

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job title:	National Consultant to integrate the Digital Delivery Unit under the Ministry of Economy and Digitalization
Duty Station:	Republic of Moldova, Chisinau
Reference to the project:	Accelerating a Just Energy Transition in Republic of Moldova
Contract type:	Individual Contract
Assignment type:	National Consultant
Contract duration:	August 2024 – July 2025
Expected workload:	216 working days
Indicative starting date:	01 August 2024

1. BACKGROUND

At the global level, UNDP's long-term vision is to help create a world in which digital is an empowering force for people and planet. Digital technology is a fundamental force for change in this century, reshaping economies, government, and civil society – thereby impacting almost every aspect of development. The profound consequences and exponential pace of digital transformation demands both local action and global leadership to reimagine development in a digital age.

In a rapidly evolving digital landscape, accentuated by the challenges and opportunities presented by the pandemic, the urgency for digital transformation has been brought to the forefront.

Recognizing this imperative, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has embarked on a comprehensive journey to harness the potential of the fourth industrial revolution. This initiative aims to revolutionize public institutions and society through a holistic and inclusive approach, ensuring that the benefits of digitalization are widespread and sustainable.

The Government of the Republic of Moldova has adopted the Digital Transformation Strategy for 2023-2030 (DTS), a forward-looking initiative elaborated with UNDP Moldova support, which underscores the country's commitment to embracing digital innovation and exploring a "whole-of-society" approach, thus ensuring that transformation is inclusive and sustainable.

The Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-2030, as well as the UNDP Digital Strategy 2022-2025, serve as the cornerstone of the current UNDP Moldova project, aligning with its mission to expedite digital transformation across various sectors, integrate digital tools in both public administration and the private sector, simplifying interactions between citizens and the state, and propelling the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNDP Moldova Digital Transformation portfolio

UNDP's mission is critical in supporting the complex and dynamic landscape of sustainable development in Moldova. Our engagements across government sectors, civil society, and academia are crucial in achieving the ambitious targets set by the SDGs agenda. In this context, the UNDP Moldova CO is strategically positioned as a reliable, responsive, and trusted provider of development services, supporting the Government's efforts to pursue its priorities.

As part of the CPD for 2023-2027, UNDP has committed to adopting a more integrated programme cycle approach to better leverage the value for system change to overcome institutional weaknesses in the country. Aligned with the UNSDCF 2023-2027, and in the spirit of building a #FutureSmartUNDP, part of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, corporate tools such as digital transformation and strategic innovation will be used to help the Government unpack and tackle complex development challenges that affect progress towards sustainable human development.

As the pace of digital technologies rapidly changes in availability, accessibility, and impact, and the digital disruption picks up, it is important that UNDP can leverage existing and emerging technologies in a pragmatic and structured manner to become a better partner. UNDP's ambition is not only to support governments and local communities to become "digital by default" but also to make sure digital solutions and initiatives aim and deliver impact. The pandemic, war in Ukraine, and other multiple crises have highlighted the reliance on digital tools and timely data and emphasized

the need for digital transformation, which has become one of the highest priorities for Moldova to impact all areas of human life.

Rethinking digital transformation opportunities

Digital transformation is already visible in Moldova, as the country has begun to transfer legal, social, and civil services delivery to online platforms. Although Moldova has (i) a developed digital infrastructure, with 4G coverage at 98%, (ii) well-placed e-Governance architecture, and (iii) an ICT sector with accelerated development, the country needs to systemically rethink digital transformation opportunities and focus on systemic transformation. Moldova must close the digital divide between rural and urban areas, people of different ages and genders, and improve/harmonize the legislative framework to align with international standards. UNDP supported the Government in developing a comprehensive National 2023-2030 Digital Transformation Strategy, which represents a bold engagement to accelerate digital transformation of the nation by exploring a 'whole-of-society' approach and is further actively engaged in ensuring that transformation is inclusive and sustainable.

