

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)**

Republic of Moldova

Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project

Credit No.: 7027-MD

Assignment Title: Elaboration of the **Employer’s Requirements chapters** for the project "Construction of the wastewater treatment plant and the sewerage infrastructure in the municipality of Soroca"

Reference No.: MD-PIU-NORLD-368215-CS-CQS

Date: June 23, 2023

The Government of the Republic of Moldova has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project (MWSSP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The objective of the assignment is to provide services of Elaboration of the Employer’s Requirements chapters for the project "Construction of the wastewater treatment plant and the sewerage infrastructure in the municipality of Soroca". The sewerage network of the municipality of Soroca is divided into 4 main basins, connected to the Centre wastewater pumping station (CPS). Two other wastewater pumping stations are located respectively in the northern part (North wastewater pumping station - NPS) and in the southern part of the city (South wastewater pumping station - SPS), with small catchment areas to pump the wastewater to the main network.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the following website: <https://www.ondrl.gov.md> or can be obtained at the address given below.

The Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are: core business and years in business, relevant experience, technical and managerial capability of the firm. Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” November 2020 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Consultant’s Qualification-based Selection** method set out in the Procurement Regulations. Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 09.00 to 17.00 hours (Moldova Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by **July 7, 2023, 16:00 o’clock, Moldova time, indicating the assignment title in subject line (when sent by e-mail).**

P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development,
Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project
Address: Str. Alexandru cel Bun 51 A, Floor 2, MWSSP Office,
Mun. Chişinău, Republic of Moldova.
Tel/fax: 022 27-91-21, 069265292
E-mail: tender@ondrl.gov.md

See below the Annex 1: Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)
Implementation of the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation
Project (P173076)
Consultant Qualification Selection (CQS)

For services:

Elaboration of the **Employer's Requirements chapters** for the project "Construction of the wastewater treatment plant and the sewerage infrastructure in the municipality of Soroca"

within the
P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development

I. MOLDOVA WATER SECURITY AND SANITATION PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Government of Moldova (GoM) is currently implementing a project supported by the World Bank (IDA) financing the **Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project (MWSSP)**. The Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project directly supports the Government's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal No.6: to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene by 2030 through its Action Program and the National Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy 2014-2028.

The World Bank's Water Security Diagnostic and Future Outlook¹ showed that there are several pressing challenges to Moldova's water security, such as (i) inequalities in access, inadequate quality of water supply in small towns and weak performance of service providers; (ii) poor environmental health and environmental pollution due to lack of sanitation and wastewater collection and treatment; (iii) weak institutions, fragmented financing streams and unresolved reform areas which hinder programmatic delivery of services.

Access in water supply and sanitation (WSS) is constrained by large coverage gaps in rural areas, compounded by income status. Compared to other countries in the Danube region, the share of population with access to basic water and sanitation services in Moldova is low. The gap between urban and rural remains one of the largest in Europe and is one of the key water security issues the country is facing. Based on JMP-data², gains were made in rural water supply access to drinking water services from piped networks, from 33 percent in 2000 to an estimate 40 percent in 2017, while urban piped service remained almost stable at 85 percent.

Household Budget Survey (HBS) (2018) data provides the picture on national access to a public piped water supply being 70 percent, with urban access at 92.4 percent and rural access at 52.2 percent. However, the water quality of rural piped system is often compromised and below

¹ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34809>

² Joint Monitoring Program data is derived based on linear extrapolations using national survey data and JMP population estimates; discrepancies between nationally reported data can be found due to differences in estimation methods and definitions. See also: <https://washdata.org/data>

drinking water quality standard. Those not served by public centralized systems rely on so-called self-supply, through private shallow wells. Around one in three people rely on self-supply for their drinking water with 80 percent of wells not compliant with drinking water norms (e.g. nitrates, e-coli). The poorest quintile of the rural population faces the largest obstacles to get connected to a public system and is least able to invest in private piped supply by wells (9 percent), with 42.2 percent of the poorest households collecting water with buckets or carts. In 2018, out of a total of 1,220 centralized water systems, 1,168 were functional, although performance data is not systematically available.

