
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job Title:	National Consultant to conduct the Final Evaluation of the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme
Duty Station:	Home based with travel to Ungheni and Cahul regions.
Project reference:	EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme
Contract type:	Individual Contract (IC)
Duration of assignment:	40 days of consultancy

1. Background and context:

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 following **results** were envisaged at the inception of the Programme:

- Increased institutional capacity of LPAs for the implementation of locally-driven environmentally compliant socio-economic development strategy for integrated local growth and development;

- Improved broader stakeholder (e.g. CSO, private sector) engagement in the planning and monitoring of the socio-economic development strategy;
- Increased quality and availability of public services delivery, including in particular those targeting women; and increased performance of local public utilities;
- More favourable conditions for the attraction of investments, job creation and women and men's entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship;
- Development and functioning of clusters in line with the smart specialization approach.

The Programme was implemented through the following components:

Component 1: Transparency, accountability of local public authorities and citizen participation in local planning and governance

Activity 1.1: Support the territorial cooperation for a more effective promotion of Economic Growth Agenda

Activity 1.2: Strengthen the capacity of local authorities to become pro-active development actors

Activity 1.3: Design and build the necessary IT infrastructure to enable SMART integrated development, increased public participation and improved local services

Activity 1.4: Strengthen the local participatory development approach

Component 2: Improved access to, and quality of local public services and utilities

Activity 2.1: Increase the efficiency and quality of local utilities through inter-municipal cooperation and regionalization

Activity 2.2: Support joint community-based initiatives to improve the local service delivery for vulnerable groups

Component 3: Employment opportunities through favourable conditions for attraction of investment, job creation and entrepreneurship

Activity 3.1: Improving the investment attractiveness of focal regions

Activity 3.2: Improving the competitiveness of private sector to generate more qualitative jobs

Activity 3.3: Improving the national and international image of Ungheni and Cahul as rising regional 'growth poles'

Component 4: Smart economic specialization through the clustering and value chain approaches

Activity 4.1: Support the organization of local key economic sectors into dynamic growth-oriented clusters

Activity 4.2: Supporting the internationalization of regional economies through integration of key- economic sectors into advanced international (primarily EU) value chains

The Programme is implemented jointly by UNDP and UNICEF. UNDP is the Implementing Partner of this programme and is responsible for producing outputs and use of resources. UNICEF is contributing to the implementation of Component 2, Action 2.2.3, focused on improving the access to, and quality of local public services and utilities. Interventions under this result seek an improved access to quality child and adolescents' friendly social services within a child friendly modern social infrastructure and delivered by a well-trained social workforce.

The main counterparts of this Programme are the local stakeholders including representatives of the local public authorities, civil society organizations and the private sector, Regional Development Agencies, Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova, the State Chancellery, Organization for Entrepreneurship Development.

The Programme` interventions are based on national, regional, local and international trends, and are in line with planning documents approved at all of these levels: they take into account the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Moldova 2030 Development Strategy, the new Regional Development Strategy 2022–2027, the National Programme of Development of Growth Pole Cities for 2021–2027, and the EU-Republic of Moldova Association Agenda.

They are people-centred, based on the principle of human rights and gender equality, and on strengthening and harnessing human potential, as well as green development. Detailed Programme Document (including logical framework or theory of change, monitoring plans and indicators), accomplishments and budget details can be found here: <https://www.undp.org/moldova/projects/eu4moldova-focal-regions>

Basic project information is presented in Table 1 below.

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION		
Project/outcome title	EU4Moldova: Focal regions Programme	
Project ID	00106290	
Corporate outcome and output	<i>The people of Moldova, especially most vulnerable, have access to enhanced livelihood opportunities, decent work and productive employment, generate by sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth</i>	
Country	Republic of Moldova	
Region		
Date project document signed	20 November 2019	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	20 November 2019	19 November 2024 (no-cost extension until July 19, 2025)
Project budget	US\$25,888,889 (\$22,911,111 managed by UNDP)	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation		
Funding source	European Union	
Implementing party¹	UNDP	

The **Logical Framework** of the Programme is presented in Annex 3.

2. Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

The purpose of the final (summative) evaluation is to provide a comprehensive and objective assessment of the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme, covering its entire implementation period from November 2019 to November 2024. This evaluation is being conducted to ensure accountability, assess achievements, and extract valuable lessons for future programming. The findings will inform key stakeholders—including UNDP, UNICEF, the EU Delegation to Moldova, local and central governments—on the Programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. The results of the evaluation will guide decision-making and planning for

¹ This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

future interventions aimed at fostering economic, territorial, and social cohesion in Moldova's focal regions of Cahul and Ungheni.

The evaluation comes at a critical juncture as the Programme is nearing completion (In October 2024, the Programme received an eight-month no-cost extension until the end of July 2025), providing an opportunity to reflect on its overall success and challenges. Given the Programme's objectives of addressing regional disparities, promoting inclusive socio-economic development, and enhancing public services, the evaluation will assess to what extent these objectives have been achieved. Furthermore, it will evaluate how cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, climate resilience, and human/child rights were integrated into the implementation process. In 2023, the Programme underwent a formative Mid-term Evaluation covering the period from November 2019 to November 2022.