A whole-of-society approach at the center of digital transformation

The National 2023-2030 Digital Transformation Strategy, as well as the UNDP Digital Strategy 2022-2025, serve as the cornerstone of the current UNDP Moldova engagements to expedite digital transformation across various sectors, integrate digital tools in both public administration and the private sector, simplify interactions between citizens and the state, and propel the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNDP Moldova is supporting women's and girls' integration in the field of science and technology, particularly promoting STEEAM-based education. To tackle digital inequality, UNDP Moldova has been equipping schools across the country with modern technology such as desk computers, laptops, smartboards, projectors, interactive boards, portable STEEAM laboratory devices, and tablets. This effort ensures that students, teachers, and school managers can futureproof their skills early in their lives and careers. Collaboration with programs such as "Tekwill in Every School," Future Classroom, UNICEF, and the European Union further enhances these efforts. Additionally, since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, UNDP has created opportunities for refugee children and women to familiarize themselves with STEEAM disciplines and acquire tech skills.

From e-Governance to digital government

National policies and regulatory frameworks for new technologies are often implemented reactively. In an era of accelerating digital transformation, governments must take proactive action to lead the way despite imperfect digital infrastructures and modest skill capacities within authorities. Governments need to increase their use of digital technology to deliver more effective services to both general and marginalized populations. This involves adding new value, promoting innovation, and reimagining development for the digital age.

UNDP Moldova has initiated the development of several portfolio interventions with cross-cutting digital transformation components (including "Accelerating a Just Energy Transition").

Digital Delivery Unit

Engaging a set of activities that facilitate the digital transformation of governance and the adoption of evidence-based policymaking, UNDP aims to significantly enhance the capacity of public institutions to plan and deliver more inclusive, accountable, and responsive public services.

Central to this effort is the support in the operationalization of the National Digitalization Council and the advancement of UNDP Moldova network of digital focal points within key ministries, designed to spearhead the strategic planning and implementation of the Digital Transformation Strategy.

UNDP support for the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization underscores the importance of a comprehensive Data Governance Framework and the formulation of evidence-based use cases, ensuring informed decision-making and increased governmental operational efficiency.

2. OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

UNDP Moldova seeks to contract a National Consultant (hereinafter "the Chief Digital Expert") to integrate the Digital Delivery Unit under the Ministry of Economy and Digitalization and facilitate the implementation of the National Digital Transformation Strategy 2030.

To achieve these objectives, the Chief Digital Expert is expected to conduct the following tasks:

- Liaise with the network of existing digital focal points across line Ministries to align and integrate digital transformation efforts (100% Digital agenda of the Moldovan Government);

- Facilitate the operationalization of the National Council for Digitalization, under the aegis of the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization;
- Oversee the development and implementation of the three programs under the National Digital Transformation Strategy, specifically the Digital Society Development Program, the ICT Sector and Digital Economy Development Program, and the Public Sector e-Transformation Program.
- Support the development and implementation of a comprehensive methodology for service digitalization;
- Participate and provide advisory in the scoping of version 2.0 of the EVO digital identity app.
- Provide expert advice to the Ministry on assessing digital transformation requirements for transposing the EU acquis and identify areas where Moldova's digital infrastructure and public services need to adapt to meet EU standards.

The Consultant is expected to collaborate closely with the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, particularly the State Secretary for Digitalization, the UNDP Moldova Country Office and experts, partner institutions, and stakeholders to deliver professional, effective, and high-quality contributions.

