

UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

Consultancy to support a gender responsive review of care systems in the ECA region

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Type of contract:	Individual Contract
Languages Required:	English + Romanian
Duration of Contract:	15 July - 30 November 2024
Expected Duration of Assignment:	Approximately 20 working days
Location:	Republic of Moldova

I. Background

Gender equality, women's empowerment, and accessible and adequate social protection are central priorities in UNDP's policy and programmatic agendas, acting as vital catalysts for achieving inclusive and gender responsive development outcomes. They are crucial for addressing poverty, reducing inequality, promoting social inclusion, fostering economic stability, and supporting human development. UNDP also recognizes the significant role that social care, as one of the pillars of social protection, plays in both economic productivity and sustainable development, emphasizing the importance of analyzing social care through a gender lens to identify entry points for making it truly effective and gender responsive.

Indeed, enhancing the gender responsiveness of care and social protection systems to address specific needs and vulnerabilities of men and women throughout their life and work career cycle is vital for inclusive growth and sustainable development, and a key priority outlined in the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. Similarly, the UNDP Regional Programme Document for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States 2022-2025 identifies the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5 ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls") as a targeted and cross-cutting programmatic objective, while in its Priority 2 on "Leaving no one behind in addressing persistent and new forms of poverty and inequalities", it reaffirms the importance of promoting inclusive labour markets and more effective social protection and social care policies.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of sustainable social care systems supported by robust social protection mechanisms to address escalating care needs and rising inequalities. Moreover, COVID-19 has brought into harsh light the system's shortcomings due to major financing gaps and inadequate investment in social infrastructure. In most countries, funding remains a major challenge due

to public finance deficits. The disproportionate impact of caregiving responsibilities on women, and its ramifications on their ability to engage in formal employment, highlight the urgency for policymakers to assess the resilience of their social care, social infrastructure and social protection systems. That assessment should ensure responsiveness to the diverse needs of men and women, fostering gender responsive approaches and promoting inclusive growth.

II. Objective of the assignment

UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) and UNDP Country Office (CO) in the Republic of Moldova are seeking to hire a national consultant. S/He will support a gender responsive review of social care systems, by applying a gender lens to normative, policy, institutional and financial frameworks and by identifying the steps needed to alleviate socially inefficient and unequal outcomes. The proposed analysis will focus on reviewing the country's social care policies, normative frameworks, the extent to which the social protection system supports care recipients and caregivers, labour standards and the quality of jobs of care workers, while also looking at the root causes, including social norms and gender stereotypes, of the unequal distribution of care responsibilities. Moreover, it will examine the institutional capacity to accommodate the rising demand for social care, sustainable and fair financing of care services and social infrastructure through a gender lens. By focusing on individual countries, as part of a regional exercise, this analysis will provide findings to inform policy discourse and advocacy to build inclusive care systems that empower women and contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth. The resulting policy recommendations will support individual governments in adopting gender responsive policies and strategies to enhance the care component of their social protection systems including leveraging fiscal space, expanding institutional capacity, financing care and providing sustainable social security benefits to care recipients and their providers.

The National Researcher is expected to support the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub as well as the UNDP Moldova Country Office in conducting a thorough desk review of critical documents in the area of care, collecting data and information and conducting semi-structured interviews with key stakeholder, partners and care beneficiaries. As part of the assignment, the national researcher will also assist IRH and CO in a review of the country's social protection expenditure focusing on the extent to which the quantity and quality of public and private sector spending on social care delivers policy goals and meets performance indicators for the care sector. The national researcher will assist the assessment of the level of investment in social care, how it is allocated across different agencies and levels of government, and support identifying possible interventions in the short, medium and long-term that would allow

governments to provide a suitable standard of social care benchmarked against, which for this exercise we would recommend, the European Care Strategy and the EU Work-Life Directive. The researcher will also support the development of recommendations to improve social care policies, social protection programmes, address harmful social norms and gender stereotypes regarding unpaid care responsibilities, and to enhance investments to build gender responsive care systems.