Who will use the evaluation results and how:

1. **UNDP and UNICEF** will use the evaluation to measure Programme outcomes, enhance their approaches for future programming, and scale up successful initiatives.
2. **EU Delegation** will utilize the findings to assess the effectiveness of EU-funded interventions and decide on potential future collaborations in Moldova.
3. **Local and Central Governments** will leverage the insights to improve governance, service delivery, and regional development planning in line with national priorities.
4. **Civil Society and Private Sector Stakeholders** will use the lessons learned to enhance their involvement in future regional development initiatives and public-private collaborations.

This evaluation is particularly essential as it aligns with the UNDP Country Office's evaluation plan and UNICEF 2023-2027 Costed Evaluation Plan, approved by Executive Board [2022-PL27-Moldova CEP-EN-2022.06.13.pdf \(unicef.org\)](#), ensuring that the Programme's results are effectively captured, while also providing the necessary evidence for scaling up similar initiatives or refining strategies for Moldova's socio-economic growth in the coming years. The lessons learned from this evaluation will shape the next steps for fostering sustainable, inclusive, and green development in the Republic of Moldova.

This final evaluation is essential to ensure accountability, extract lessons, and assess the Programme's overall achievements. The final findings will be presented to local governments, central authorities, UNDP, UNICEF, and the **EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova**.

The evaluation should address the **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact** of the project, as per the OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria. The evaluation will include review of the programme design, and assumptions made at the beginning of the programme development process. It will assess whether the programme results were on track; capacities built, and cross cutting issues of **gender and human/child rights, disability and green development** have been addressed.

The National consultant will collaborate closely with one International Consultant (to be contracted by UNDP) and one National consultant (to be contracted by UNICEF Moldova), ensuring comprehensive evaluation coverage across both regions.

3. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Programme and the following key questions will guide the final programme evaluation:

- a) **Relevance/coherence** – (The design and focus of the programme)
- To what extent have the EU₄Moldova: Focal Regions Programme results contributed to the UNSDCF/CPDs outcomes?
 - To what extent are the Programme's outcomes aligned with national and sub-national priorities and the EU-Moldova Association Agenda?
 - What factors have contributed to achieving or hindering achievement of the intended outputs and outcomes?
 - Was the strategy adopted and inputs identified, realistic, appropriate and adequate for achievement of the results?
 - Has the partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?
 - To what extent did the EU₄Moldova: Focal Regions Programme align and coordinate with other EU-funded interventions in Moldova?
 - How effectively did the Programme's communication and visibility strategies align with EU standards and contribute to raising awareness of EU-funded support?
- b) **Effectiveness** – (The management processes and their appropriateness in supporting delivery)
- To what extent the Programme already achieved the expected outcome, outputs, and respective targets?
 - What have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards programme's success in attaining its targets? (*Also consider any which were possibly beyond the control of the programme*)
 - To what extent were the cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights and social standards addressed in the design and implementation of the project?
 - Which programme areas are the most relevant and strategic for UNDP and UNICEF to scale up or consider going forward?
 - In which areas does the programme have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the programme build on or expand these achievements?
 - In which areas does the programme have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
- c) **Efficiency** – (Of Programme Implementation)
- Is the process of achieving results efficient? Specifically did the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred? Were the resources effectively utilized?
 - What factors are contributing to implementation efficiency?
 - To what extent were resources used to address inequalities and gender issues?
 - To what extent were partnership modalities conducive to the delivery of programme outputs?
 - Do the programme's activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions (funded nationally and /or by other donors? Are there more efficient ways and means of delivering more and better results (outputs and outcomes) with the available inputs?
 - Could a different approach have produced better results?
 - How is the program management structure operating?
 - How efficient are the management and accountability structures of the programme?

- How did the programme financial management processes and procedures affect programme implementation?
- To what extent did UNDP and UNICEF engage or coordinate with different beneficiaries (men and women, boys and girls), implementing partners, other United Nations agencies and national counterparts to achieve outcome-level results?
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the programme implementation process?
- Was the intervention logic clear, and did it contribute to achieving intended results?

d) **Sustainability**

- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme?
- What needs to be done and/or improved to ensure sustainability?
- What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability in order to support female and male project beneficiaries as well as marginalized groups?
- Describe the main lessons that have emerged.
- What are the recommendations for similar support in future?
- How well did the Programme incorporate monitoring and learning processes to inform and improve project implementation?

e) **Impact**

- To what extent has the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme contributed to long-term changes in the targeted regions (e.g., economic growth, social development, institutional capacity)?
- What has been the impact of the Programme on beneficiaries, including marginalized and vulnerable groups?
- How has the Programme contributed to enhancing gender equality and reducing inequalities in the regions?
- To what extent have the Programme's interventions led to sustained improvements in local governance, public service delivery, and economic opportunities?
- What are the unintended positive or negative impacts of the Programme, and how have these affected the overall outcomes?
- How has the Programme contributed to systemic or transformative changes within the local and regional economic environment?
- How have the Programme's activities influenced national or sub-national policy and decision-making processes in the long term?
- To what extent has the Programme's work strengthened the resilience of communities to future crises (economic, social, or environmental)?

f) **Human rights/Children's rights**

- To what extent the rights of children has been addressed and have poor, women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the implementation of the Programme in the focal regions?

g) **Gender Equality**

- To what extent has the Programme promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups?

h) Disability

- What proportion of the beneficiaries of a Programme were persons with disabilities?