In response to these challenges, the Project Development Objective (PDO) of the MWSSP is **to increase access to safely managed water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns, and to strengthen institutional capacities for water supply and sanitation service delivery**. Strengthening institutional capacities for water supply and sanitation service delivery refers to both national level planning and sector development capacities, as well as to improved operational efficiency and delivery at utility level.

The Project will have four components:

Component 1: Increasing access to safely managed WSS services in selected rural areas and towns This component will develop new and rehabilitate existing WSS infrastructure and WASH facilities in rural areas and towns, thus expanding access and quality of services for households, businesses, and public institutions and supporting resilience. Component 1 supports climate adaption through (a) providing reliable centralized water supply protecting vulnerable households from drought and poor water quality; (b) improving wastewater systems, sanitation, and WASH facilities, reducing environmental exposure to pathogens exacerbated by flooding, particularly in towns facing frequent flooding; and (c) ensuring climate-resilient design of all infrastructure for robust functioning under extreme weather events. It consists of two subcomponents:

Subcomponent 1.1: Expanding access and quality of WSS services. This subcomponent will finance climate-resilient investments in towns and rural areas. This includes the following:

(a) **Water supply investments:** Expansion and rehabilitation of the regional water systems for water supply production and distribution, and service connections for LPAs in selected districts, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents; technical supervision; and citizen engagement activities. This refers to water supply infrastructure in two preliminarily identified subprojects, that is, regional water system expansion for LPAs in Cahul District and the ATU of Gagauzia and a regional water supply system with a surface water treatment plant in Riscani District. Many LPAs, particularly in the south (Cahul) as well as in the northern part along the Prut (Riscani), face shortages of water in the summer, with shallow wells/springs posing a challenge such as in the Prut cluster villages, in the Vulcanesti town, and other villages in Cahul District.

(b) **Wastewater investments:** Expansion and rehabilitation of wastewater systems in selected towns, including the construction and rehabilitation of sewer networks and service connections, and the construction of new wastewater treatment plants, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents; technical supervision; and citizen engagement activities. This refers to two preliminarily identified subprojects in Soroca and Comrat towns.

There are areas in the Comrat town that face frequent flooding, and the Soroca town is also vulnerable directly on the right bank of the Dniester. The project will support the assessment of flood risk and impact at the household level and, in addition to ensuring resilient design of infrastructure, provide measures to reduce the impact of floods where possible.

(c) **Pilot for on-site household sanitation:** selected rural or peri-urban villages, will benefit from the improvement of on-site household sanitation following a demand-led approach through the provision of technical assistance, the implementation of information campaigns, and the carrying out of civil works. The pilot will be co-financed through the ADA grant. This pilot will demonstrate the use of climate-resilient low-cost technologies for rural sanitation.

Subcomponent 1.2: Improving resilient WASH facilities in public social institutions. This subcomponent will finance works, goods, consulting services, non-consulting services and training/workshops to realize climate-resilient WASH facilities in HCFs and education institutions and implement hygiene education and behavior change communication program.

Component 2: Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels for WSS service delivery. This component focusses on institutional capacities of national and subnational entities and WSS operators for management, planning, regulation and reform implementation, and performance improvement of service providers for green, resilience, and inclusive service delivery. At the national level, development of plans, policies, and regulatory documents will support climate adaptation through climate-resilient planning, and at the local level, performance improvements will deliver climate benefits through reduction of NRW and improvement of energy efficiency. It consists of two subcomponents:

Subcomponent 2.1: Building national institutional capacity for WSS. This subcomponent aims to strengthen critical functions of facilitating and implementing WSS sector reform, investment planning and monitoring, and sector modernization and build capacities to this end of the assigned lead unit/entity within MIRD's structure. It finances goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, and training/workshops for activities that strengthen institutional capacities for planning, financing, economic regulation, performance monitoring, professional development, and the revision and development of new policies and normative documents.

