



TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. Job title:	Junior Consultant on implementation and enhancement of energy vulnerability compensation mechanisms aimed at assisting energy-poor households
B. Duty Station:	Republic of Moldova, Chisinau
C. Project reference:	Accelerating a Just Energy Transition in the Republic of Moldova Project
D. Contract type:	Individual Contract
E. Duration of assignment:	May 2024 – April 2025, 240 working days

F. Background

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality, and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

UNDP does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse, any kind of harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks.

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization in fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

Since October 2021, Moldova has faced significant increase of gas prices as a consequence of very tight global energy markets and a recently amended contract with Gazprom Moldova gas supplier. With the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis has only deepened. Therefore, the country faced major risks in terms of supply (quantities) and price for gas and electricity. The repercussions on the economy are severe, as the country is entering a recession period and an important reduction in GDP. Households are particularly affected by the increase in prices, since over 60% of the households spend much more than 10% of their incomes on energy.

UNDP conducted a first assessment of the energy vulnerability in the country that resulted in a much better understanding of the complex issue and definition of specific options to tackle energy poverty in the current volatile context. To mitigate the impact of the energy crisis, UNDP, together with the Government of Moldova, designed and implemented [an evidence-based](#), on-bill, compensation scheme to minimize the negative impact of energy inflation on Moldovan households: the Energy Vulnerability Reduction Fund (EVRF). After the successful impact it achieved during the 2022-23 heating season and the 2023-24 heating season, the EVRF is now preparing for the 2024-25 heating season.

The EVRF is linked with an [Energy Vulnerability Information System](#) (EVIS) through which households can apply online, directly, or with the help of a social assistant or a librarian. Each applicant is automatically ranked into one of seven energy vulnerability categories (from extremely vulnerable to non-vulnerable) through a dedicated algorithm that provides full transparency on the system of categorization and compensation. A reduced tariff is then applied to bills for natural gas, electricity, or centralized heating. The most vulnerable households who use firewood or coal for heating are eligible for a monthly cash transfer.

UNDP supported the development of the Energy Vulnerability Information System, as well as the creation and operation of a call center to provide information on the registration procedure. During the November 2023 – March 2024 period, the call center solved around 58,000 email queries and answered approximately 96,000 calls from EVRF beneficiaries.

G. Objective

The Project seeks to contract a National Consultant (hereinafter “the Consultant”) on Digital Inclusion to support the Energy Vulnerability Reduction Fund (EVRF).

The consultant is expected to work closely with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in order to deliver professional, effective, and qualitative contributions to the Project’s digital transformation interventions.

H. Scope of work and expected outputs

The consultant is expected to undertake the following tasks:

- Support mapping the needs of the Ministry of Labour and Social protection in digital inclusion. Provide support to the Ministry on digital inclusion of the citizens to the Energy Vulnerability Fund Platform. Ensure data validations and checkups of the registrations to address mismatches;
- Support with small data collection and data analysis;

- Provide communication related support such as design of web posters, develop short visibility messages;
- Draft reports as per assignment needs. Collect and store required reporting metrics.

I. Expected Deliverables

Item no.	DELIVERABLES	Estimate Workdays	Tentative timeframe
I.	<p>Activity 1: Gather issues and challenges faced along the operation of the EVIS during the 2023-2024 heating season, proposing a structured approach for evidence, action and follow up on activities to address the issues and to improve EVIS functionalities for the 2024-2025 heating season.</p> <p>Deliverable 1: Compiled report on issues and challenges faced along the operation of the EVIS (by system administrators, case managers, and household beneficiaries) and proposed solutions for mitigating the identified issues.</p>	40 WDs	by 30 June 2024
II.	<p>Activity 2: Conduct an analysis on the activity of the Support Unit during the 2023-2024 heating season, highlighting the good practices as well as the inefficiencies that require correction ahead of the 2024-2025 heating season.</p> <p>Deliverable 2: Develop and validate with the MLSP a preparatory action plan for the 2024-2025 heating season activity of the Support Unit to ensure a successful and timely launch of the 2024-2025 heating season.</p>	40 WDs	by 31 August 2024
III.	<p>Activity 3: Facilitate the dissemination of expertise regarding the Energy Vulnerability Information System for the social workers and librarians (case managers) engaged in the EVRF 2024-2025 registration campaign. Ensure the capacity-building of case managers through training sessions that explain the EVRF registration process, present relevant methodologies and the updated legal framework, teach how to avoid common registration mistakes and instruct on dispute settlement mechanisms. The updated case manager interface in EVIS will be demonstrated step-by-step during the training sessions.</p> <p>Deliverable 3: Deliver a minimum of 10 training sessions to case managers engaged in the inclusion of citizens into EVRF. Develop a comprehensive guide on registration and the particular EVIS functionalities of case managers.</p>	40 WDs	by 31 October 2024
IV.	<p>Activity 4: Ensure the training of the Support Unit (Call Center operators + MLSP staff) who will provide technical support to citizens by phone and email. Define a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) pertaining to the activity of the Support Unit.</p> <p>Deliverable 4.1: Scripts for call center operators and templates for mail operators.</p> <p>Deliverable 4.2: KPI report on the activity of the Support Unit for November 2024.</p>	40 WDs	by 31 December 2024