4. Methodology

The evaluation will be guided by norms and standards of the [United Nations Evaluation Group \(UNEG\)](#) and will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the 'UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results' and 'Integrated Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations'.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, UNICEF, key stakeholders and the Evaluation Team.

The evaluation should apply a mix of qualitative and quantitative processes and methodologies. The Evaluation Team is expected to provide evidence-based information, through rigorous triangulation, that is credible, reliable and useful.

Methods to be used by the evaluator to collect and analyse the required data shall include but not limited to:

- **Desk review** of relevant documents (e.g. annual progress reports, etc.);
- **Interviews** with the Senior Management and Programme staff of implementing UN agencies (UNDP and UNICEF);
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova and the Government, as well as with other donors and partners;
- **Interviews with partners and stakeholders** (including gathering the information on what the partners have achieved and what strategies they have used), specifically but not limited to:
 - Local governments (Cahul and Ungheni rayons, Cahul and Ungheni municipia, other communes from the two rayons)
 - Municipal enterprises in charge of local public services
 - Communities and community-based organizations (NGOs, Local Action Groups, volunteer groups, community groups, children, adolescents and youth and their parents)
 - Economic actors including urban and rural businesses
 - Central government ministries and institutions (e.g. Ministry for Infrastructure and Regional Development).

All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.

- **Field visits** to selected project sites and discussions with programme beneficiaries.

The consultant is particularly encouraged to use participatory methods to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted as part of the evaluation process. They should take measures to ensure data quality, reliability and validity of data collection tools and methods and their responsiveness to gender equality and human rights. Gender and human rights lens. All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human/child right issues.

5. Evaluation products (deliverables)

UNDP expects the National Consultant to contribute to the evaluation products described below. The schedule of deliverables is described in section 6.

- **Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages).** The inception report will include the evaluation methodology, work plan, ad evaluation matrix. It will be produced after a desk review and preliminary discussions with UNDP and UNICEF and before any formal evaluation activities begin. *(Please refer to Annex 1 for the templated of the Inception Report).*
- **Evaluation debriefings.** A summary of key findings will be presented to UNDP and UNICEF Immediately following the site visits and interviews.
- **Draft evaluation report (within an agreed length).** A length of 40 to 60 pages including executive summary is suggested. *(Please refer to Annex 2 for the template of the Evaluation Report)*
- **Evaluation report review (audit) trail.** The programme unit and key stakeholders in the evaluation should review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluator within an agreed period of time, as outlined in these guidelines. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.
- **Final evaluation report (as per Annex 2 template)**
- **Presentations to stakeholders and/ or evaluation reference group** (if required).
- **Evaluation brief and other knowledge products** or participation in knowledge-sharing events, if relevant to maximise use.

Language requirements

All documentation related to the assignment shall be in English.

6. Deliverables:

Tasks for 2 National Consultants <i>(1) National Consultant to be contracted by UNDP via this procurement opportunity;</i> <i>(1) National Consultant to be separately contracted by UNICEF Moldova</i>	Tasks for the International Consultant <i>(for information purpose)</i>	Deliverable	Indicative timeline
<i>Background materials collected and analysed</i> <i>8 w.d. (each consultant)</i>	Review of the relevant input/background documentation 8 w.d.	Deliverable 1 Evaluation outline	17 January, 2025
<i>Provide inputs to methodology and work plan</i> <i>2w.d. (each consultant)</i>	Drafting the Inception report including evaluation methodology, work plan evaluation matrix developed and agreed upon 5 w.d.	Deliverable 2 Inception Report (as per template in Annexes)	24 January, 2025

<i>Organize Field visits and meetings with relevant parties</i> <i>13 w.d. (each consultant)</i>	Visit to Moldova. Project site visits, interviews with implementers, partners and key stakeholders conducted. 7 w.d.	Deliverable 3 Summary key findings presented to UNDP and UNICEF	3-7 February, 2025
<i>Provide inputs to the draft evaluation report (developed by international consultant)</i> <i>10 w.d (each consultant)</i>	Drafting of the Evaluation report 12 w.d.	Deliverable 4 Draft evaluation report (as per template in Annexes)	By 5 March, 2025
<i>Provide inputs to the presentation of the final evaluation report</i> <i>2 w.d. (each consultant)</i>	Debriefing with UNDP/UNICEF/EUD 2 w.d.	Deliverable 5 Online presentation	By 12 March, 2025
<i>Inputs to the final evaluation report provided</i> <i>5 w.d (each consultant)</i>	Finalization of the evaluation report (incorporating comments received on first drafts) 6 w.d	Deliverable 6 Final evaluation report; Relevant knowledge products	By 31 March, 2025
Total estimated number of working days – 40 (per each consultant)	Total estimated number of working days – 40, out of which 7 days on mission to Moldova		

- Exact deadlines will be mutually agreed upon contract signature.
- Required formats for the inception reports, evaluation reports and other deliverables are included in the annexes of the TOR.

7. Evaluation team composition and required competencies

The **Evaluation Team** to be set consist of an International Consultant that will be hired by UNDP and two National/local Consultants. The International Consultant will be responsible for coordinating the evaluation process, ensuring that all activities are aligned with the evaluation objectives and timelines and quality control and adherence of all deliverables to evaluation standards.

