

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job title:	Economic Reintegration and Access to Finance Consultant
Duty Station:	Republic of Moldova, Chisinau
Reference to the project:	Resilient and Inclusive Markets (PRIM)
Contract type:	Individual Contract
Assignment type:	National Consultant
Contract duration:	August 2025 – March 2026
Expected workload:	70 working days
Indicative starting date:	1 August 2025

1. BACKGROUND

Moldova has experienced sustained economic growth over the past two decades, driven largely by remittance-fueled consumption, which has improved living standards and reduced poverty. However, recent global challenges—such as the COVID-19 pandemic, energy crisis, and the war in Ukraine—have underscored the need to enhance economic resilience and diversify the economy.

Building on UNDP-SDC's earlier work in local economic development, the first phase (2023–2024) of the Resilient and Inclusive Markets in Moldova (PRIM) project established micro-clusters in rural tourism, horticulture, and livestock—strengthening local economies, creating jobs, and fostering community engagement. It also contributed to legislative reforms that improved the business environment and generated significant savings for SMEs.

The second phase of the project (2025–2029) aims to deepen Moldova's economic transformation by scaling up the clustering approach, advancing SMART specialization, developing value chains, and attracting investment at the micro-regional level. It promotes inclusive, sustainable, and resilient growth by supporting SMEs and vocational training, with a special focus on local communities, returning migrants, and refugees.

Under Outcome 1, the project strengthens policy and institutional frameworks that promote inclusive economic development, support SME and cluster growth, improve access to finance, and encourage diaspora and migrant engagement in national and local economic life. This includes targeted support for the design and operationalization of reintegration mechanisms, reforms to expand financial instruments, and legal adjustments to make public funding more accessible to business clusters and diaspora investors.

Under Outcome 2, the project boosts the resilience of local economic actors—particularly small-scale farmers—to external shocks such as regional conflict and climate change. This is achieved through investment attraction, value chain development, and continued support for innovative, locally grounded, cluster-based economic initiatives.

Together, these outcomes ensure that migration and local entrepreneurship are transformed into engines of sustainable development. By addressing barriers to reintegration, improving access to state and diaspora financing, and embedding migrants and diaspora members into local value chains, PRIM contributes to Moldova's long-term inclusive growth strategy.

2. OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The Project seeks to contract a National Economic Reintegration and Access to Finance Consultant (hereinafter “the Consultant”) to provide technical expertise and thematic support in designing, updating,

and operationalizing national mechanisms that facilitate the economic reintegration of returning migrants, strengthen diaspora investment and entrepreneurship, and improve access to finance for cluster members. The Consultant will focus on three tasks:

Task 1: Support to the Update and Operationalization of the PARE 1+3 Programme

Building on the concept note developed during the initial phase of the PRIM project, the Consultant will support national stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Economy and Digitalization and the Organization for Entrepreneurship Development (ODA), in updating and preparing the PARE 1+3 programme for implementation. This includes revising core documents, conducting stakeholder consultations, and ensuring alignment with policy priorities, institutional mandates, and legal requirements.

Expected Outputs:

- Updated the ex-ante impact assessment of the PARE 1+3 programme, reflecting revised assumptions, current data and circumstances, and alignment with national policy priorities.
- Revised concept note for the PARE 1+3 programme, integrating findings from the assessment and inputs from key stakeholders.
- Refined implementation framework, detailing eligibility criteria, application and selection process, and support mechanism.
- Monitoring and Evaluation framework, including baseline indicators, reporting mechanisms, and performance metrics.
- Complete documentation package for submission and approval of the PARE 1+3 programme, including Government Decision Draft, updated and ready for official launch.

