



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title:	International expert on development of the National Digital Strategy of the Republic of Moldova for the period 2021-2030
Project:	Accelerating Digital Transformation in Public Sector in the Republic of Moldova,
Reporting to:	Project Manager
Duty Station:	Home Based
Contract Type:	Individual Contract (IC)
Duration:	up to 40 working days, in the period of October 2021 – January 2022

01. PROJECT OVERVIEW

With Accelerating Digital Transformation in Public Sector Project, UNDP Moldova aims to improve access to and quality of public services and business conditions through accelerated digital transformation of government processes and business model(s) and promote innovation, as well as collaborative experimentation within the Government, in the private sector, internally in UNDP Moldova, and in collaboration with external partners.

The Project is envisioned to serve as the platform of support to the newly assigned Deputy-Prime Minister on Digital Transformation to move ahead with digital agenda of Moldova on all necessary dimensions.

UNDP Moldova, through this Project, is strategically positioned as an integrator of programmatic solutions with innovative mindset, including bringing forward digital components in supporting accelerated delivery of the SDGs.

The Project has the following objectives:

- Development of a National Strategy for the digital transformation of the Moldovan society – this includes the assistance to the Government to elaborate the vision and the Digital Transformation Strategy for Moldova up until 2030, in line with the commitment of the Government as part of the Association Agreement with EU and Moldova 2030 Strategy.
- Digitalization of the public services and solutions for citizens and the local private sector via engaging and encouraging participation of the private sector (especially of the very vibrant local ICT sector) and local innovators to play an active role in the Digital Transformation of the society.
- Accelerate digital literacy, both in the public and private sectors, facilitate an inclusive digital transformation that considers gender, age, vulnerability and divide in digital access and digital literacy, including the building a network of the Agents (Implementers, Influencers, Envoyes, Local Ambassadors etc.) of Digital Transformation of Moldova (ADT-M or Agents of Change).
- Build digital collaborative platforms for data and new evidence and use of such platforms to inform policy development and experimentation work with the Government of Moldova.
- Support transformative changes in the organizational and innovation culture in the public and private sectors and align all participants for the accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Agenda and national targets;

- Support the Digitalization of Moldova that will contribute to improved governance by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of government processes, increasing transparency and public access to governmental information – and therefore promoting accountability and public participation, and improving an innovative delivery of public services, as well as impact evaluation and strategic support to scaling-up of the successful solutions.

02. BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic underlined the importance of Digital Transformation globally and nationally. In response to these new challenges, Digital Transformation became one of the highest priorities for governments, including in Moldova. The Republic of Moldova is a country with all necessary ingredients for a fast and impactful digital transformation. Moldova has across the key areas of the nation:

1. **Infrastructure** - Very good internet coverage where 98% of localities have internet connection, however adequate high-speed home access of broadband is still challenging.
2. **People** - ICT skills are expanding, but not meeting the demand level and there doesn't seem to be encouragement of inclusive national adoption.
3. **Government** - Good eGov platform has been progressing well in terms of digitalization of public services; with opportunities to monitor progress proactively as well as to expand in areas of demand such as business registration, and services related to judiciary procedures.
4. **Business** - Vibrant and agile ICT sector that is already contributing more than 7% to GDP; nevertheless private-sector modernization needs support such as financing and public-sector innovation opportunities.
5. **Whole-of-Society** - Digital Foundations serve as catalysts to speed transformation and while digital payments component scores highly according to the public sector, data from indexes and other sectors indicate that there may be a opening to focus efforts here to unlock further opportunities, particularly if paired with support for SMEs that have struggled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, further encouragement of startups with enhancing credit access, and support for citizen digital literacy.

Overall, international indicators reflect varying successes in Moldova's current development, but more research needs to be undertaken to be comprehensive in the confident determination of specific focus areas that are outlined. Digital changes rapidly, and a more real-time analysis across key indicators can provide a clearer look into progress over time.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during the various lockdowns, over 150,000 children of preschool age were unable to attend school and continue their education online due to lack of devices, connectivity issues, educational content not adapted to online teaching, as well as limited teacher familiarization with online methods and lack of digital skills. A lot of companies, especially micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), have been affected by the limitations imposed during the pandemic and faced difficulties in accessing their customers and partners through existing traditional distribution networks. As a result, many of them had to close their operations causing a lot of the population, especially women to lose their jobs. Additionally, access to some non-digitized public services was difficult, particularly during the lockdowns.

As the Digital Moldova Strategy came to a conclusion in 2020, the country is in urgent need to systemically rethink digital transformation opportunities and focus on a whole-of-society systemic transformation by the use of digital technologies and focus on the key opportunities in engaging with citizens, private sector, local administrations, building demand for digital skills and for utilizing digital solutions. Digitalization is key to also achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as 2030 is fast approaching.

The new Government of the Republic of Moldova, through its Programme of actions, made a bold decision to accelerate digital transformation of the nation by making use of the existing opportunities and exploring a 'whole-of-society' approach in making sure that the transformation is inclusive and

sustainable. To such end, UNDP Moldova has made an accepted 'value proposition' to the Government to support the visioning, leadership and operationalization of specific interventions.