National Consultant 1 (hired by UNDP via this procurement opportunity) will support the International Consultant by conducting specific evaluation tasks and providing expertise in local development, urban and regional development, economic development, participatory planning for sustainable development areas.

Local Consultant 2 (hired by UNICEF to assess UNICEF components as outlined in the DoA) will support the International Consultant by conducting specific evaluation tasks and providing expertise and knowledge of social services (education, health, inclusion, social protection, adolescents participation, culture and sports) areas.

Members of the evaluation team must not have been associated with the Programme's formulation, implementation or monitoring.

Specifically, the National Consultant (hired by UNDP) will perform the following tasks (related to local development, urban and regional development, economic development, participatory planning for sustainable development areas):

- Collection of background materials upon request by International Consultant;
- Provision of important inputs in developing methodology, work plan and Evaluation report outlines upon request by International Consultant;
- Assist to the International Consultant in desk review of materials;
- Assist the International Consultant in developing the mission agenda and establishing meeting with relevant stakeholders;
- Participation in debriefings with UNDP/UNICEF representatives;
- Arranging field visits and assisting the International Consultant in interviewing local stakeholders at project sites, provision of interpretation in communication with beneficiaries when required;
- Assist the International Consultant in elaboration of a summary matrix of the project implementation key findings based on interviews and site visits performed;
- Participate in briefings with UNDP/UNICEF representatives;
- Assist the International Consultant in developing the first draft of the Evaluation report;
- Assist the International Consultant in finalization of the Final Evaluation Report through incorporating suggestions received.

Required qualifications and competencies for the National Consultant (hired by UNDP):

National Consultant must possess the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Public Administration, Regional Development, Economics, Sociology, or other relevant fields; Master's degree is an advantage.
- At least 5 years of work experience in areas relevant to the assignment (local development, urban and regional development, economic development, participatory planning for sustainable development).
- Experience in contributing to the evaluation of projects in the inclusive growth or regional development area.
- Knowledge of development approaches in Moldova's local governance and socio-economic development context.
- Experience working with local stakeholders, including public authorities and civil society organizations, particularly in field coordination and logistical support for evaluation activities.
- Familiarity with results-based management approaches (especially results-oriented monitoring and evaluation).
- Strong spoken and writing skills in Romanian and English. Knowledge of Russian is an advantage.

The evaluation will be fully independent, and the evaluation team will retain enough flexibility to determine the best approach in collecting and analysing data for the evaluation.

8. Evaluation ethics

Evaluations in UN agencies are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) "[Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#)". The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluator must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and

confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners. Violation of confidentiality requirement may result in immediate termination of the contract. The evaluator will be held to the highest ethical standards.

9. Institutional/Implementation arrangements

While the evaluation will remain fully independent, the assignment shall be performed in close coordination with the UNDP Inclusive Growth Cluster Lead and the Programme Manager and in coordination with UNICEF Education Officer.

Thus, the Programme will provide the Consultants the necessary information (including core data) and materials for the fulfilment of the assignment, including the required support for organizing the necessary meetings/interviews and interacting with the relevant institutions and stakeholders. The supervision along with the deliverables 'quality assurance and their approval will be carried out by the Inclusive Growth Cluster Lead. All the deliverables shall be submitted in English, in electronic format.

Before submission of final deliverables, the consultants will discuss the draft documents with the parties involved, so that the final products reflect their comments.

The Programme National Steering Committee manages the Programme and provides advice on the overall Programme implementation at the highest level. It comprises representatives of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, UNDP, UNICEF, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, and the European Business Association. Since the Programme implements activities in numerous areas, representatives of relevant line ministries and agencies (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Agency for Electronic Governance) and development partners, such as UN Women, GIZ, the German Banking Representation in Moldova, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, were invited to the National Steering Committee meetings as observers.

The National Steering Committee of the Programme was formed to provide overall programmatic guidance, namely: to approve annual workplans and reports; to take conceptual decisions; to assess and decide on Programme changes through revisions; and to decide on the Selection Committee's composition and selection criteria.

The Selection Committee, which comprises representatives of the EU delegation, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, UNDP and UNICEF, met during the reporting period to evaluate and select the grant beneficiaries.

Local Steering Committees were established in both Ungheni and Cahul focal regions. The Committee reviews and guides the work of the action and supervises the overall implementation of projects at the local level for each focal region. The Committee also endorses the list of projects and beneficiaries to be supported within the respective focal region.

In terms of staffing, during the implementation period, UNDP had between 14-18 staff members (working full-time) on Programme-related activities, to ensure the successful implementation of the Programme.

The UNICEF team engaged in the Programme comprise four staff members who are working full-time on Programme-related activities and ensuring its successful implementation: a Programme Officer – Education, a Programme Officer – Health, a Programme Associate, and a Programme Associate – Communication.

10. 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 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, transport costs, etc.).

Travel

This assignment includes at least 2 trips to the regions of Moldova (Cahul and Ungheni).

The travel costs including expenses related to site visits, meetings with implementers, partners, and key stakeholders (local transportation), should be indicated separately in the financial proposal.

11. 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 and at least 3 referees.

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.

