
TERMS OF REFERENCE

- A. Job Title:** **International consultant for capacity building of LPAs from Cahul and Ungheni focal regions in the field of growth poles and decentralized territorial cooperation**
- B. Duty Station:** Home based assignment with two field visits in Moldova to Ungheni and Cahul municipalities
- C. Project Reference:** EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme (funded by EU)
- D. Contract Type:** Individual Contract (IC)
- E. Duration of Assignment:** 38 working days during April – August 2023

F: Background:

EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme (hereafter the Programme) is based on the European Commission Decision on the Implementation of the 2018 Annual Action Programme for the Republic of Moldova and is funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme. The purpose of the five-year Programme lies in strengthening the economic, territorial and social cohesion in the Republic of Moldova by facilitating smart, green, inclusive, sustainable and integrated socio-economic local development and improving the living standards of citizens in the focal regions: Cahul and Ungheni.

To achieve this major goal, the Programme aims to address the urban-rural gap and regional disparities, stimulate economic growth, create jobs for men, women and young people in the focal regions and improve the attractiveness of the focal regions (small towns and villages) taking into account climate change and gender perspectives in Programme's activities.

Specific objectives:

1. To strengthen transparency, accountability of local public authorities and citizen participation in local governance processes in the focal regions;
2. To improve citizens' access to quality public services and utilities in the focal regions;
3. To create employment opportunities for men and women in the focal regions and improve the attractiveness of the focal regions for investors and entrepreneurs;
4. To promote the smart specialization of the economy of the focal regions through the development of the clustering and value chain approach.

Programme objectives will be achieved through measures focused on: (i) capacity building to support the implementation and monitoring of local economic development plans; (ii) involvement of civil society in local planning, governance processes and delivery of basic social services; (iii) provision of investment funding to support the creation and/or development of social and technical infrastructure, which in combination with the results of interventions (i) and (ii) above, will have an immediate, visible and tangible impact on job creation, living standards of the population in focal regions.

The Program approach in promoting local economic development in the Republic of Moldova is focusing on increasing the competitiveness of cities and towns with economic potential and their

positive impact on adjacent rural areas. The program's methodology aligns with a change of paradigm for the regional development which encourages the accelerated social-economic development of the strongest regional urban centres to become growth poles capable of promoting development in the adjacent rural areas. Six municipia are identified as potential regional growth poles in the Republic of Moldova and two of them, including Cahul and Ungheni, which are main beneficiaries of the EU4MD Program. The Program is based on the concept of interdependence between the town and its surrounding communities, with the urban growth pole acting as a coordinating centre for the functional urban and rural area. During implementation the Programme provided assistance and support to improve the necessary services and infrastructure at the government level, stimulate private investment and create employment opportunities at the private sector level, and strengthen citizen participation and democratic governance processes plus their capacity to demand rights at the population level. Thus, at the level of the two growth pole municipalities there is already some experience in territorial cooperation between the growth pole city and the neighbouring municipalities. It is the right time to move to a more advanced stage of decentralised territorial cooperation.

As international experience attests ([Romania Catching-Up Regions : Metropolitan Romania \(worldbank.org\)](http://www.worldbank.org)) the decentralised territorial cooperation between local public authorities to solve common development problems has well-defined institutional framework, clearly defined areas of responsibility, services and competences, identified sources and well-established financing modalities, monitoring, evaluation and control structures. These elements ensure operability, functionality, but most importantly sustainability of decentralised territorial cooperation. Given the lack of knowledge, experience and practice of cooperation, the local authorities of both beneficiary municipalities have requested assistance in gaining in-depth knowledge of this field and visiting other localities abroad to learn on the spot about advanced experiences of cooperation and good practices.

The main tasks of the selected international consultant will be to organize and moderate training sessions in the field of decentralized territorial cooperation, to organize a study visit abroad to one or two growth pole cities and to elaborate a Roadmap containing short, medium and systemic actions for strengthening the territorial cooperation of the two growth pole cities, Cahul and Ungheni with the rural communities in their area of influence.

G. Objective:

The EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme is seeking to hire an International Consultant to provide guidance and technical expertise in promoting the growth pole concept and road-mapping the interventions for supporting two growth poles from the Republic of Moldova to build and strengthen the decentralised territorial cooperation of towns with the rural communities in their area of influence.

