

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(Re-advertisement 3)**

Republic of Moldova
Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project
Credit No.: 7027-MD
Reference No.: MD-PIU-NORLD-395565-CS-INDV
Assignment Title: National consultant to support the development of the Management Informational System (MIS)
Date: March 4, 2024

Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project (MWSSP) is a World Bank-financed Project implemented by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development (MIRD).

The NORLD now invites eligible Individual Consultants (“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 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. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the „Open Competitive Selection of Individual Consultants” method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

The objective of this task is to support the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development and the National Agency for Energy Regulation in the development of the necessary normative acts and the actual development of the Management Information System concept, including the terms of reference for contracting the company that will develop the Information System.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the **Annex 1 to this ToR**, NORLD web page: <https://www.ondrl.gov.md>

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 09 00 to 16 00 hours.

The applications should include letter of Expression of Interest, CV, and related recommendation letters, if any, together with a copy of CV in **WORD format**.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by **March 18, 2024, 16:00 o’clock**, Moldova time, indicating the assignment title in the subject line.

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Annex 1: Terms of Reference

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

Individual Consultant Selection (IC)

**National consultant to support the development
of the Management Informational System (MIS)
within the**

P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development

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 MWSSP 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 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

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>

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 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (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 Local Public Administrations (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 Administrative Territorial Unit (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 Health Care Facilities (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 Non-Revenue Water (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 Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development's (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. Within Subcomponent 2.1, the following actions are planned to be carried out:

1. Preparation and implementation of a National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (NWSSDP), including its investment program and financing strategy. This involves conducting detailed assessments, formulating strategies, and setting priorities for the development of the water supply and sanitation sector.
2. Strengthening the capacity of the Regional Development Policy Department (RPDD) within the designated MIDR structure to lead the preparation and implementation of the NWSSDP. This includes providing training, resources, and support to enhance their ability to effectively manage and coordinate the sector's development activities.
3. Provision of technical assistance to Local Public Authorities (LPAs) and Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) operators. This assistance aims to build the knowledge and skills of LPAs and WSS operators in implementing the NWSSDP, including aspects related to infrastructure development, service delivery, and financial management.

4. Development and implementation of policies, amendments to existing legislative acts, and the creation of new regulations, norms, or codes of practice related to Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS). These policy and regulatory measures aim to improve governance, operational efficiency, and sustainability in the sector.
5. The development and implementation of a Management Information System (MIS) for monitoring and evaluating the performance of WSS operators. This system will provide a comprehensive and reliable platform for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on the operation and maintenance of WSS facilities, service coverage, and customer satisfaction.
6. Implementation of a capacity-building program for relevant entities involved in the water supply and sanitation sector. This program will focus on enhancing technical skills, managerial competencies, and institutional capacities to ensure efficient and sustainable service delivery.

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 Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) of selected WSS operators involved under Subcomponent 1.1. WSS operators will carry out annual assessments on PIP implementation and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including publication of results and feedback rounds with customers. The financing for selected WSS operators will be allocated based on the 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.

CURRENT SITUATION WITHIN THE WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION SECTOR

In the Republic of Moldova, the existing legal framework in the field of water supply and sanitation clearly represents the existing institutional framework and the functions of the institutions. However, the implementation of the national legislation and the efficient management of the sector still remains an internal challenge for which reason it is difficult to monitor the number of existing operators in the water supply and sanitation sector in the Republic of Moldova, which makes it impossible to assess the quality of the services provided.

According to the *Law no. 303/2013 on public water supply and sanitation service*, the institutions with competences in the field of water supply and sanitation service management in the Republic of Moldova are:

- a. Government of the Republic of Moldova - responsible for adopting the regulatory framework in the field and providing the necessary support to local public authorities for the establishment, development and improvement of public water supply and sanitation services;
- b. Central public authority (Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development) – responsible for development and promotion of the state policy and normative acts, regularly accumulates and systematizes the information on the situation in the sector and informs the Government on the current situation, elaborates the framework procedure for the organization, implementation and award of contracts for the delegation of service management, etc.;
- c. The National Agency for Energy Regulation - develops and approves regulations applicable to all operators providing water supply and sanitation public services regarding the approval of tariffs, regulatory framework on the organization and functioning of operators, and other powers under Article 7 of Law No. 303/2013. Also, according to the provisions of the Parliament Decision No. 334/2018 on the approval of the regulations on the organization and functioning of the National Agency for Energy Regulation, one of the Agency's duties is implementation of state policies regarding regulation in the field of public water supply and sanitation services;
- d. Local Public Administration – being responsible for organising the WSS services and controlling the quality of services as a founder, and other competencies according to the article 8 of the Law 303/2013.
- d. Other institutions with the right to control, including the quality of drinking water, etc.

