



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title: National Consultant/ Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Specialist
Project: Multidimensional response to emerging human security challenges in Moldova
Reporting to: UNDP Moldova"
Duty Station: Chisinau, Republic of Moldova
Contract Type: Individual Contract (IC)
Duration: up to 89 working days during September 2023 – February 2024

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Moldova is facing a compound crisis of energy and food security, curtailed economic growth, growing inflation, limited institutional capacities and divisions in society, aggravated by the continuing socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. The refugee crisis presents an additional challenge that requires sustained attention and support from the international community.

Without urgent intervention, the deepening socio-economic, energy, food and human security crises has the potential to derail the trajectory of development, and drastically increase human suffering of people in Moldova, whether Ukrainian refugees, third country nationals, or Moldovan citizens (including those from minority ethnic groups). There are risks of massive outmigration and brain drain, as an immediate impact of the worsening of the socio-economic situation, depleting the country of its major asset: human capital.

The overall objective of the intervention is to protect human security and enhance the resilience of the Republic of Moldova, in order to address the multifaceted and interconnected challenges of the current socio-economic, food and energy shocks. The three specific objectives are:

Specific objective 1: To enhance people's energy security through access to affordable energy that supports livelihoods and energy-efficient production.

Specific objective 2: To enhance food security by supporting the government to implement its Food Security Strategy, thereby strengthening the capacities of agricultural producers affected by the compound crises.

Specific objective 3: To enhance community security by capacitating the police service and community actors to deliver on the principles of social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.

With this project, UNDP ensures that immediate humanitarian assistance is complemented by development efforts across three core insecurities (Energy, Food, Community) to protect and maintain vital systems, structures and a capacity to support Moldova's resilience. Ultimately, the advancement of human security in Moldova will give rise to more tangible and sustainable results that comprehensively address root causes and drivers behind current and emerging challenges, identify priorities based on the actual needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the governments, institutions and the target group of people, and advance solutions that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all peoples and communities.

The project is financed through the Japan Supplementary Budget for a period of 1 year and the total budget of the Specific Objective 1 is around 2.2. mln USD.

The Specific Objective 1/Component 1 will create pre-requisites for secure and affordable energy supply to improve people's living conditions and of the productions processes. The activities under Objective/Component 1 of the project range from capacity building for biomass boilers operators to grant scheme for households, biomass producers, SMEs and revamping of related platforms to enable access to biomass-related information such as follows:

The foundations of the solid biofuels sector in the Republic of Moldova were laid between 2012 and 2017 when, through a multidimensional approach, several projects aimed at creating a solid biofuels market were implemented. Thus, in 2017 in the Republic of Moldova there was a demand for solid biofuels in the form of pellets and briquettes provided by approximately 320 public institutions and over 1200

domestic consumers, there were over 70 producers of solid biofuels, there was a laboratory for checking the quality of solid biofuels, there were training programs ranging from school children to solid biofuel plant operators. After 2018, the solid biofuels sector experienced a recession, this being influenced by several factors such as the very low price of natural gas, the precarious institutional framework to ensure the continuity of the launched initiatives, the lack of political support for the sector, etc.

The energy crisis affecting the Republic of Moldova starting in the fall of 2021 highlighted the importance of the biofuels sector for the national economy but also from the point of view of energy security. At the same time, it demonstrated the need for the unconditional development of this sector in the situation where the stable supply of energy resources of the country still remains a challenge.

In terms of producing of solid biofuels, official data shows a production volume of solid biofuels that varies between 21.7 thousand tons in 2021 and 30.6 million tons in 2020, the average for the analysed period being 25.5 thousand tons. The average volume of solid biofuels imported in the period 2019-2021 is 4299 tons of which 2305 tons represent briquettes and 1994 tons pellets. The average volume of biofuels exported during this period is 221 tons and is represented only by pellets. Considering this, there is an average volume of biofuels available on the market of approximately 29.57 thousand tons, 24.4% out of which are imported.

According to the statistical data, a minimum volume of 21.8 thousand tons of solid biofuels was consumed in 2020 and a maximum of 28.3 thousand tons consumed in 2021. There are 265 public institutions consumers of solid biofuels, totalling an installed capacity of 57 MW and 1159 households that have solid biofuel plants with a total installed capacity of 26.2 MW.