H. Scope of work and expected outputs:

The overall objective of the International Consultant is to develop a concept of, organise and carry out training and consultancy activities to promote the concept of growth poles and decentralised territorial cooperation and to roadmap the interventions for strengthening territorial cooperation of towns with the rural communities in their area of influence.

To achieve the objective, the international Consultant will:

- Define practical approach to organise training, study visit, to provide consultancy and expertise.
- Draft the concept, organize and conduct at least two days of training for representatives of local public authorities from Ungheni and Cahul municipalities and surrounding communities (min. 20 participants).
- Draft the Agenda and organize a study visit abroad to learn about the growth poles concept and decentralized territorial cooperation and best practice examples.
- Perform tasks according to the requirements and standards of excellence and best practices in consulting, mentoring and coaching.
- Develop progress reports, conclusions and recommendations for further similar actions organised by the Programme.

At the same time, the Consultant will be responsible for the presentation and overall quality of all Deliverables of the given assignment, according to the agreed framework and methodology.

In this regard, the selected consultant shall carry out the following activities:

1. Initiate the activities

At the inception phase, selected Consultants will conduct the following activities:

- Prepare the methodological approach to achieve the tasks set and coordinate the approach with the Programme.
- Agree with the Program and local public authorities the group of participants at trainings and study visit, the period of activities, training sessions and other aspects relevant to the this assignment.
- Plan the training activities in detail, draft Agenda, mentioning the expected results/deliverables.
- Prepare and submit a progress report on the activities carried out at this stage.

2. Develop training materials and logistical preparation for training sessions

The Consultant will develop a set of training materials on the growth poles concept and decentralized territorial cooperation. The training sessions will cover, but will not be limited to the following topics:

1. The growth poles concept:
 - a. Theories, Approaches
 - b. Advantages and stages of territorial cooperation
 - c. Case studies, success stories and best practices (France, Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Baltic countries, etc.)
2. Legal framework and institutional arrangements of territorial cooperation in urban metropolitan zones
 - a. Legal provisions
 - b. Organization forms (case studies).
3. Areas of territorial cooperation urban-rural communities, competences, public services (including green and digital transformation of public services).
 - a. Domains of territorial cooperation
 - b. Public services
 - c. Economic development

- d. Partnerships
4. Financing instruments for decentralized territorial cooperation
 - a. Practical approach and mechanisms for joint financing of cooperation activities and joint development projects
 - b. Supporting programs and projects.

The selected Consultant will also agree with local public authorities and Program the logistical aspects of the training.

3. Delivery of training sessions

The contracted consultant will deliver at least 2 (two) days of training in each focal region. The willingness of LPA representatives to participate will be taken into consideration when organising training sessions and selecting the type of training sessions - hybrid, offline or online - sessions. At least 20 participants are expected to attend the training sessions in each focal region.

Before starting the training sessions, the Consultant will submit to the Programme for endorsement – draft agenda, brief description of training modules (purpose, content, expected results, etc.), PPT presentations, case studies, sample of evaluation questionnaire.

Purely theoretical training sessions will be avoided. Only practical capacity building measures will be pursued, tailored to possibilities and oriented to opportunities. The training programme will be organised in such a way as to:

- be adjusted to the level of knowledge and skills of the participants;
- be based on the practical approach and geared to 'learning by doing';
- include relevant case studies, examples of successful and negative practices;
- be interactive, using adult learning techniques, audio and video materials, including a bibliography of recommended informational materials;
- incorporate a human rights-based approach, social inclusion, sustainable development and green economy, the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and the gender equality approach.

The aspects of organisation, training materials, trainer performance and other relevant issues will be assessed at the end of the training sessions.

4. Organisation of study visit abroad

The contracted Consultant will organise a study visit (4 days) abroad the country to learn about the growth pole concept and decentralised territorial cooperation of towns with surrounding communities and best practice examples in this field. The study visit will include at least 2 growth pole cities which should be similar in size to Ungheni and Cahul (up to 100 thousand population). Examples in this respect could be: Oradea, Satul Mare, Zalau, or similar towns in the EU.