Therefore, in the Diagnostic Study prepared by the World Bank³ and in other reports dedicated to the sector (including the Court of Account⁴), there is evidence of insufficient involvement of the institutions responsible for the management of the public water supply and sanitation service, which makes it imperative to identify measures that would increase the efficiency of the services provided and ensure a more rigorous control over the activities of the operators.

In addition, it should be noted that in the Republic of Moldova there are no official statistics or an effective mechanism for monitoring the number of operators providing water supply and sanitation services, there are no mechanisms for controlling the activity and quality of the services provided, including the quality of water in drinking water supply networks. Also, although the regulations drawn up and approved by the National Agency for Energy Regulation are mandatory for all operators in the sector, regardless of their status, whether licensed or not,

³ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/9b985a5a-80ef-5994-bd1e-d3c72df522ad/content>

⁴ https://ccrm.md/ro/decision_details/1211/hotararea-nr14-din-06-aprilie-2023-cu-privire-la-raportul

there is no mechanism for controlling the number of operators and regulating their activity, which creates total uncertainty in the sector and a lack of official statistics on the number of networks, localities and households connected, the number of citizens provided with water supply and sanitation services, and there is a lack of prospects for the sustainability of the new created infrastructure.

Thus, in order to increase the efficiency of the national authorities' interventions in the process of managing water supply and sanitation services, within the project "Water Security and Sanitation Project in Moldova", an Inter-Institutional Cooperation Agreement has been signed between the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, the National Agency for Energy Regulation and the I.P. National Office for Regional and Local Development, according to which is planned the development of a "Management Information System", in order to develop a tool which will help the national institutions to monitor and evaluate the performance of water supply and sanitation operators. The Management Information System will include Key Performance Indicators for licensed operators, indicators regarding the total operating area of the operators (localities, no. of beneficiaries, no. of households, companies, length and quality of the infrastructure, water and waste water quality etc) and will be developed as a critical tool for: i) introducing benchmarking through performance indicators for licensed operators; ii) providing an e-governance interface for the regulatory and ANRE-managed processes; iii) informing on the degree of implementation of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan, ensuring that basic data on rural (unlicensed) operators is included.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this task is to support the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development and the National Agency for Energy Regulation in the development of the necessary normative acts and the actual development of the Management Information System concept, including the terms of reference for contracting the company that will develop the Information System.

SCOPE OF WORK

In order to achieve the objectives mentioned above, the consultant is responsible to provide conceptual support to Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development and National Agency for Energy Regulation with the following main tasks and responsibilities:

Conduct a desk review of the existing Informational systems model, business processes and flows, functional and non-functional usage of the project's information, integration aspects and mapping of available tools and platforms operated by MIRD and ANRE;

Carry out an analysis of the international best practices and available IT solutions applied for operating similar platforms, including their advantages and disadvantages and provide recommendations to be applied;

Participate in the working group meetings at MIRD or ANRE and other related institutions and develop the preliminary concept of the MIS;

Together with MIRD and ANRE representatives, develop the cost estimation needed to ensure operationalisation of the MIS solution and embedded platform (including but not limited to development, hosting, GIS software or services acquisition, domain etc.); Develop the needed Government Decision for approval of the:

- a. Concept of the MIS, and other relevant document, develop divergence table, and Informative Note, and providing support to the MIRD in the promotion of the Government Decision for approval;
- b. Regulation for maintaining the information system "Management of public water supply and sewerage services.