III. Duties and responsibilities

Under the supervision and guidance of UNDP Inclusive Growth and Gender Equality teams in IRH and the UNDP Moldova CO, and in line with the guidelines provided by UNDP IRH, the national researcher will be tasked with the following:

- Conduct a state-of-the-art comprehensive desk review of the care economy in the participating country, and an analysis of strategic documents and analytical tools at national level. This will focus on the care systems in each participating country, how care is delivered, the role of social security in supporting care beneficiaries and their caregivers, changes that have been introduced over the last five years that have attempted to redress gender inequalities and improve care provision, national standards for care provision, training for care workers, institutional capacity and financing for care services and infrastructure, the amount of national expenditure governments are allocating to care, gender norms and stereotypes, social protection systems, flexible and family-friendly work arrangements. The desk review and analysis will contribute to examining the existing discrepancies and disparities between the legal framework and the current state of implementation.
- Based on a systemic framework for collection of data, collect and disaggregate (by gender and other relevant factors, where applicable), relevant data of appropriate granularity, including but not limited to: population data (incl. specific relevant cohorts such as e.g., 65+), social indicators, time use surveys and unpaid care work data, employment data within social care sector, data on fiscal revenues of governments, revenues of social care providers, data on governments' and private spending on social care and social protection, short/mid-term key macroeconomic variables (GDP, fiscal revenues, expenditures on social care) incl. their official short/mid-term forecasts, number of social care providers differentiated by the governance hierarchy. Along with data, collect further information on institutional set-up of the country's systems of social care, including relevant legislation, social insurance and social assistance programmes, social care programmes, health insurance programmes, social norms and perceptions on gender roles, types of social care providers, distribution of social care services they provide.

- Prepare a list of relevant stakeholders, such as government officials, academics, private sector, CSOs with expertise, relevant employee associations, care recipients, caregivers, etc., and perform semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with those stakeholders to gather further insights on care and social protection systems and infrastructures, including policies, standards and services, gender norms and distribution of unpaid care responsibilities.
- Based on the findings, along with UNDP IRH and COs, prepare a first draft situational analysis of the current situation relating to care in the country by focusing on gendered patterns and inequalities, and addressing four care categories – care infrastructure, care-related social protection, care services and employment-related care.
- With UNDP IRH and COs, assess the current situation against the benchmarks to form the basis of draft recommendations (in English) that will be made to governments, as well as an assessment of the medium-term cost of implementing the draft recommendations and suggestions made as to possible sources of funding the draft recommendations.
- Participate in introductory and result workshops to align methodologies and validate findings, and with COs, identify key stakeholders to be invited to participate in the workshop.
- Following the workshop, with COs and IRH, finalize individual reports with recommendations and costing for the COs to submit to the government.

IV. Deliverables and time frame:

Deliverable 1: 50% by 20 September 2024

- Workplan submitted and active participation in the introductory workshop, and follow-up meetings, to familiarize with the methodology and ensure synchronized approach.
- Desk review, collection and disaggregation of data, collection of social care system information and semi-structured interviews and focus groups conducted in Moldova.
- First draft situation analysis, of the current situation related to care in the country, submitted.

Deliverable 2: 25% by 25 October 2024

- Recommendations and assessment of medium-term costs of implementation drafted.
- Feedback integrated and additional information and data provided, based on requests from IRH Inclusive Growth and Gender teams and Moldova.

- Online validation workshop attended, and summary of the outcomes produced.

Deliverable 3: 25% by 22 November 2024

- Summary of data and information, analysis, findings, and recommendations submitted.

Each deliverable as stated above is required to be delivered to UNDP IRH Inclusive Growth and Gender Equality Team Leaders, and Inclusive Growth Programme Officer and Gender and Inclusion Specialist in UNDP Moldova CO with satisfactory quality and in a timely manner. Each deliverable and change in the methodology, or objective must be discussed and accepted by UNDP IRH Inclusive Growth and Gender Equality Team Leaders and Inclusive Growth Programme Officer and Gender and Inclusion Specialist in UNDP Moldova CO.

V. Copyright

All information and products produced by contractor under this project will remain property of the UNDP.

VI. Monitoring and reporting requirements

The National Researcher will work under the supervision of UNDP IRH Inclusive Growth and Gender Equality Team Leaders and Inclusive Growth Programme Officer and Gender and Inclusion Specialist, and in close coordination with the UNDP IRH Social Protection Specialist and Research and KM Analyst and focal points at UNDP Country Offices. They shall comply with the system of monitoring, evaluation, and quality control, implemented by the UNDP. All necessary performance information, reports, statistics, electronic and paper version of the reports should be prepared and submitted for clearance by UNDP within the agreed period of time. After the completion of all deliverables, they will submit to the UNDP IRH Inclusive Growth and Gender Equality Team Leaders and Inclusive Growth Programme Officer and Gender and Inclusion Specialist a detailed report with description of the work performed and the key deliverables. All reports and results are to be submitted to the UNDP in electronic form (*.docx, *.xlsx, *.pptx, and *.pdf, SPSS output files or other formats accepted by UNDP).