V.	<p>Activity 5: As the heating season progresses, new issues emerge. The Consultant will ensure that the Support Unit is up-to-date with any EVIS bugs and will train the Support Unit on how to best assist the beneficiaries in solving the new issues.</p> <p><u>Deliverable 5.1:</u> Updated and additional scripts for call center operators and templates for mail operators.</p> <p><u>Deliverable 5.2:</u> Three KPI reports on the activity of the Support Unit: for December 2024, January 2025, and February 2025.</p>	30 WDs	by 1 March 2025
VI.	<p>Activity 6: Develop situational reports on the implementation of the EVRF for the 2024-2025 heating season for donors and other development partners.</p> <p><u>Deliverable 6.1:</u> Narrative report on the implementation of the EVRF for the 2024-2025 heating season.</p> <p><u>Deliverable 6.2:</u> Final KPI report on the activity of the Support Unit for March 2025.</p>	40 WDs	by 30 April 2025
VII.	<p>Activity 7: Provide data points and indicators requested by the Communication Team for the creation of infographics for social media channels.</p> <p><u>Deliverable 7:</u> Infographics related to the implementation of EVRF for the 2024-2025 heating season.</p>	10 WDs	by 30 April 2025

Note: Deliverables and the final timeline can be amended or specified for the purpose of the assignment. All deliverables should be agreed with Project and be provided in electronic copy. Payment will be made upon the successful completion of the tasks assigned.

J. Organizational Setting

The timeframe for the work of the Consultant is planned for the period May 2024 – April 2025. During this time, the Consultant is expected to work a total of 240 working days.

The Junior Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the UNDP Project Manager. The Consultant will perform his/her duties under mix arrangements, office of UNDP/Ministry of Labour, as agreed with the Project Manager. The Consultant will report to the UNDP Accelerating a Just Energy Transition in the Republic of Moldova Project Manager, or his designee, who will be responsible for supervising Consultant's performance.

Working languages: Romanian and English. All deliverables are to be delivered in Romanian, with the exception of deliverable 6.1, which is to be delivered in English.

K. Financial arrangements

Payments will be disbursed in tranches upon submission and validation of deliverables by the UNDP Project Manager (certifying that the services have been satisfactorily performed) and their subsequent approval by the Policy Specialist.

Travel

No travel is envisaged in the framework of the current assignment.

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

L. Confidentiality

Materials provided to the Consultant and all proceedings within the consultancy contract shall be regarded as confidential, both during and after the consultancy. Violation of confidentiality requirements may result in immediate termination of contract.

M. Qualifications and skills required

I. Academic Qualifications:

- University degree in economics, finance, public administration, social sciences, international relations, or related field(s).

II. Experience and knowledge:

- Minimum experience of one year in projects involving multi-stakeholder cooperation activities, including interaction with Governmental authorities;
- Previous experience in development assistance or related work for an international and/or donor organization is required;
- Previous experience in managing digital inclusion activities related to onboarding of people to web-based platforms is a strong advantage;
- Experience in the usage of computers and office software packages (MS Word, Excel, etc.) and advance knowledge of spreadsheet and database packages, experience in handling of web-based management systems;
- Excellent interactive and interpersonal skills and the ability to work in a multicultural environment;
- Good statistical background and working experience with statistical analysis, being able to communicate data-driven insights is a strong asset;
- Fluency in oral and written Romanian and English. Knowledge of Russian language is a strong asset.