Task 2: Design of a New Reintegration Support Mechanism

In coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agency for Intervention and Payments in Agriculture (AIPA), and under the guidance of the Project Team, the Consultant will design a targeted national support mechanism for the economic reintegration of returning migrants and their families. Aligned with Specific Objective 3 of the National Programme for the Stimulation of Return and Facilitation of (Re)integration of Citizens of the Republic of Moldova (2023–2027), the mechanism will focus on fostering both agricultural and non-agricultural entrepreneurship in rural areas, with particular emphasis on inclusive economic development and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Expected Outputs:

- Ex-ante assessment for the program, including a review of existing programmes, identification of systemic gaps, analysis of socio-economic trends, and estimation of potential impact and feasibility of the proposed support mechanism.
- Concept and operational framework for a new national support programme targeting returning migrants and their families, with a focus on rural areas and women, integrating findings from assessments and inputs from key stakeholders.
- Definition of eligibility criteria, support modalities (financial and non-financial), delivery mechanisms, and institutional roles defined.
- Costed implementation plan with timeline, funding needs, and key performance indicators.
- Monitoring and evaluation framework with indicators and tools for tracking progress and impact.
- Facilitated stakeholder consultations involving government, diaspora, private sector, and development partners to validate and refine programme components.
- Draft legal or regulatory proposals, as needed for programme adoption and launch.

Task 3: Improving Legal and Financial Access for Clusters

The Consultant will assess existing national support programmes implemented by institutions such as the Organization for Entrepreneurship Development (ODA) and the Agency for Intervention and Payments in Agriculture (AIPA), with the aim of identifying legal and regulatory barriers and opportunities for integrating business clusters into these financing schemes. This will include a comprehensive review of current frameworks, eligibility criteria, and operational procedures.

Based on this assessment, the Consultant will propose legal and institutional adjustments to enable the inclusion of clusters in national support programmes. The Consultant will facilitate consultations with key stakeholders—including MoEDD, ODA, AIPA, and other relevant institutions—to validate the proposed adjustments. Following these consultations, the Consultant will revise recommendations and prepare a complete legal package to operationalize the proposed changes, including a draft Government Decision and other supporting regulatory documentation.

Expected Outputs:

- Analytical report identifying legal and regulatory gaps and opportunities for enabling cluster access to national support programmes.
- Consultation summary and concept note outlining proposed legal and institutional changes, based on stakeholder input.
- Final legal package, including a draft Government Decision and accompanying regulatory documents required to implement the proposed reforms.

3. KEY ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

Key activities and deliverables	Tentative timetable
<p>Activity 1: Review and Update the Ex-Ante Assessment for PARE 1+3 Programme</p> <p>The consultant will analyze, update and complete any missing gaps in the ex-ante assessment of the PARE 1+3 programme to reflect the current macroeconomic context, evolving return migration trends, and revised policy priorities. This will include validating initial assumptions, analyzing updated data, and refining financial projections and expected impact estimates to ensure the programme's continued relevance, feasibility, and alignment with national strategies.</p> <p>Deliverable 1.1: Updated ex-ante impact assessment for PARE 1+3</p>	<p>Deliverable 1.1 15 September 2025 3 wd</p>
<p>Activity 2: Revise PARE 1+3 Concept and Operational Framework</p> <p>The consultant will revise the concept and operational framework of the PARE 1+3 programme, refining its logic, objectives, eligibility criteria, and support schemes. This will be based on updated data, stakeholder consultations, and the revised ex-ante assessment to ensure alignment with current policy priorities and implementation capacity.</p> <p>Deliverable 2.1: Revised concept note and operational framework for PARE 1+3</p>	<p>Deliverable 2.1 by 31 October 2025 5 wd</p>
<p>Activity 3.1: Develop the Implementation Plan and M&E Framework for PARE 1+3</p> <p>The consultant will prepare a costed implementation plan for the PARE 1+3 programme, outlining phased activities, estimated funding needs, institutional responsibilities, and a realistic timeline for rollout and scale-up. In parallel, the consultant will develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework with indicators, tools, and reporting mechanisms to track progress, measure outcomes, and ensure accountability.</p> <p>Deliverable 3.1: Costed implementation plan and M&E Framework</p>	<p>Deliverable 3.1 by 15 November 2025 3 wd</p>
<p>Activity 4.1: Facilitate Stakeholder Consultations and Finalize Programme Design</p> <p>The consultant will organize and lead consultations with key stakeholders. Based on the feedback received, the consultant will finalize all programme</p>	<p>Deliverable 3.1 15 December 2025 4 wd</p>