VII. Management arrangements

All the products developed during the assignment should ensure the reference to the UNDP copyright and all content, logos any other intellectual property will be solely owned by UNDP. The implementation

of services will be monitored in accordance with the workplan, but UNDP reserves the right to request information about the current state of progress at any stage. The final decision on the evaluation of the work delivered will be made by the UNDP IRH Inclusive Growth and Gender Equality Team Leaders and Inclusive Growth Programme Officer and Gender and Inclusion Specialist.

VIII. Competencies

The competencies of each the locally recruited researchers will be:

Corporate competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism
- Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

Functional competencies:

- Strong interpersonal skills, communication and diplomatic skills, ability to work in team
- Strong analytical, reporting and writing abilities
- Strong organizational, coordination and time management skills
- Ability to organize tasks independently and assume responsibility
- Openness to change and ability to receive/integrate feedback
- Ability to work under pressure and tight deadlines
- Ability to adapt solutions and proposals to specificities of client organizations.

IX. Qualifications of the selected candidate

The selected candidate shall possess:

- A bachelor's degree in social sciences or a related discipline. A relevant post-graduate qualification is desirable.
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in areas of social protection, care or gender equality including gathering data and opinions from Government/CSO's/individual citizens on

social care issues. For a candidate with a relevant post-graduate qualification the experience qualification would be 3 years.

- Relevant professional experience in design, management, and delivery of complex assessments with multiple stakeholders in development cooperation in social care would be desirable.
- Experience in researching and analyzing government data and familiarity with systems of national accounts are desirable.
- English language proficiency in addition to local language proficiency.

X. Criteria for selection of best offer

The contract will be awarded to the best offeror based on their combined technical and financial scores. Only those bidders who reach the prescribed minimum technical score of 50 points will have their financial proposals considered.

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

- A bachelor's degree in social sciences or a related discipline. A relevant post-graduate qualification is desirable.
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in areas of social protection, care or gender equality including gathering data and opinions from Government/CSO's/individual citizens on social care issues. For a candidate with a relevant post-graduate qualification the experience qualification would be 3 years.

A. Technical Criteria (maximum score of 70) based as follows:

Criteria	Maximum points 70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Bachelor's degree in social sciences or related discipline plus 5 years' relevant professional experience. • A relevant Master's degree plus 3 years relevant professional experience. • Both 12 points • PhD plus 3 years relevant experience = 15 points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional years of relevant professional experience in the areas of social protection, care, or gender equality) including gathering the views of Government/CSO's/individual citizens on social care issues. • More than 7 years in total = 10 points • From 5 to 7 years in total = 8 points • 3 to 5 years in total = 6 points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant professional experience in design, management, and delivery of assessments with multiple stakeholders in development cooperation in social care • No experience = 0 points • Up to 2 years' experience = 8 points • 3 to 4 years' experience = 12 points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 or more years' experience = 14 points • 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in researching and analyzing government data and familiarity with systems of national accounts. • Over 8 years' experience = 16 points • From 5 to 7 years' experience = 14 points • From 3 to 5 years' experience = 10 points • Up to 2 years' experience = 6 points • No experience = 0 points • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in English is required, knowledge of the Romanian and Russian languages. • English = 10 points. • Romanian = 2.5 points. • Russian = 2.5 pt points. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15

B. Financial proposal – 30 points to the lowest priced bidder who meets the minimum technical score with other bidders meeting the minimum technical score prorated.

C. The contract will be awarded to the bidder with the highest combined technical and financial score.

XI. Documents to be submitted

The application submission is a two-step process. Failing to comply with the submission process may result in disqualifying the applications.

Interested candidates must include the following documents when submitting the applications:

- Cover letter explaining why you are the most suitable candidate for the advertised position. Please paste the letter into the "Resume and Motivation" section of the electronic application
- Filled P11 form or CV including past experience in similar projects and contact details of three referees.
- Sample report(s) and/ or links to online content authored/coauthored by the candidate that is relevant to this assignment (sample(s) can be submitted as .pdf together with other attachments.
- 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.

Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director.

Qualified women and members of minorities are encouraged to apply.



Due to large number of applications, we receive, we are able to inform only the successful candidates about the outcome or status of the selection process.