid-January, 2019
Stocktaking and analytical products to be used in the VNR chapters		
3.	Lead thematic public consultations held as per the SEP for collecting information and data on the implementation of the SDGs that are relevant to the specific sector; document such consultations in short position papers, summaries, etc.	By mid-February, 2019
4.	Contribute to the first draft of VNR Report, provide specific sector-related inputs and drafts of sections of the Report, containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the Integration of the SDGs into the national sector strategic planning frameworks, including the RIA update;- mainstreaming of the Leaving No One Behind and Reaching the Further Behind First principles in the national frameworks;- analysis of the dynamics of SDG targets and indicators related to the specific sector(s), and critical analysis of the difficulties in reaching them, based on a SWOT analysis and an analysis of the most significant challenges and trends for Moldova, as well as based on the assessment of their impact in the achievement of the SDGs;- approval by the Steering Committee	By mid-March, 2019

5.	Participate to the public consultations for validating the report, as per the SEP	By end of March, 2019
6.	Participate to the drafting of the Final VNR Report and to the presentation of the Report	By mid-April, 2019

TIMEFRAME

The expected period of implementation is during January – May 2020. Estimated 25 working days for each thematic expert.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS:

The consultants will work under the guidance of the State Chancellery (directorate responsible for policy coordination) and UNCT for substantive aspects of the assignment under the direct supervision of the Secretary General of the Government.

The consultants will report to the Secretary General of the Government and UNCT.

Payments will be disbursed in several instalments, upon submission and approval of deliverables mentioned in the Section “Deliverables and tentative framework” and certification by UNDP Policy Specialist that the services have been satisfactorily performed.

REQUIREMENTS, COMPETENCIES AND EXPERIENCE:

For the thematic consultants in the areas of governance and human rights policies, social policies, economic policies, and environment policies:

- Master’s degree or equivalent (5 years University degree) in one of the areas relevant to the thematic specializations above (i.e. Law, Public Policy, Human Rights, Economics, Social Sciences, Public Administration, Environment, Energy, or other relevant fields);
- At least 5 years working/professional evidenced experience in conducting evaluations, M&E, and drafting policy documents;
- At least 5 years of practical experience and knowledge of governance (justice, public administration, anticorruption) / economic / social (education, health and social protection) / environment and energy policies;
- Extensive experience of working with government, public, civil society organisations and development partners (minimum 5 projects in total);
- Strong analytical skills, including in the identification of key issues and how they relate;
- Excellent command of Romanian, as well as good knowledge of Russian and English.

During the assignment, the Contractor’s team of experts should prove 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. Applicants demonstrating equitable gender representation and diversity within the team will have an advantage.