documents, including the full documentation package required for official approval, such as the draft Government Decision.	
Deliverable 4.1: Finalized Programme Documentation Package	
<p>Activity 5: Conduct the Ex-Ante Assessment for the New Reintegration Support Mechanism</p> <p>The consultant will develop an ex-ante assessment to inform the design of a new national reintegration support programme for returning migrants and their families. This will include a review of existing initiatives, identification of systemic and institutional gaps, analysis of socio-economic trends, and feasibility of various support modalities. The consultant will assess the specific needs of returnees in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, with a focus on rural development, gender inclusion, and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Deliverable 5.1: Ex-ante assessment for the new reintegration support mechanism</p>	<p>Deliverable 5.1 by 31 October 2025 9 wd</p>
<p>Activity 6: Develop the Programme Concept and Operational Framework</p> <p>The consultant will develop the concept and operational framework for the new reintegration support mechanism, defining its objectives, target groups, eligibility criteria, and types of support to be offered. The activity will also outline the delivery model and institutional arrangements for programme implementation. This work will be grounded in the findings of the ex-ante assessment and informed by stakeholder consultations to ensure policy alignment, inclusivity (with a focus on rural areas and women), and implementation feasibility.</p> <p>Deliverable 6.1: Concept note and operational framework for the reintegration support programme</p>	<p>Deliverable 6.1 15 December 2025 10 wd</p>
<p>Activity 7: Prepare the Implementation Plan and M&E Framework</p> <p>The consultant will prepare a costed implementation plan, including phased rollout, resource requirements, and realistic timelines. An integrated monitoring and evaluation framework will also be developed to guide programme oversight, data collection, and impact assessment.</p> <p>Deliverable 7.1: Costed implementation plan and monitoring and evaluation framework</p>	<p>Deliverable 7.1 10 February 2026 7 wd</p>
<p>Activity 8: Facilitate Stakeholder Consultations and Finalize Programme Design</p> <p>The consultant will organize and lead consultations with relevant stakeholders to validate the programme design and ensure broad ownership. Based on the feedback received, the consultant will finalize the full documentation package necessary for the programme's official adoption and launch. This will include drafting any required legal or regulatory documents, including the draft Government Decision.</p> <p>Deliverable 8.1: Finalized programme documentation package, including draft Government Decision and other legal or regulatory proposals, as needed</p>	<p>Deliverable 8.1 30 March 2025 9 wd</p>

<p>Activity 9: Analyze Existing Support Programmes and Propose Legal and Regulatory Adjustments for Cluster Access to Finance</p> <p>The consultant will conduct a comprehensive assessment of current national support schemes (ODA, AIPA, etc.) to identify legal and regulatory barriers and opportunities for enabling business clusters to access public financing programmes. This analysis will include mapping existing frameworks, reviewing eligibility criteria, and recommending necessary legal and regulatory adjustments to improve cluster inclusion.</p> <p>Deliverable 9.1: Analytical report on legal and regulatory opportunities and gaps for cluster integration into national support programmes, including initial recommendations for legal and institutional adjustments.</p>	<p>Deliverable 9.1 15 December 2025 12 wd</p>
<p>Activity 10: Facilitate Stakeholder Consultations and Finalize Legal Framework for Cluster Access to Finance</p> <p>Following the analytical report, the consultant will engage with key stakeholders including MoEDD, ODA, AIPA, and other relevant institutions to validate findings and gather feedback on the proposed legal adjustments. Based on consultations, the consultant will revise the recommendations and draft a comprehensive legal package, including a draft Government Decision and any additional regulatory documents necessary to enable cluster access to finance.</p> <p>Deliverable 10.1: Final legal documentation package enabling cluster access to national support programmes, including a draft Government Decision and supporting documents.</p>	<p>Deliverable 10.1 31 March 2026 8 wd</p>

Note: Deliverables and the final timeline can be amended or specified for the purpose of the assignment. All deliverables should be agreed with Project 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 2025 – March 2026. During this time, the Consultant is expected to work a total of 70 working days (part-time consultancy), 46 working days in 2025 and 24 working days in 2026.

The assignment shall be performed in close coordination with the Project Team, under the guidance and supervision of the Project Manager and Policy Component Manager.

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

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 by the Policy Component manager (certifying that the services have been satisfactorily performed) and their subsequent approval by the Project Manager.

6. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

Academic Qualifications:

- University degree (or higher) in Economics, Business Administration, Legal Studies, Public Policy, Migration Studies, Rural Development, or other relevant fields.

Experience and knowledge:

- At least 5 (five) years of experience at the national level in economic development, diaspora engagement, entrepreneurship promotion, or migration policy.
- At least 3 (three) years of experience in providing advisory and capacity building support for non-governmental organizations and/or public institutions.
- At least 3 (three) years of experience in conducting ex-ante assessments, socio-economic impact analyses, and policy evaluations.
- Experience in developing and operationalizing financial and non-financial support modalities for entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas, will be considered a strong advantage.
- Proven track record in stakeholder engagement and consultation, particularly with government institutions, private sector actors, and diaspora organizations will be considered an advantage.
- Previous experience within an UNDP Project and/or other international organization(s) will be considered a strong 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 written and communication skills, with 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.
- High level of professionalism and ethical standards, with a demonstrated ability to handle confidential and sensitive policy matters.
- 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.

The UNDP Moldova is committed to workforce diversity. Women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, as well as refugees and other non-citizens legally entitled to work in the Republic of Moldova, are particularly encouraged to apply.

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, in USD. 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 Economics, Business Administration, Legal Studies, Public Policy, Migration Studies, Rural Development, or other relevant fields.
- At least 5 (five) years of experience at the national level in economic development, diaspora engagement, entrepreneurship promotion, or migration policy.
- Citizen 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 Economics, Business Administration, Legal Studies, Public Policy, Migration Studies, Rural Development, or other relevant fields.	<i>Bachelor's degree – 5 pts. Master's degree – 10 pts.</i>	10
At least 5 (five) years of experience at the national level in economic development, diaspora engagement, entrepreneurship promotion, or migration policy.	<i>5 years – 15 pts., each additional year of experience – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 40 pts.</i>	40
At least 3 (three) years of experience in providing advisory and capacity building support for non-governmental organizations and/or public institutions.	<i>3 years – 15 pts., each additional year of experience – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 30 pts.</i>	30
At least 3 (three) years of experience in conducting ex-ante assessments, socio-economic impact analyses, and policy evaluations.	<i>3 years – 15 pts., each additional year of experience – 5 pts. up to a maximum of 30 pts.</i>	30

Experience in developing and operationalizing financial and non-financial support modalities for entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas, will be considered a strong advantage.	<i>more than 3 years – 20 pts;</i> <i>up to 3 years – 10 pts;</i> <i>no experience – 0 pts.</i>	20
Proven track record in stakeholder engagement and consultation, particularly with government institutions, private sector actors, and diaspora organizations will be considered an advantage.	<i>more than 3 years - 20 pts;</i> <i>up to 3 years – 10 pts;</i> <i>no experience – 0 pts.</i>	20
Previous experience within an UNDP Project and/or other international organization(s) will be considered a strong advantage.	<i>Each assignment – 2 pts.</i> <i>up to a maximum of 10 pts.</i>	10
Subtotal Technical Scoring		160
<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>		
Interview	<p>Demonstrated knowledge of the current socio-economic context, economic and migration policy development and enhancement (none – 0 pts, limited ≤ 5 pts, good ≤ 25 pts, strong ≤ 35 pts)</p> <p>Perceived ability to perform and deliver expected results in a fast-paced working environment (none – 0 pts, limited ≤ 10 pts, good ≤ 25 pts, strong ≤ 35 pts)</p> <p>Strong sense of initiative and ability to work independently (none – 0 pts, limited ≤ 10 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts)</p> <p>Demonstrated interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively (none – 0 pts, limited ≤ 5 pts, good ≤ 20 pts, strong ≤ 30 pts)</p>	130
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 (mandatory) and English (optional)	2.5 pts each (5 pts total)	5
<u>Interview Scoring</u>		140
<u>Maximum Total Technical Scoring</u>		300

Financial

Evaluation of submitted financial offers will be done based on the following formula: 200

$S = F_{min} / F * 200$ (*S – score received on financial evaluation*);

Fmin – the lowest financial offer out of all the submitted offers qualified over the technical evaluation round (*F – financial offer under consideration*)

** 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.***