12. Evaluation

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

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Public Administration, Regional Development, Economics, Sociology, or other relevant fields;
- At least 5 years of work experience in areas relevant to the assignment (local development, urban and regional development, economic development, participatory planning for sustainable development);
- Experience in contributing to the evaluation of projects in the inclusive growth or regional development area.

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		
Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Public Administration, Regional Development, Economics, Sociology, or other relevant fields; Master's degree is an advantage.	Bachelor's – 5 pts; Master's – 10 pts	10
At least 5 years of work experience in areas relevant to the assignment (local development, urban and regional development, economic development, participatory planning for sustainable development).	Up to 5 years – 0 points, 5 years – 5 points, each additional year – 5 points up to max. 25 pts	25
Demonstrated experience in conducting evaluation of projects in the inclusive growth area, regional and local development, green and sustainable development, participatory governance and transparency: (minimum 2 evaluations)	Up to 2 comprehensive studies/evaluations – 0 points, 2 studies/evaluations – 10 points, each additional study/evaluation – 10 pts. Up to max. 50 pts	50
Experience in applying qualitative and quantitative research methods in evaluations or assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant experience: 0 points • Limited experience (1-2 assignments with basic use of research methods): 3 pts. • Moderate experience (3-4 assignments with clear application of mixed methods): 6 pts. • Extensive experience (5+ assignments demonstrating advanced application of mixed methods): 10 pts. 	10

<p>Experience working with local stakeholders, including public authorities and civil society organizations, particularly in field coordination and logistical support for evaluation activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No relevant experience in working with local stakeholders or field coordination: 0 pts.</i> • <i>Limited experience (e.g., 1-2 years, with minor involvement in such activities): 5 pts.</i> • <i>Moderate experience (e.g., 3-4 years, with clear evidence of collaboration with stakeholders and some field coordination/logistical support): 10 pts.</i> • <i>Extensive experience (5+ years, with significant involvement in working with public authorities, civil society organizations, and demonstrated leadership in field coordination and logistical support): 15 pts.</i> 	<p>15</p>
Total Technical Stage		110 pts
<p>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.</p>		
<p>Proven competencies in carrying out needs and capacity assessments; designing feasibility studies/ documentation/ specific regulatory framework/ standard operating procedures</p>	<p><i>Limited competencies – up to 5 pts, fair competences – up to 15 pts., good competences – up to 30 pts, very good – up to 40 pts</i></p>	
<p>Strong understanding and knowledge of regional/local and economic development</p>	<p><i>Limited understanding – up to 5 pts, fair – up to 25 pts., good – up to 45 pts, very good – up to 65 pts</i></p>	
<p>Demonstrated ability to effectively utilize analytical and collaboration tools (e.g., MS Office 365, ZOOM, Google Workspace, evaluation-specific software) for complex data management, analysis, and reporting within an evaluation context</p>	<p><i>Limited understanding and ability – up to 5 pts., satisfactory – up to 15 pts.; extensive – up to 20 pts</i></p>	<p>185</p>
<p>Ability to address challenges effectively, adapt to changing circumstances, and find practical solutions during evaluation activities.</p>	<p><i>No experience – 0 pts., limited experience – up to 5 pts., demonstrated ability – up to 10 pts., extensive experience / strong skills – up to 15 pts</i></p>	
<p>Strong communication and interpersonal skills</p>	<p><i>No – 0 pts., to some extent – up to 10 pts., extensive experience / good skills – up to 15 pts</i></p>	
<p>Strong spoken and writing skills in English</p>	<p><i>Working knowledge / intermediate – up to 15 pts, advanced – up to 20 pts</i></p>	
<p>Additional languages: knowledge of Russian</p>	<p><i>Up to 10 pts</i></p>	

Belonging to the group(s) under-represented in the UN Moldova and/or the area of assignment*	(No – 0 pts., to one group – 2.5 pts., to two or more groups – 5 pts.)	5
Total Interview stage		190 pts
Maximum Total Scoring		300

*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.**

Financial	
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	200

Winning candidate

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

Annexes:

Annex 1: Inception Report Template

Annex 2: Evaluation Report Template

Annex 3: The Logical Framework of the Programme

Annex 1: Inception Report template

Inception report content

1. **Background and context**, illustrating the understanding of the project/ outcome to be evaluated.
2. **Evaluation objective, purpose and scope**. A clear statement of the objectives of the evaluation and the main aspects or elements of the initiative to be examined.
3. **Evaluation criteria and questions**. The criteria the evaluation will use to assess performance and rationale. The stakeholders to be met and interview questions should be included and agreed, as well as a proposed schedule for field visits.
4. **Evaluability analysis**. Illustrates the evaluability analysis based on formal (clear outputs, indicators, baselines, data) and substantive (identification of problem addressed, theory of change, results framework) approaches, and the implications for the proposed methodology.
5. **Cross-cutting issues**. Provide details of how cross-cutting issues will be evaluated, considered and analysed throughout the evaluation. The description should specify how methods for data collection and analysis will integrate **gender considerations**, ensure that data collected is disaggregated by sex and other relevant categories, and employ a diverse range of data sources and processes to ensure the inclusion of diverse stakeholders, including the most vulnerable where appropriate.
6. **Evaluation approach and methodology**, highlighting the conceptual models to be adopted, and describing the data collection methods,² sources and analytical approaches to be employed, including the rationale for their selection (how they will inform the evaluation) and their limitations; data-collection tools, instruments, and protocols; and discussing their reliability and validity for the evaluation and the sampling plan.
7. **Evaluation matrix**, identifying the key evaluation questions and how they will be answered through the selected methods. (see table 1 below)
8. A revised **schedule of key milestones**, deliverables and responsibilities, including the evaluation phases (data collection, data analysis and reporting).
9. Detailed **resource requirements**, tied to evaluation activities and deliverables detailed in the workplan. Include specific assistance required from UNDP and UNICEF, such as providing arrangements for visiting particular field offices or sites
10. **Outline of the draft/ final report** as detailed in the guidelines, and ensuring quality and usability (outlined below). The agreed report outline should meet the quality standards outlined in these guidelines and the quality assessment requirements outlined in section 6.