There were identified several problems within the solid biofuels producing sector, e.g. difficulties in diversifying raw material sources; accessibility of the equipment for the collection and primary preparation of raw materials, low financial and administrative capacities of economic agents to manage the situation of diversification of raw material sources; high rates for the credits, low interest of the local public authorities, state-owned enterprises and other state entities that, as a result of their activity, generate biomass waste, to send for solid biofuels production, etc.

With support of the Energy and Biomass Project, financed by EU and implemented during 2011-2018 by UNDP in November 2016, the web portal www.piata-biomasa.md has been launched. It represents a platform where the demand meets the offer, solid biofuel boilers, raw materials and market-specific services. The portal functions as a market of biomass products; its home page is a page for product sale and purchase announcement publication. It provides also modular information on green technologies available on Moldovan market depending on the type of beneficiary – household consumer, company or public authority, as well as legal database in force on energy sector, studies and research on market evolution. Also, the consumers may find lists and contacts of solid biofuel suppliers, heating plants, authorized energy auditors, etc.

After project completion the portal has been handed over to EEA and in parallel Biomass Cluster/supposed to contribute to its further operation.

Currently the website of EEA and the website piata-biomass.md, which is managed by EEA (and which contains also the platform for interaction between the biomass fuel producers and potential buyers) have low accessibility. The JSB project is set to support relaunching of the website, but also other ICT related issues, such as remote monitoring system operated by EEA to monitor biomass heating systems functioning (207 units) and expanding it to other BHSs.

Considering this, UNDP Moldova, through the Project “Multidimensional response to emerging human security challenges” (Human Security Project), Objective 1/Component 1 - To enhance people’s energy security through access to affordable energy that supports livelihoods and energy-efficient production is providing support to improve the regulatory framework that will contribute to an improved raw material supply and to development of the solid biofuel market.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Scope of work

The ICT specialist will provide essential guidance on website rehabilitation, stakeholder engagement, and Remote Monitoring System (RMS) enhancement.

The specialist's duties include assessing website rehabilitation options, liaising with key stakeholders, and overseeing website creation. They will evaluate the current RMS status, conduct site surveys, propose solutions for updates, assist with supplier selection, and formulate implementation plans. User training for new systems will also be a part of their role. The ICT specialist will in detail provide:

- ICT specific consultancy regarding the options and mechanisms to rehabilitate the website piata-biomasa.md;
- ICT specific consultancy regarding the support for the Association of Biomass producers to create a website;
- Lead the communication with the main stakeholders e.g. Ministry of Energy, Energy Efficiency Agency, biofuel producers association and consumers;
- Develop detailed specifications for the creation of the biofuel related websites;
- Oversee the implementation and commissioning of the websites;
- ICT specific consultancy for the assessment of the current state of the Remote Monitoring System for biomass boilers;
- Conduct site surveys and provide site-survey reports;
- Provide solutions to update and reconnect RMS and sensors;
- Provide a plan to update and upgrade RMS system;
- Assist the selection of suppliers for implementation of missing or new components for RMS;
- Develop detailed specifications, test, training and implementation plans;
- Perform user training for new implemented systems.

Overall, the ICT Specialist will play a vital role in advancing digital infrastructure within the biomass industry, driving efficiency, communication, and technology integration.

b. Deliverables and Timeline

The consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:

No.	Deliverables	Timeframe
1.	Deliverable 1: Assessing the existing biofuel market site (www.piata-biomasa.md). Prepare a detailed report regarding the feasibility to reuse site and necessities, including all ICT related components, to relaunch the site. (up to 5 working days).	September 2023
2.	Deliverable 2: Assess requirements and draw a detailed technical specification for the rehabilitation of piata-biomasa.md website (up to 8 working days).	October 2023
3	Deliverable 3: Provide consultancy services for the Association of Biomass Producers regarding creation of the organization's website and/or other ICT related aspects. Draft Technical specifications for the website. (up to 10 working days).	October 2023
4.	Deliverable 4: Oversee the implementation and launch of the biomass related websites. Provide a final report. (up to 20 working days).	October 2023 - February 2024
5.	Deliverable 5: Assessing the operation of the Remote Monitoring System for biomass boilers, consisting of: a) Assessment report. b) Sites visit, surveys and inspections. c) Recommendations for upgrade and updates. (up to 20 working days).	September – November 2023
6.	Deliverable 6: Develop a Scope of Work and specifications for the selection of the supplier for RMS updates and upgrades. (up to 8 working days).	October – December 2023

7.	Deliverable 7: Oversee and lead the implementation of updates and upgrades for RMS. Provide monthly and final reports. (up to 18 working days)	November 2023 – February 2024
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MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

This is a part-time consultancy. The timeframe for the work is September 2023 – February 2024.