3. KEY ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

Key activities and deliverables	Tentative timetable
Activity 1: Develop the integration framework and tracker of the digital initiatives across line Ministries to align the digital transformation efforts under the Implementation Programmes of the National Digital Transformation Strategy	
Deliverable 1.1: Integration framework and tracker of the digital initiatives across line Ministries developed and validated with digital focal points in line Ministries.	by 15 December 2024 16 WDs
Deliverable 1.2: Develop 4 analytical papers (quarterly) on alignment and integration outcomes of digitalization initiatives across MDED and line Ministries, in line with implementation programmes of the NDTs 2023-2030.	by 15 July 2025 24 WDs
Activity 2: Develop the operationalization framework for 2024-2025 of the National Council for Digitalization	
Deliverable 2.1: Operationalization plan for 2024-2025 of the National Council for Digitalization, including governance structure and operational procedures.	by 30 September 2024 8 WDs
Deliverable 2.2: Report on the Council's activities for 2024, including case studies and recommendations for improvements of monitoring and tracking mechanisms.	by 15 December 2024 20 WDs
Deliverable 2.3: Report on the Council's activities for Q1 of 2025, including case studies and key achievements.	by 15 July 2025 10 WDs
Deliverable 2.4: Report on the Council's activities for Q2 of 2025, including case studies and key achievements.	by 15 July 2025 10 WDs
Activity 3: Assess the development and implementation of three programs under the National Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-2030	
Deliverable 3.1: Status assessment paper for 2024 on the Digital Society Development Program's implementation.	by 15 December 2024 8 WDs
Deliverable 3.2: Status assessment paper for 2024 on the Public Sector e-Transformation Program implementation.	by 15 December 2024 8 WDs
Deliverable 3.3: Status assessment paper for 2024 on the ICT Sector and Digital Economy Development Program implementation.	by 15 December 2024 10 WDs
Deliverable 3.3: Country report for 2024 on the implementation of the National Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-2030. <i>Note: the report will include the assessment of the progress of the three Strategy programs, including milestones achieved, key results and recommendations for future programming.</i>	by 15 March 2025 20 WDs
Activity 4: Development and implementation of a comprehensive methodology for public services digitalization	

Deliverable 4.1: First draft redaction of the public services digitalization methodology, including best practices, applicable quality standards and implementation plan.	by 15 November 2024 18 WDs
Deliverable 4.2: Consultation rounds (minimum 3) delivered for public institutions (conducted with the participation of the MDED and the e-Governance Agency).	by 15 December 2024 6 WDs
Deliverable 4.3: Final redaction of the public services digitalization methodology.	by 15 January 2025 16 WDs
Activity 5: Asses the requirements for transposing the EU acquis on digital governance	
Deliverable 5.1: Assessment matrix on requirements for EU acquis on digital governance transposition by the Republic of Moldova	by 15 November 2024 10 WDs
Deliverable 5.2: Updated recommendation document outlining modification requirements for Moldova's digital infrastructure and public services, to reflect the assessments matrix from Deliverable 5.1.	by 15 February 2025 12 WDs
Activity 6: Review the scoping of version 2.0 of the EVO digital identity app	
Deliverable 6.1: Revised report of the MDED scoping of the version 2.0 of the EVO digital identity app for alignment to methodology for public services digitalization (from deliverable 4.3) and EU acquis (from deliverable 5.1).	by 30 June 2025 20 WDs

Notes: Deliverables and the final timeline can be amended or specified for the purpose of the assignment.

All deliverables should be agreed with UNDP and be provided in electronic copy.

Payment will be made upon the successful completion of the tasks assigned.

4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The timeframe for the work of the Consultant is planned for the period August 2024 – July 2025.

During this time, the Consultant is expected to work a total of 216 working days (part-time consultancy).

The Consultant will report to the UNDP Moldova Policy Specialist, or his designee, who will be responsible for supervising consultant's performance. Provided deliverables shall be confirmed by the Ministry of Economic Development Digitalization.

For the duration of the assignment the Project will provide the Consultant with the necessary information and materials for the fulfilment of the assignment.

The fulfillment of the assignment will include desk reviews, development of analytical tools, reports and documents, as well as facilitation and participation in associated meetings and/or public events.

All communications and documentation related to the assignment will be in Romanian and/or English.

5. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Payments will be disbursed in tranches upon submission and validation of deliverables (certifying that the services have been satisfactorily performed).

Travel

Travel cost is not envisaged under current assignment.

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

6. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

Academic Qualifications:

- University degree (or higher) in Informational Technologies, Engineering, Business Administration/ Management, Economics, or other relevant fields.

Experience and knowledge:

- At least 5 (five) years of progressive experience (at the national and/or international level) in management, consultancy, or technical advisory within the field of informational technologies and/or data.