Table 1: Sample evaluation matrix

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific sub-questions	Data sources	Data collection methods/ tools	Indicators/ success standards	Methods for data analysis

Annex 2: Evaluation Report template

UNDP evaluation report template and quality standards

This **evaluation report template** is intended to serve as a guide for preparing meaningful, useful and credible evaluation reports that meet quality standards. It does not prescribe a definitive section-by-section format that all evaluation reports should follow. Rather, it suggests the areas of content that should be included in a quality evaluation report.

The evaluation report should be complete and logically organized. It should be written clearly and be understandable to the intended audience. In a country context, the report should be translated into local languages whenever possible. The report should include the following:

1. **Title and opening pages** should provide the following basic information:
 - Name of the evaluation intervention.
 - Time frame of the evaluation and date of the report.
 - Countries of the evaluation intervention.
 - Names and organizations of evaluators.
 - Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation.
 - Acknowledgements.

2. **Project and evaluation information details** to be included in all final versions of evaluation reports (non-GEF)³ on second page (as one page):

Project/outcome Information		
Project/outcome title		
Quantum ID		
Corporate outcome and output		
Country		
Region		
Date project document signed		
Project dates	Start	Planned end
Total committed budget		
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation		
Funding source		
Implementing party ⁴		

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)		
Final/midterm review/ other		
Period under evaluation	Start	End
Evaluators		
Evaluator email address		
Evaluation dates	Start	Completion

3. **Table of contents**, including boxes, figures, tables, and annexes with page references.

4. **List of acronyms and abbreviations**.

5. **Executive summary (four/ five page maximum)**. A stand-alone section of two to three pages that should:
- Briefly describe the intervention of the evaluation (the project(s), programme(s), policies, or other intervention) that was evaluated.
 - Explain the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, including the audience for the evaluation and the intended uses.
 - Describe key aspects of the evaluation approach and methods.
 - Summarize principle findings, conclusions and recommendations.

6. **Introduction**

- Explain why the evaluation was conducted (the purpose), why the intervention is being evaluated at this point in time, and why it addressed the questions it did.
- Identify the primary audience or users of the evaluation, what they wanted to learn from the evaluation and why, and how they are expected to use the evaluation results.
- Identify the intervention being evaluated (the project(s) programme(s) policies or other intervention).
- Acquaint the reader with the structure and contents of the report and how the information contained in the report will meet the purposes of the evaluation and satisfy the information needs of the intended users.

7. **Description of the intervention** provides the basis for report users to understand the logic and assess the merits of the evaluation methodology and understand the applicability of the evaluation results. The description needs to provide sufficient detail for the report user to derive meaning from the evaluation. It should:

- Describe **what is being evaluated, who seeks to benefit** and the **problem or issue** it seeks to address.
- Explain the **expected results model or results framework, implementation strategies** and the key **assumptions** underlying the strategy / theory of change.
- Link the intervention to **national priorities, UNSDCF priorities, corporate multi-year funding frameworks or Strategic Plan goals, or other programme or country-specific plans and goals**.
- Identify the **phase** in the implementation of the intervention and any **significant changes** (e.g., plans, strategies, logical frameworks, theory of change) that have occurred over time, and explain the implications of those changes for the evaluation.
- Identify and describe the **key partners** involved in the implementation and their roles.