Moreover, in order to continue and accelerate the Digital Transformation of Moldovan society and leverage on the recently approved new Government initiatives, the Government of Moldova is planning to develop new set of policy initiatives. Taking in consideration that the Moldova Digital Agenda approved in 2013 was fully implemented, the Government has to define the Digital Transformation development agenda for the next 10 years in form of a new strategy. The Government of Moldova recognizes the importance of adopting policy initiatives aimed towards a continuous improvement of the Digital Transformation of Moldova. Thus, urgently developing a new Government's Agenda towards Moldova Digital Transformation is critical. This will ensure a continuity of the previous efforts and create conditions for advancement of the Moldovan Society digital transformation in both quantitative and qualitative manner.

03. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this assignment is to secure the consultant's services to support UNDP's Digital Transformation Project and the Government in developing the Moldova National Digital Strategy. The assignment will consist in developing the Strategy document that will correspond to the structure defined in the Government Decision Nr. 33 from 01.11.2007 about the rules for developing and common requirement regarding the policy documents

[\(HG386/2020 \(legis.md\)\)](#).

04. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Carry out the assignment as defined in the ToR;
- Complete the final deliverable in a timely manner as defined below;
- Conduct all business in a manner that respects local culture;
- Maintain high ethical standards, avoiding any actual or perceived conflicts of interest and abiding by all local laws and/or all UNDP directives and requirements;
- Ensure continuity after assignment termination by providing on-demand coaching and knowledge transfer;

05. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The consultant with the support of the local expert will carry out the following tasks:

- Develop the first draft of the Moldova National Digital Strategy for the period 2021-2030 that will be composed of the chapters prescribed in article 8 of HG386/2020:
 - introduction (indicating the importance and decisions that led to the elaboration of the strategy, the relevance in accordance with the National Development Strategy, the Government's Activity Program and the international commitments assumed by the Government, the period proposed for implementation, the parties involved in elaborating the strategy);
 - analysis of the situation (description of problems in the field of activity and their causes, including description of possible consequences and risks in case of non-intervention in solving problems and their impact on the main vulnerable groups affected, using quantitative and qualitative evidence);
 - objectives (description of the expected results in the field of activity);
 - priority directions (description of the planned activities in the field of activity to achieve each objective);
 - impact (description of the long-term impact - anticipated changes in the economic, social, ecological and administrative environment following the implementation of the strategy);

- monitoring and evaluation indicators (description of the monitoring indicators of the planned activities, through which the degree of implementation of the strategy is measured, as well as the evaluation indicators, through which the level of achievement of the objectives is established);
 - implementation risks (description of anticipated risks and measures to reduce or eliminate them);
 - responsible authorities / institutions (indication of the public authorities / institutions responsible or contributing to the implementation of the strategy, as well as of other parties involved);
 - reporting procedures (description of monitoring and evaluation methods, indication of public authorities / institutions and subdivisions responsible for reporting and periodicity of monitoring, evaluation and reporting).
- Assist the Government of Moldova in developing the Strategy regulatory impact assessment
 - Assist the Government of Moldova in finalizing the strategy during the Government policy making procedure.
 - Based on the strategy reviews received from other ministries, adjust the strategy and compile a synthesis of reviews and modifications.
 - The consultant will provide all necessary explanations and links/notes to data sources

06. DELIVERABLES

The consultants is expected to produce the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Deadline
Deliverable 1. Draft National Digital Strategy for the period 2021-2030 – 20 LOE	30 November 2021
Deliverable 2. Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Strategy – 10 LOE	20 December 2021
Deliverable 3. Final Strategy including the synthesis of reviews and modifications. – 10 LOE	31 January 2022

07. LEVEL OF EFFORT

The level of effort (LOE) in days needed for this assignment is **40 days**.

08. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The consultant can perform remotely with a few visits to Moldova during key milestones.

09. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The assignment will begin in October 2021 and end on January 31, 2022.

10. REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS

The consultant will report to the UNDP Digital Transformation Project Manager, or his designee, who will be responsible for supervising the consultants' performance.

11. REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Education:

- Master's Degree or equivalent in economics, social sciences, law, or related areas. Additional training and certification in strategies design and development would be an advantage.

Experience:

- At least 10 years of the senior level working experience in the design, elaboration, management, and implementation of National Digital and/or ICT related strategies with specific experience in drafting 1-2 such documents as main author.

- Previous senior level working experience of at least 10 years in the field of digitalization, digital transformation and profound understanding of digital transformation is required with specific experience implementing and monitoring digital strategies and action plans.
- Experience in managing a high-level strategic team.
- Previous senior level experience in development assistance or related work for a donor organization, governmental institutions, NGO, or private sector / consulting firm is required.

Language Requirements:

- Fluency in oral and written English. Good writing skills are highly desirable and previous publications will be considered as an asset during evaluation.