The study visit will be attended by representatives of local public authorities of Cahul and Ungheni municipalities and neighbouring communities (up to 20 participants).

The study visit will aim to consolidate the knowledge acquired during the training courses but also to practically clarify all aspects and steps in the organization and functioning of territorial cooperation.

Note: *The epidemiological situation in and out of country will be taken into account when organising the study visit, as well as the willingness of the participants to take part.*

The tasks of the Consultant on this activity will include:

- Coordinate with hosts and agree on the locations of visits.
- Develop Agenda of the visit, which will include visited institutions, speakers, topics of presentations.
- Support in organization of all logistical aspects, accommodation, local transport, lunches and coffee breaks, meeting rooms, etc.
- Prepare information materials for participants, if necessary.
- Attend the study visits.
- Sum up the conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations for participants and the Programme.

The study visit shall:

- Be organised in accordance with the objectives set in this ToR.
- Meet the needs of participants in study visit.
- Be based on knowledge of advanced experiences and successful practices and address practical issues.
- Include relevant case studies already implemented or being implemented.
- Be interactive.

Before organising any study visit, the Consultant will submit to the Programme for endorsement – the study visit agenda, brief description of topics addressed (purpose, content, expected results, etc.), model case studies, case studies presented and other materials used.

Note: *All study visit related costs will be covered by the Programme.*

5. Support the process of elaboration of Roadmaps for strengthening territorial cooperation of Cahul and Ungheni towns with surrounding communities

In this stage the consultant will provide methodological support and coaching for elaboration of Roadmaps for strengthening territorial cooperation of Cahul and Ungheni towns with surrounding communities. This will include:

- Provide methodological support and coaching in the process of identification of local strength, common problems, winning points, advantages to be capitalized via integrated territorial cooperation.
- Organize and conduct workshops for elaboration of Roadmaps (at least 2 workshops in each focal region).
- Draft Roadmaps for strengthening territorial cooperation of Cahul and Ungheni towns with surrounding communities (incorporate “quick wins”, “midterm actions” and “catalytical” interventions).
- Provide recommendations to the Programme Management in conceptualizing the further technical assistance and financing of the interventions in Cahul and Ungheni “metropolitan zones” to support the implementation of the elaborated Roadmaps.

6. Completion of activities.

The contracted Consultant will sum up the implemented activities and achieved results and will submit a Final Report to the Programme, which will describe the input to the implemented activities, achieved results, learnt lessons and recommendations to the Programme.

I. Expected Deliverables:

Item no.	DELIVERABLES	Estimate Workdays	Tentative timeframe
	Tasks		
I.	<p>Initiation of activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop the methodological approach and detailed Work Plan; ✓ Agree with the Program and local public authorities the logistic and organizational issues ✓ Prepare Inception Report <p>Deliverable 1: Inception Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Methodology ✓ Detailed implementation plan ✓ Lists of participants at trainings ✓ Logistic Note on training sessions and study visit. 	3 working days	By April 30, 2023
II.	<p>Develop training materials and logistical preparation for training sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop training programme and modules, agendas, adjusted to the needs of the beneficiaries and the current context (for 2 days of training in each region). ✓ Prepare presentations, information materials, as appropriate. <p>Deliverable 2: Progress Report 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Trainings concept ✓ Draft agendas ✓ Information materials (word version and power point presentations) endorsed by the Program. 	5 working days	By May 10, 2023
III.	<p>Deliver training sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Moderate and deliver 2 (two) days of training (possibly online) with the participation of the identified groups of participants; ✓ Summary of conclusions and recommendations. ✓ Evaluation of the results of the training activities implementation (Questionnaire). <p>Deliverable 3: Progress Report 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Progress Report that will include a description of how the training sessions were conducted, the inputs provided during the training process, ✓ Results of the participants knowledge assessment questionnaire. 	5 working days	By May 30, 2023