- Include data and an analysis of **specific social groups** affected. Identify **relevant cross-cutting issues** addressed through the intervention, i.e., gender equality, human rights, vulnerable/ marginalized groups, leaving no one behind.
 - Describe the **scale of the intervention**, such as the number of components (e.g., phases of a project) and the size of the target population (men and women) for each component.
 - Indicate the **total resources**, including human resources and budgets.
 - Describe the context of the **social, political, economic, and institutional factors**, and the **geographical landscape** within which the intervention operates, and explain the challenges and opportunities those factors present for its implementation and outcomes.
 - Point out **design weaknesses** (e.g., intervention logic, theory of change) or other **implementation constraints** (e.g., resource limitations).
8. **Evaluation scope and objectives.** The report should provide a clear explanation of the evaluation's scope, primary objectives and main questions.
- **Evaluation scope.** The report should define the parameters of the evaluation, for example, the time period, the segments of the target population and geographic area included, and which components, outputs or outcomes were or were not assessed.
 - **Evaluation objectives.** The report should spell out the types of decisions the evaluation will feed into, the issues to be considered in making those decisions and what the evaluation will need to achieve to contribute to those decisions.
 - **Evaluation criteria.** The report should define the evaluation criteria or performance standards used⁵ and explain the rationale for selecting those particular criteria.
 - **Evaluation questions.** The report should detail the main evaluation questions addressed by the evaluation and explain how the answers to those questions address the information needs of users.
9. **Evaluation approach and methods.**⁶ The evaluation report should describe in detail the selected methodological approaches, methods and analysis; the rationale for their selection; and how, within the time and money constraints, the approaches and methods employed yielded data that helped to answer the evaluation questions and achieved the evaluation purposes. **The report should specify how gender equality, disability, vulnerability and social inclusion were addressed in the methodology, including how data collection and analysis methods integrated gender considerations, use of disaggregated data and outreach to diverse stakeholder groups.** The description should help the report users judge the merits of the methods used in the evaluation and the credibility of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. The description of methodology should include discussion of each of the following:
- **Evaluation approach.**
 - **Data sources:** the sources of information (documents reviewed and stakeholders met) as well as the rationale for their selection and how the information obtained addressed the evaluation questions.
 - **Sample and sampling frame.** If a sample was used, describe the sample size and characteristics, the sample selection criteria; the process for selecting the sample (e.g. random, purposive); if applicable, how comparison and treatment groups were assigned; and the extent to which the sample is representative of the entire target population, including discussion of the limitations of sample for generalizing results.
 - **Data collection procedures and instruments:** methods or procedures used to collect data, including discussion of data-collection instruments (e.g., interview protocols), their appropriateness for the data source, and evidence of their reliability and validity, as well as gender-responsiveness.
 - **Performance standards:**⁷ the standard or measure that will be used to evaluate performance relative to the evaluation questions (e.g. national or regional indicators, rating scales).

- **Stakeholder participation:** who participated and how the level of involvement of men and women contributed to the credibility of the evaluation and the results.
 - **Ethical considerations:** including the measures taken to protect the rights and confidentiality of informants (see UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators' for more information).⁸
 - **Background information on evaluators:** the composition of the evaluation team, the background and skills of team members, and the appropriateness of the technical skill mix, gender balance and geographical representation for the evaluation.
 - **Major limitations of the methodology** should be identified and openly discussed, as well as any steps taken to mitigate them.
10. **Data analysis.** The report should describe the procedures used to analyse the data collected to answer the evaluation questions. It should detail the various steps and stages of analysis that were carried out, including the steps to confirm the accuracy of data and the results for different stakeholder groups (men and women, different social groups, etc.). The report should also discuss the appropriateness of the analyses to the evaluation questions. Potential weaknesses in the data analysis and gaps or limitations of the data should be discussed, including their possible influence on the way findings may be interpreted and conclusions drawn.
11. **Findings** should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data. They should be structured around the evaluation questions so that report users can readily make the connection between what was asked and what was found. Variances between planned and actual results should be explained, as well as factors affecting the achievement of intended results. Assumptions or risks in the project or programme design that subsequently affected implementation should be discussed. Findings should reflect gender equality and women's empowerment, disability and other cross-cutting issues, as well as possible unanticipated effects.
12. **Conclusions** should be comprehensive and balanced and highlight the strengths, weaknesses and outcomes of the intervention. They should be well substantiated by the evidence and logically connected to evaluation findings. They should respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to the decision-making of intended users, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment as well as to disability and other cross-cutting issues.
13. **Recommendations.** The report should provide a reasonable number of practical, actionable and feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation. They should address sustainability of the initiative and comment on the adequacy of the project exit strategy, if applicable. Recommendations should also provide specific advice for future or similar projects or programming. Recommendations should address any gender equality and women's empowerment issues and priorities for action to improve these aspects. Recommendations regarding disability and other cross-cutting issues also need to be addressed.
14. **Lessons learned.** As appropriate and/or if requested in the TOR, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation, that is, new knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (intervention, context, outcomes, even evaluation methods) that are applicable to a similar context. Lessons should be concise and based on specific evidence presented in the report. Gender equality and women's empowerment, disability and other cross-cutting issues should also be considered.

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15. **Report annexes.** Suggested annexes should include the following to provide the report user with supplemental background and methodological details that enhance the credibility of the report:
- TOR for the evaluation.
 - Additional methodology-related documentation, such as the evaluation matrix and data-collection instruments (questionnaires, interview guides, observation protocols, etc.) as appropriate.
 - List of individuals or groups interviewed or consulted, and sites visited. This can be omitted in the interest of confidentiality if agreed by the evaluation team and UNDP.
 - List of supporting documents reviewed.
 - Project or programme results model or results framework.
 - Summary tables of findings, such as tables displaying progress towards outputs, targets, and goals relative to established indicators.
 - Pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation signed by evaluators.