The consultant will work from the premises of the UNDP Moldova project office. He/she will use data available in Romanian, English and Russian, and will produce all the deliverables in English and Romanian languages. Shall the deliverables need to be translated into Russian; the project will cover the translation costs.

All deliverables must be quality reviewed and accepted by Team Leader and UNDP's Energy/Environment Cluster Lead. The payments will be disbursed in several instalments, upon the completion of the deliverables.

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 instalments 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) (see Annex 2 of the Offeror's Letter Confirming Interest and availability).

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

Qualifications and Experience:

- Master's degree or equivalent in the field of IT management, computer sciences, computer engineering or other relevant discipline;
- Excellent knowledge of the ICT policies and regulatory framework of the Republic of Moldova;
- Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience in planning, design, development, implementation, and maintenance of information systems;
- Proven previous experience (at least 2 previous assignments) in actively participating in the work related to conceptualization of Databases, IT Registers and/or IT Systems;
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the phases related to set-up and subsequent functioning of a National IT Informational System;
- Proven previous experience in working with Government on ICT related projects or similar;
- Demonstrated interpersonal and diplomatic skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with stakeholders at all levels and to present ideas clearly and effectively;
- Strong leadership and team management skills.

Skills and Competencies:

- Excellent quantitative and qualitative research skills;
- Proven capacity to produce reports and analyses in English;
- Consistently ensures timeliness and quality of work;
- Innovative and creative thinking;
- Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude;
- Excellent interpersonal and teamwork skills;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Ability to facilitate group processes, including when tensions arise.

Language:

- Proficiency in Romanian, English and Russian.

Personal qualities:

- Resourcefulness and creativity;
- Adherence to UN's values and ethical standards;
- Cultural and gender sensitivity;
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.

Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status. Please mention in CV if you belong to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment.

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.

Application Process:

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

- Proposal (Motivation Letter), explaining why he/she is most suitable for the work, including past experience in similar assignments, providing a brief information on above qualifications and methodology on how he/she will approach and conduct the work (if applicable).
- OFFEROR'S LETTER TO UNDP CONFIRMING INTEREST AND AVAILABILITY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR (IC) ASSIGNMENT
- CV with at least three names for a reference check.

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.

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

Evaluation:

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

- Citizen of the Republic of Moldova;
- Master's degree or equivalent in the field of IT management, computer sciences, computer engineering or other relevant discipline;
- At least 10 years of relevant professional experience in planning, design, development, implementation, and maintenance of information systems.

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 if the technical and financial offers have 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
<u>Technical</u>		
Master's degree or equivalent in the field of IT management, computer sciences, computer engineering or other relevant discipline	Master's Degree – 80 pts;	80
At least 10 years of relevant professional experience in planning, design, development, implementation, and maintenance of information systems	10 years – 40 pts., each additional year – 10 pts., up to max. 80 pts;	80
Extensive experience in actively participating in the work related to conceptualization of Databases, IT Registers and/or IT Systems	At least 4 projects – 40 pts; for each additional project – 10 pts; up to max. 60 pts;	60
At least 7 years' experience in engagement with Government Institutions on ICT related projects	At least 7 years of experience of working with Government Institutions on ICT related projects – 20 pts; for each additional year – 5 pts; up to max. 40 pts;	40
English, Romanian and Russian is required for this assignment	10 pts. per language, up to max. 30 pts;	30
Belonging to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment*	(no – 0 pts., to one group – 10 pts.)	10
Maximum Total Technical Scoring		300
<u>Financial</u>		
Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula: <u>$S = F_{min} / F * 200$</u> 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		200

**Under-represented group in the area of assignment are women. 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*

Winning candidate

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