III. Competencies:

- Ability to perform and deliver expected results in a fast-paced working environment.
- Strong sense of initiative and ability to work independently.
- Demonstrated interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively and build meaningful partnerships with all stakeholders.

IV. Personal qualities:

- Responsibility, flexibility and punctuality, ability to meet deadlines and prioritize multiple tasks.
- 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.

The 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.

N. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS

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

- Signed and filled-in Offeror's letter to UNDP confirming interest and availability for the individual contractor (IC) assignment, incorporating Financial proposal in Annex 2 (in USD, specifying a total requested amount per working day, including all related costs, e.g. fees, phone calls etc.). Annex 2 to the Offeror's letter, incorporating the Financial Proposal, shall be filled in mandatorily and includes the detailed breakdown of costs supporting the all-inclusive financial proposal;
- Duly updated CV with at least 3 references.

Important notice: The applicants who have 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 entire duration of the Individual Contract.

O. EVALUATION

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

- University degree in economics, finance, public administration, social sciences, international relations, or related field(s).
- Minimum experience of one year in projects involving multi-stakeholder cooperation activities, including interaction with Governmental authorities.
- Citizenship of the Republic of Moldova

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 for the Technical Evaluation shall be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Criteria	Scoring	Maximum Points Obtainable
<u>Technical</u>		
University degree in economics, finance, public administration, social sciences, international relations, or related field(s)	<i>Bachelor's degree – 5 pts. Master's degree – 10 pts.</i>	10
Minimum experience of one year in projects involving multi-stakeholder cooperation activities, including interaction with Governmental authorities	<i>1 year of experience – 30 pts; each additional year – 10 pts, up to a total of 50 points;</i>	50
Previous experience with Governmental authorities in social related activities	<i>Yes – 30 pts. No experience – 0 pts.</i>	30
Experience of cooperation with UN agencies and/or international organizations, and/or development programs will be an asset	<i>Yes – 30 pts. No experience – 0 pts.</i>	30
Subtotal Technical Scoring		120
<u>Interview</u> (demonstrated technical knowledge and experience; communication/ interpersonal skills; initiative; creativity/ resourcefulness). Only the first 5 applicants that have accumulated the highest technical score shall be invited to the interview.		
Previous experience in supporting capacity building activities for community engagement activities, including social support	<i>(1 assignment – 10 pts, up to a total of 40 pts)</i>	175
Previous experience in implementation of data validation tasks	<i>(1 assignment – 10 pts, up to a total of 40 pts)</i>	
Strong interpersonal skills, communication and diplomatic skills, teamwork ability	<i>(extensive – 30 pts., satisfactory – 20 pts., limited – 0 pts)</i>	
Strong analytical, reporting and writing abilities	<i>(extensive – 30 pts., satisfactory – 20 pts., limited – 10 pts., no abilities – 0 pts)</i>	
Strong leadership and team management skills	<i>(excellent – 20 pts., satisfactory – 10 pts., limited – 0 pts)</i>	
Fluency in English, Romanian and Russian languages	<i>5 pts per language –15 pts total</i>	
Belonging to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment	<i>No – 0 pts., to one group – 1,5 pts., to two or more groups – 5 pts.</i>	5
Total Interview Scoring		180
Maximum Total Technical Scoring		300

** Under-represented groups in UN Moldova are persons with disabilities, LGBTI, ethnic and linguistic minorities, especially ethnic Gagauzians, Bulgarians, Roma, Jews, people of African descent, people living with HIV, religious minorities, especially Muslim women, refugees and other non-citizens. **Please specify in CV, in case you belong to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment.***

<u>Financial</u>	
<p>Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula:</p> <p><u>$S = F_{min} / F * 200$</u></p> <p>S – score received on financial evaluation;</p> <p>F_{min} – the lowest financial offer out of all the submitted offers qualified over the technical evaluation round;</p> <p>F – financial offer under consideration</p>	200

Winning candidate

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