ANNEX A. LOGFRAME

	Results chain	Indicators	Baselines (incl. reference year)	Targets (incl. reference year)	Sources and means of verification
Overall objective: Impact	To strengthen the economic, territorial and social cohesion in the Republic of Moldova through facilitating inclusive, sustainable and integrated local socio-economic growth and improving the standards of living of the citizens in the focal regions	Level of regional GDP (average for both focal regions)	17% (2017)	19% (2023)	- National Bureau of Statistics
Specific objective(s): Outcome(s):	Specific objective (SO) 1 To strengthen transparency, accountability of local public authorities and citizen participation in local governance processes in the focal regions	Degree of engagement of CSOs in local planning, governance processes and in public service delivery Level of adolescents' participation in local public decision making	Baseline to be established at the beginning of the project through an analysis by the project implementer 0% (2018)	Improvement in terms of number of CSOs involved and in terms of quality 8% (2021) 15% (2023)	- Minutes of local council meetings - Minutes of CSOs/LPAs joint meetings/seminars/workshops - Progress reports of jointly implemented projects
	Specific objective (SO) 2: To improve citizens' access to quality public services and utilities in the focal regions	People's level of satisfaction with the improved or new services/utilities, disaggregated by the type of services (age and sex disaggregation) Population connection rate (%) to improved services,	0 (2018)	At least 70% satisfied with the improved services (35% men and 35% women). 35% (2023)	- Satisfaction survey - Ministry of Agriculture, Regional development and Environment report - Water supply, solid waste and waste water treatment utilities reports - MARDE reports - Local authorities reports

		disaggregated by the type of services in target focal regions	20% 2018		
Specific objective (SO) 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	Number of people benefitting from innovative socio-economic development opportunities in the focal focal regions age and sex disaggregation)	0 (2018)	200,000 people (2023)	- National Bureau of Statistics - Local public authorities reports - Progress reports	
	Employment levels of residents in target focal regions, disaggregated by sex and age	32,5 % (2016)	34 % (2023)	National Bureau of Statistics - Ministry of Economy reports on implementation of the SME strategy - ODIMM reports on action plan implementation - Eurostat / National Bureau of Statistics data	
	Number of jobs created, disaggregated by sex and age	Number of jobs created – 1, 146 (2015)	Number of jobs created by 20% increase (2023)		
	Number of SMEs created	(0) 2018	At least 500 jobs (of which 30% taken by women) are created (2023)		
			40 SMEs created		
Specific objective (SO) 4: To promote the smart specialization of the economy of the focal regions through the development of the clustering and value chain approach in key economic sectors	Number of clusters in each focal region	2018: 0	2023: 3 per focal region	- Progress reports, TAIEX mission	
	Number of companies connected to a cluster	N-A	At least 3	Progress reports	
	Cluster performance	N-A	Increased cluster performance	Qualitative assessment performed by the project implementer or by TAIEX	

Outputs:	<p>Result 1.1) Increased institutional capacity of LPAs for the implementation of locally-driven environmentally compliant socio-economic development strategy for integrated local growth and development.</p> <p>Result 1.1) Improved and broader stakeholder (e.g. CSO, private sector) engagement in the planning and monitoring of the socio-economic development strategy,</p>	<p>No of CSOs involved in joint actions with LPAs in the target regions</p> <p>No of CSOs proposed suggestions (proposals) to local plans and budgets adopted by local authorities in the two focal regions</p> <p>No. of social entrepreneurship initiatives</p> <p>No. of priority local development projects implemented</p> <p>% of staff from local public authorities trained</p>	<p>3 CSOs involved in joint actions with LPAs (2018)</p> <p>0 (2018)</p> <p>(0) 2018</p> <p>0 (2018)</p> <p>40% of staff from local public authorities are trained (2018)</p>	<p>10 CSOs involved in joint actions with LPAs (2023)</p> <p>10 suggestions (proposals) to local plans and budgets adopted by LPAs</p> <p>5 social entrepreneurship initiatives (2023)</p> <p>10 priority local development projects implemented (2023)</p> <p>80% of staff from local public authorities are trained (2023)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minutes of Local council sessions - CSOs reports - ODIMM reports - Progress reports - Ministry of Agriculture, Regional development and Environment reports - Local authorities' annual reports - LPA's HR reports
	<p>Result 2) Increased quality and availability of public services delivery and local public utilities performance,</p>	<p>Number of people benefitting from improved local public and social services and renovated infrastructure (age and sex disaggregation and type of service disaggregation)</p> <p>Number of inter-municipal cooperation established for the</p>	<p>(0) 2018</p>	<p>At least 200,000 people benefitting from improved public services and renovated infrastructure (2023)</p> <p>2 public services in each focal region provided through inter-municipal cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports on implementation of national regional development strategy - WHO/UNICEF / Eurostat / National Bureau of Statistics data

		management of the public service			
	Result 3) More favourable conditions for the attraction of investments and for women and men's entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship; job creation is stimulated, especially in less favoured areas.	<p>Number of business development services developed</p> <p>Number and quality of brand promotion activities supported</p> <p>Number of business supported, including women</p> <p>Number of social entrepreneurs supported, including women</p>	N.A	<p>Increase/improvement (3 per focal region)</p> <p>20 promotion activities supported</p> <p>70 businesses supported</p> <p>5 social entrepreneurs supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress Reports on implementation - National Bureau of Statistics data
	Result 4) Development and functioning of clusters in line with the smart specialisation approach.	<p>Number of cluster development workshops</p> <p>Number of clusters supported in each focal region</p>	<p>N-A</p> <p>0</p>	<p>12 cluster development workshops</p> <p>3 per focal region</p>	<p>Progress Reports on implementation</p>

ANNEX B. THEORY OF CHANGE DIAGRAM