Item no.	DELIVERABLES	Estimate Workdays	Tentative timeframe
	Tasks		
IV.	<p>Organisation of study visit abroad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coordinate with "hosts" and agree on the locations of visits; ✓ Develop agendas; ✓ Organise all logistical aspects: accommodation, transport, lunches and coffee breaks ✓ Take part in study visits. ✓ Sum up the conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations for participants and the Programme. <p>Deliverable 4: Progress Report 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Progress Report 3 will include a description of the contributions made to the organisation of study visits ✓ The study visit agenda ✓ Information materials ✓ Power point presentations used, photo and video materials, summary of conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. 	15 working days	By June 15, 2023
V.	<p>Support the process of elaboration of Roadmaps for strengthening territorial cooperation of Cahul and Ungheni towns with surrounding communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide methodological support and coaching in the process of identification of local strength, common problems, winning points, advantages to be capitalized via integrated territorial cooperation. ✓ Organize and conduct workshops for elaboration of Roadmaps (at least 2 workshops in each focal region). ✓ Draft Roadmaps. <p>Deliverable 5: Progress Report 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Progress Report 4 will include description on coaching local teams in elaboration of Road Maps ✓ Draft Road Maps for Cahul and Ungheni ✓ Recommendations to the Programme Management in conceptualizing the further technical assistance and financing of the interventions in Cahul and Ungheni "metropolitan zones" to support the implementation of the elaborated Roadmaps. 	8 working days	By July 15, 2023
VI.	<p>Completion of activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Draft the Final Report on the activities implemented. 	2 working days	By July 30, 2023

Item no.	DELIVERABLES	Estimate Workdays	Tentative timeframe
	Tasks		
	<p>Deliverable 6: Final Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Final Report will describe the contribution made to the implementation of the activities, results achieved, lessons learnt, best practices accumulated and a set of recommendations for further activities in the field to the Programme. 		
	TOTAL estimated number of working days	38 working days	

J. Organizational Settings:

The International Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Project/Local Development Manager, in close cooperation with the Local Coordinators in Ungheni and Cahul focal regions.

The work of the International Consultant will be mainly home-based (office/home-based) applying online meetings and communication. During the assignment period the Consultant will carry out at least 2 (two) visits to Cahul and Ungheni (up to 6 (six) working days in total including time for travel). All travel costs to and from the location of the contract (Cahul and Ungheni) will be covered by the Consultant, hence, transport costs must be included in the consolidated financial offer. At the same time, the Consultant will have to participate in the study visit, but the costs for this trip (study visit) should not be included in the consolidated financial offer.

Before starting the implementation of the tasks, the Consultant will attend a kick-off meeting with the participation of EU4MD: Focal Regions Programme representatives to agree on the implementation approach.

The Programme will assist in organising training sessions, round tables, working sessions (it will offer its electronic platforms for online sessions).

All deliverables mentioned above will be endorsed by the Programme Manager within *14 calendar days* of submission. All deliverables will be presented in Romanian language.

All activities in this contract will be carried out in a gender-sensitive manner and by applying the human rights-based approach, green economy and efficient use of resources, circular economy, and use of renewable natural resources.

K. Financial Arrangements:

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 the daily fee, taxes, and number of anticipated working days).

Travel

Two travel missions are envisaged in the framework of the current assignment (two field visits in Moldova to Ungheni and Cahul municipalities). The exact duration and period of the mission shall be coordinated with EU4MD: Focal Regions Programme. For purpose of estimation of services' costs, the expected duration of each mission, could be up to 3 (three) working days, depending on the scope.

All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel. In general, UNDP should 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 the respective business unit and Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

The travel costs to Moldova shall be indicated separately in the financial proposal and will be covered only if the travel will be allowed in the COVID-19 context.

L. Confidentiality:

Materials provided to the International 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:

- Master's Degree (or equivalent) in Public Administration, Sociology, Economics, Management and Business administration or other related fields. A PhD's degree is considered an advantage.

II. Years and sphere of experience:

- At least 7 years of practical experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development (*proof: the list of the last 3 contracts in which the Consultant was involved in the last 7 years and the role therein must be submitted with the application package*).
- At least 5 years of international experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development (*proof: the list of the last 3 contracts in which the Consultant was involved in the last 5 years and the role therein must be submitted with the application package*).
- Experience in facilitating, coaching, mentoring, delivering training courses (*proof: the list of last 3 events/training courses facilitated must be submitted with application package*).