Develop the *Requirements for Information System*, that shall encompass the concept of the MIS, technical requirements and licensing model of the used software (open source, closed source, commercial, etc.), requirements for the tools and possibilities of the administrative panel of the embedded web platform, front-end development requirements for the embedding web platform, security and administrative access policies and measures, server-side software environment requirements for the platform. *The Requirements of the Information System shall comprise four significant and closely related subsections: (i) Technical Requirements, (ii) Implementation Schedule, (iii) System Inventory Tables, (iv) Background and Informational Materials*".

Develop and propose to MIRD and ANRE selection criteria for the company to be selected via competitive process to develop and deploy the MIS solution and embedding platform;

Submit to MIRD and ANRE and presentation to the working groups of the pre-final draft concept of the MIS;

Include the approved recommendations for the improvement of the concept and submit the final concept of the MIS.

DELIVERABLES

Table. 1 Details of key deliverables and timelines

No.	Work result description	Deadlines	Formats	Language
1.	Inception report, including description of the detailed approach, working methodology and action plan aimed to achieve the assignment's objectives and at least 2 conceptual/technical described options for the MIS, agreement with MIRD and ANRE on preferred one	40 calendar days after the contract signing date	Doc.	Romanian
2.	Draft Government Decision, Informative Note and the Concept of the Management Information System, developed according to the national legislation, Summary table ⁵	80 calendar days from the contract signing date	Doc, ppt	Romanian
3.	Regulation for maintaining the information system "Management of public water supply and sewerage services.	100 calendar days from the contract signing date	Doc	Romanian

⁵ Law No.467/2003 on informatization and state information resources
 Law No 100/2017 on normative acts
 Other national normative acts related to the task

No.	Work result description	Deadlines	Formats	Language
4.	Requirements for Management Information System (ToR to contract the ICT company which will develop the MIS) is developed, consulted and endorsed by MIRD and ANRE, including selection criteria for the company that will be selected via competitive process	120 calendar days from the contract signing date	Doc	Romanian
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other documents as necessary to achieve the intended result of this ToR, • All technical and economical/financial calculations have to be provided in the original Excel sheets with unrestricted accessibility. 				

Note:

The deliverables described in points 2, 3 and 4 of the table are to be prepared in accordance with the provisions of "Article 7⁶. Documents of State information systems and resources" of the Law no. 467/2003 on computerization and information resources and the Law no. 71/2007 regarding the registers.

VI. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

6.1 Qualification

Master degree or an equivalent in ICT, statistics, public administration, governance, economics and/or other science related to areas of assignment.

6.2 Competencies

- Familiarity with use of statistical data through modern information technologies, as well as international practice;
- Knowledge of security/confidentiality standards related to data management and exchange, as well as virtualization, network or workflow technologies, open source concepts and interoperability platforms;
- Excellent communications, organizational and management skills in a complex multi-stakeholder environment;
- Strong results orientation;
- Flexible and responsive with a client-oriented approach.

6.3 General Experience (30 points)

- Minimum 5 years of experience in IT solutions, project management or other relevant areas.

6.4 Specific Professional Experience (50 points)

- Minimum of 5 years of proven experience in designing and/or implementation of software applications and/or complex IT systems, development of the *Requirements for Information System* including those based on contemporary web/mobile technologies or other relevant experience;
- Proven experience in working with GIS data, using GIS software and coding based on GIS modules;

- Experience in development of at least 2 similar analytical and/or conceptualizing works (concepts, visions, technical requirements, assessments, evaluations) in the field of ICT;
- Experience of collaboration with governmental institutions, preferably in area/s relevant for the present assignment;
- Proved practical experience of work with statistical data, evidences and informative materials, on-line web-based applications, as well as data/database modelling and optimizations.

6.5 Language (20 points)

Fluency in Romanian is required. Knowledge of English and/or Russian would be an advantage.

VII. TIMING

The implementation of the present assignment is planned for a period of approx. 4 months of the consultant's input.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The consultant's activity will be carried out in close collaboration with and under the guidance of the delegated persons from the MIRD and ANRE, and also in close cooperation with the PIU.

NOTE:

P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from qualified candidates regardless of gender, disability, or other factors/ characteristics. Women and persons with disabilities, with relevant skills are particularly encouraged to apply.