Subcomponent 2.2: Improving performance of WSS service providers. Subcomponent 2.2 will finance works, goods, consulting services, non-consulting services, and training to support the implementation of a prioritized rolling multiyear PIP of selected WSS operators involved under Subcomponent 1.1. WSS operators will carry out annual assessments on PIP implementation and KPIs, including publication of results and feedback rounds with customers. The financing for selected WSS operators will be allocated based on results. Investments and TA activities identified in the PIPs are based on utility diagnostics and include, but are not limited to, the following: improving technical and commercial operations, improving financial management (FM), HR management, and organization and strategy aspects, including improving asset management systems and inventories, energy efficiency, NRW reduction programs, water metering practices and equipment to improve climate resilience, water safety, and business continuity, and enhancing responsiveness to customers.

Component 3: Project management and coordination. This component will finance operational costs, consulting services, non-consulting services, goods, and training to finance the overall project management cost, including the project team at the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), implementation support consultants at the regional level within MIRD's RDAs for environmental and social standards implementation, and, at the national level, MIRD as the project implementing entity (PIE). It will finance training costs, including for capacity building in procurement, environmental, and social standards, specialized short-term implementation support consultants, financial audits, project communication and citizen consultations, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Component 4: Contingent emergency response component (CERC). A provisional zero-amount component is included, which will allow for rapid reallocation of credit/loan proceeds from other components during an emergency under streamlined procurement and disbursement procedures. This component allows the Government to request the World Bank to recategorize and reallocate financing from other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs.

II. GENERAL DATA

III.

II.1 Investment: Services for Elaboration of the Employer's Requirements chapters for the project "Construction of the wastewater treatment plant and the sewerage infrastructure in the municipality of Soroca".

II.2 Beneficiary: National Office for Regional and Local Development (NORLD).

II.3 Location: The works that are the subject of the elaborated Employer's Requirements will be executed in the municipality of Soroca.

IV. OBJECT OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The sewerage network of the municipality of Soroca is divided into 4 main basins, connected to the Centre wastewater pumping station (CPS). Two other wastewater pumping stations are located respectively in the northern part (North wastewater pumping station - NPS) and in the southern part of the city (South wastewater pumping station - SPS), with small catchment areas to pump the wastewater to the main network.

Raw wastewater is currently discharged into the Dniester River through two main discharge points:

- The first is close to the CPS, discharging most of the city's wastewater volume (part of basin 1 and basins 2b, 3 and 4). This underground drain is close to Soroca Castle, which is the main tourist attraction of the city;
- The second discharge point is located near the SPS, through which only wastewater from accumulation area 2a is discharged. As the SPS is damaged, the pipe upstream of the station has been perforated so that the wastewater can flow into the river.

According to the Feasibility Study elaborated in August 2021 by SEURECA company, the short-term construction works include (see main benchmarks in the **Annex 1**):

- SPS must be rebuilt and the respective pressure pipe to the main sewer network must be rehabilitated.
- CPS must be rebuilt. A new pressure pipe must be constructed to direct the pumped wastewater to the designed wastewater treatment plant (WWTP).

The selection of the pumps will be done taking into account the future connection rate to the network in the year 2035.

Therefore, the development of the sewerage system in Soroca was considered a national priority and is part of the World Bank's "Moldova Water Security and Sanitation" project.

V. SCOPE OF WORK

The **Consultant** shall undertake the tasks under the Subcomponent 1.1, article "Wastewater investments", described above: *Expansion and rehabilitation of wastewater systems in selected towns, including the construction and rehabilitation of sewer networks and service connections, and the construction of new wastewater treatment plants, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents.*

The **Consultant** shall undertake the tasks exclusively for the sub-project **Soroca**.