- Relevant experience in Central/East-European countries in the area of assignment is desirable.
- Previous experience of working with the UN agencies and/or international organisations, and/or EU/donor funded development projects/programmes is an asset.

III. Competencies:

- Proven competencies in elaboration of local development and regional development studies, public policies documents; designing strategies / programmes / specific regulatory framework.
- Strong understanding and knowledge of territorial cooperation of urban-rural communities and growth poles concept.
- Ability to analyse, plan, communicate effectively, organise and deliver expected results, adapt to different environments (cultural, economic, political and social).
- Ability to achieve deliverables and deadlines on time while maintaining high quality standards.
- Solid understanding of and ability to apply communication and collaboration tools and techniques (MS Office 365, ZOOM, Google tools etc.).
- Fluency in English language. Knowledge of Romanian and/ or Russian language would be an advantage.

IV. Personal qualities:

- Resourcefulness and creativity;
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.

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 noncitizens 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, with the detailed breakdown of costs supporting the all inclusive financial proposal (in USD, specifying a total requested amount per working day, including all related costs, e.g. fees, phone calls, transport costs etc.);
- Proposal (Motivation Letter): explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including previous experience in similar Projects (please provide brief information on each of the above qualifications, item by item, including information, links/copies of documents that prove participation in similar assignments);
- Curriculum Vitae including records on past experience in similar projects/assignments and concrete outputs obtained;

- Proof of professional experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development (minimum 3 contracts implemented at national and international level);
- Proof of professional experience in facilitating, coaching, mentoring, delivering training courses (minimum 3 events/training courses facilitated).

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:

- Master's Degree (or equivalent) in Public Administration, Sociology, Economics, Management and Business administration or other related fields;
- At least 7 years of practical experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development;
- At least 5 years of international experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development.

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
Technical		
Master's Degree (or equivalent) in Public Administration, Sociology, Economics, Management and Business administration or other related fields	<i>Master's – 5 pts; PhD –10 pts</i>	10
Professional practical experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development (minimum 7 years)	<i>Up to 7 years – 0 points, 7 years – 5 points, each additional year – 5 points up to max. 25 pts</i>	25
Demonstrated international experience in the field of local public administration or local economic development (minimum 5 years)	<i>Up to 5 years – 0 points, 5 years – 5 points, each additional year – 5 points up to max. 25 pts</i>	25
Professional experience in facilitating, coaching, mentoring, delivering training courses (minimum 3 events/training courses facilitated)	<i>Up to 3 events/training courses - 0 points, three events/training courses – 5 points, each additional event/training course – 5 pts. Up to max. 25 pts</i>	25
Professional experience in Central and Eastern Europe on similar assignments is desirable	<i>Each assignment - 5 pts, up to max 15 pts</i>	15
Experience in working with UN agencies is an asset	<i>Each assignment - 5 pts, up to max 15 pts</i>	15
Interview (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.		
Proven competencies in elaboration of local development and regional development studies, public policies documents; designing strategies / programmes / specific regulatory framework	<i>Limited competencies – 5 pts, fair competences – 15 pts., good competences – 30 pts, very good – 40 pts</i>	185
Strong understanding and knowledge of territorial cooperation of urban-rural communities and growth poles concept	<i>Limited up to – 5 pts, fair – 25 pts., good – 45 pts, very good – 65 pts</i>	
Solid understanding of and ability to apply communication and collaboration tools and techniques (MS Office 365, ZOOM, Google tools etc.), including the ability to analyses and use research data outside from the evaluated context	<i>Limited understanding and ability - up to 5 pts., satisfactory – 15 pts.; extensive – 20 pts</i>	
Resourcefulness and creativity	<i>No – 0 pts., to some extent – 10 pts., extensive experience / good skills - 15 pts</i>	
Strong communication and interpersonal skills	<i>No – 0 pts., to some extent – 10 pts., extensive experience / good skills - 15 pts</i>	

Command of English language	<i>Working knowledge/ intermediate – 15 pts, advanced – 20 pts</i>	
Additional languages: knowledge of Romanian and/or Russian	<i>5 pts per language, max. total 10 pts</i>	
Maximum Total Technical Scoring		300

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