- At least 3 (three) years of experience providing advisory services in digital governance, utilizing domain-specific tools and approaches.
- At least 2 (two) years of experience in designing and/or coordinating assignments related to digital public and/or private sector services.
- Proven knowledge of the national and EU legislation in the area of digital transformation.
- Previous experience within an UNDP Project and/or other international organization(s) will be considered an advantage.

Competencies:

- Ability to perform and deliver expected results in a fast-paced working environment.
- Strong sense of initiative and ability to work independently.
- Strong analytic capacity and ability to identify relevant findings and prepare analytical documents in a clear and concise manner.
- Demonstrated interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively and build meaningful partnerships with all stakeholders.
- Fluency in Romanian (verbal and written) is a must.
Strong knowledge of English considered as an advantage.

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.

7. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS

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

- Offeror's letter to UNDP confirming interest and availability for the individual contractor (IC) assignment, incorporating Financial Proposal in Annex 2

Upload the signed version of the filled in Offeror's letter to UNDP confirming interest and availability for the individual contractor (IC) assignment. 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.

The Financial Proposal shall be additionally submitted directly in the system. Please ensure there are no mathematical errors and that amounts from Offeror's Letter to UNDP Confirming Interest and Availability match with your offer in the system.

- Duly updated CV with at least 3 references.

Important notice: applicants who have the statute of Government official / public servant will be asked to submit the following documentation:

- a no-objection letter in respect of the applicant received from the Government, and;
- certification in writing by the employer to be on official leave without pay for the entire duration of the individual contract.

8. EVALUATION

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

- University degree (or higher) in Informational Technologies, Engineering, Business Administration, Management, Economics, or other relevant fields.
- At least 5 (five) years of progressive experience (at the national and/or international level) in management, consultancy, or technical advisory within the field of informational technologies and/or data.
- At least 3 (three) years of experience providing advisory services in digital governance.
- 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 / 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.

Winning candidate

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

Criteria	Scoring	Points Obtainable
<u>Technical</u>		
University degree (or higher) in Informational Technologies, Engineering, Business Administration, Management, Economics, or other relevant fields.	<i>Bachelor's degree – 5 pts. Master's degree – 10 pts. PhD degree – 15 pts.</i>	15
At least 5 (five) years of progressive experience (at the national and/or international level) in management, consultancy, or technical advisory within the field of informational technologies and/or data.	<i>5 years – 15 pts., each additional year of experience – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 45 pts.</i>	45
At least 3 (three) years of experience providing advisory services in digital governance, utilizing domain-specific tools and approaches.	<i>3 years – 15 pts., each additional year of experience – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 35 pts.</i>	35
At least 2 (two) years of experience in designing and/or coordinating assignments related to digital public and/or private sector services.	<i>2 years – 15 pts., each additional year of experience – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 35 pts.</i>	35
Previous experience within an UNDP Project and/or other international organization(s) will be considered an advantage	<i>each assignment – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 15 pts.</i>	10
<i>Subtotal Technical Scoring</i>		140
<u>Interview</u>		
<i>(The first three candidates who passed technical evaluation criteria with the best score shall be invited for an online interview and pass the cumulative analysis)</i>		
<u>Interview</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated knowledge of the digital transformation context, economic policy development and enhancement (<i>none – 0 pts, limited ≤ 5 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts</i>) • Proven knowledge of the national and EU legislation on digital transformation (<i>none – 0</i> 	150

	<p>pts, limited ≤10 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived ability to perform and deliver expected results in a fast-paced working environment (<i>none – 0 pts, limited ≤10 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts</i>) • Strong sense of initiative and ability to work independently (<i>none – 0 pts, limited ≤10 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts</i>) • Demonstrated interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively (<i>none – 0 pts, limited ≤ 5 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts</i>) 	
Belonging to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment*	No – 0 pts, Yes – 5 pts.	5
Proficiency in Romanian and English	2.5 pts each (5 pts total)	5
Maximum Total Technical Scoring		300

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

* 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.**

Winner

The winner is the candidate who cumulatively scored the maximum number of points (technical + financial).