The **Consultant** shall elaborate the Employer's Requirements chapters according to the following rules and conditions:

1. Employer's Requirements shall be elaborated according to the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" - November 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"), WB Standard Bidding Documents and other regulatory documents.
2. The Employer's Requirements shall cover the following wastewater infrastructure: Soroca Wastewater Treatment Plant, Wastewater Pumping Station "Center", Wastewater Pumping Station "South", and sewerage pressure pipelines, connecting the wastewater pumping stations to the wastewater treatment plant (see attached Feasibility Study for schemes, layouts and other technical details).
3. The Employer's Requirements shall include but not be limited to the following chapters:
 - Scope of Supply of Plant and Installation Services
 - General Information
 - Employer's Requirements for Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - Employer's Requirements for Wastewater Pumping Stations
 - Employer's Requirements for Sewer Pressure Mains
 - Specifications
 - General Information
 - Civil Works
 - Mechanical Works
 - Electrical Works
 - Drawings

- Wastewater Treatment Plant – general layout (scale 1:1000, format DWG and PDF)
- Wastewater Pumping Stations – general layout and sections (scale 1:100/200), existing facilities and new arrangement (scale 1:50/100, format DWG and PDF)
- Sewer Pressure Mains – situation plan and routing layout (scale 1:2500/5000, format DWG and PDF)
- Cost Estimates per main components
- Supplementary Information

4. Employer’s Requirements shall comply with the WB's Environmental and Social Standards, including at the design stage to analyze possible social and environmental risks as well as risks of resettlement, based on which the Contractor will subsequently develop the ESMP.

During the process of the bidding documents’ verification and approval the **Consultant** shall provide the explanations and answer the comments on the elaborated document, received from the World Bank and other relevant stakeholders.

VI. DELIVERABLES AND TIMING

The Employer’s Requirements chapters in Draft and Final versions shall be presented in MS Word format, in electronic form, in English language. The drawings, schemes and layouts shall be presented in DWG (vector information) and JPG (raster information) formats.

No.	Deliverable	Submission timeline	No. of Copies to Client
1.	Draft Employer’s Requirements	60 calendar days from the date of the approval of the Inception Report	Electronic version in English One (1) paper copy in English
2.	Final Employer’s Requirements	10 calendar days from the date of the submitted of the comments	Electronic version in English One (1) paper copy in English
3.	Provided support during the approval process	Will be held during the approval process	-

The duration of the assignment is **70 calendar days**.

The starting date of the assignment is expected to be in the beginning of **July, 2023**.

VII. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 1 General Experience under similar contracts (according to the above para. IV “Scope of Work”) in the role of consulting firm for at least seven (7) years prior to the applications submission deadline.
- 2 Specific Experience in participation as a consultant in at least two (2) contracts within the last five (5) years in elaboration of technical specifications for wastewater treatment plants, that have been successfully completed.
- 3 Development of technical specifications for wastewater pumping stations, pressure and gravity sewer pipelines, wastewater treatment plants including (according to the option proposed in the Feasibility Study for Soroca sub-project):
 - Pre-treatment: Screening and combined grit and grease removal tank
 - Imhoff tanks
 - Intermediate pumping stations
 - Trickling filter
 - Secondary clarifiers
- 4 The Consultant should be familiar and experienced with the World Bank procedures for procurement of works.
- 5 FIDIC conditions of contracts, including Yellow Book will be an asset.
- 6 The Consultant has not been subject to any litigation, penalties and bankruptcy for the current calendar year and the five (5) calendar years immediately preceding its submission of information related to affiliated entities. There are no current investigations, indictments or pending litigation by any federal or local jurisdiction relating to the bidding company, any of its officer, director, or partner.

VIII. STAFFING

The **Consultant’s** team will consist of:

Key Expert 1 – Project Manager;

Key Expert 2 – Wastewater Treatment Expert;

Key Expert 3 – Electrical and Mechanical Expert;

Non key experts – if needed.

The **Consultant** will provide qualified and certified (in accordance with legislation of Republic of Moldova) technical staff with at least 5 years of experience in the water supply and wastewater design works.

The **Consultant** is strongly encouraged to involve qualified female candidates for this activity.

IX. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The **Consultant's** activity will be carried out in close collaboration with and under the guidance of the delegated persons from Project Implementation Unit, under the Public Institution National Office for Regional and Local Development.

The **Consultant's** deliverables will be approved for financing only as a result of the signing of an acceptance certificate signed by P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development in the role of institution with fiduciary responsibilities.

NOTE: The Contractor is strongly encouraged to involve qualified female candidates for this activity.

Annex 1. Location of the main benchmarks

