

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Individual Consultant Selection
Extension Deadline

Republic of Moldova
Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project

Credit No.: 7027-MD

Reference No.: MD-PIU-NORLD-432026-CS-INDV

Assignment Title: National Consultant for Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report and development of the Capacity Development Plan for Lead Unit – MIRD.

Date: July 22, 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 assignment is to support the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development in developing the Capacity Development Plan in the field of water supply and sanitation, for the MIRD management (2 persons) and the staff of the WSS Policy Department within the MIRD (5 persons).

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the 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 **August 12, 2024, 16:00 o’clock**, Moldova time, indicating the assignment title in the subject line.

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Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project
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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 for Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report and development of
the Capacity Development Plan for Lead Unit_MIRD**

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 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

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>

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 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.

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.

II. Current institutional situation at national level in the field of water supply and sanitation

In August 2021, a new structure of the central public authorities was approved by the Parliament. With the approval of the changes of the governmental institutions, the decision to transfer the competence for policy development and implementation in the field of water supply and sanitation from the Ministry of Environment to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development was approved. Thus, the WSS Policy Department was established in February 2022. The newly constituted department within the MIRD is responsible for water supply and sanitation policies and provides an opportunity to be established as the Lead WSS Unit with adequate staffing, training, and capacity development. Therefore, taking into account that the newly created department was established in February 2023 and the number of employees has been completed at the end of June 2023, according to the Financing Agreement, MIRD have to present evidence that the new created department is well-capacitated lead unit for the facilitation and monitoring of the implementation of WSS sectoral reforms.

The order of actions concerning the creation of the new department is as follows:

- the WSS Policy Department was constituted according to the provisions of the government decision no. 852/2022;
- the personnel states, were approved by the Minister of Infrastructure and Regional Development on January 17, 2023, and by the State Chancellery at January 20;
- at the end of the first semester of the project implementation (february 2022), in the department 2 people were employed out of 5;
- the decision regarding the delegation of the WSS Policy Department, as the lead WSS unit was approved at the end of February, 2023.

Thus, in order to ensure the capacity development of the newly created department, taking into account that not all employees have experience in policy development and implementation in the field of water supply and sanitation, it is necessary to conduct a detailed assessment of employees within the department, as well as representatives of subordinate institutions, to examine the need for capacity development, and as a result of these assessments, a Capacity Development Plan will be developed, to be implemented by the end of 2023.

III. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this assignment is to support the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development in developing the Capacity Development Plan in the field of water supply and sanitation, for the MIRD management (2 persons) and the staff of the WSS Policy Department within the MIRD (5 persons).

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of the consultancy is oriented towards identifying the capacity development needs for the management of the MIRD responsible for coordination of the WSS policies (2 persons) and staff of the WSS Policy Department (5 persons), whose role is oriented towards identifying the development vision of the WSS sector in the Republic of Moldova. The Consultant will ensure the development of the Capacity Development Plan according to the identified needs. In this regard, in an attempt to further develop planning and analytical skills, the consultancy will focus on strengthening capacities for development and implementation of public policies.

V. Tasks and activities of the consultant

The consultancy will consist of two key tasks:

- A. Analysis / Assessment of the existing capacities of the Department's staff to execute the re-occurring tasks and achieve the objectives arising from the relevant WSS sector development strategies.
- B. Development of the Capacity Development Plan for the staff MIRD management and of the WSS Policy Department.

In carrying out the above tasks the Consultant will undertake the following activities:

Activity A.1: Development of a methodology and form/template for interviewing and assessing capacity development needs in MIRD's management and WSS Policy Department. The methodology will take in consideration the possibility to identify gaps related specifically to shortcomings related to professional capacities, shortcomings in information flows between institutions within the sector and the capacity to process information, knowledge specific to the sector - technological and managerial. In the preparation of the methodology, the consultant will take into account the opinions / suggestions of relevant stakeholders - decision-makers from MIRD and staff of the WSS Policy Department.

Activity A.2: The consultant, based on the results of the previous activity, will prepare a Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report. The report will be circulated for comments among the participants interviewed and will be approved at the State Secretary level. The report will come with the proposed content of the Plan and the justification for each proposed training theme.

Activity B.1: Development of the Capacity Development Plan for the MIDR management and WSS Policy Department staff

When drawing up the Plan, the Consultant will take into account the fact that the training cycle is directly related to the implementation of the following steps:

- Identification and development of the Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report (Activity A.1 and A.2);
- Submit proposals for the inclusion of capacity building needs in the Training Programme developed and approved by MIDR;
- Elaboration of tasks, key actions and detailing of proposed topics;
- After approval of the Capacity Development Plan, a cost estimate for its implementation will be prepared, with identification of funding sources.

All these issues will be taken into account and reflected in the narrative part of the Plan.

Activity B2. Presentation of the draft Capacity Development Plan in a meeting with the participation of the individuals involved in Activity A1.

The list of Deliverables is presented in the Table 1 below.

VI. DELIVERABLES

The services shall be implemented under a Lump-Sum Contract and payments will be made against satisfactory delivery and acceptance of final deliverables, as summarized in the Table 1 below.

Table. 1 Details of key deliverables and timelines

Deliverable	Deadline	Phase completion
Inception report including Methodology and the form/template for staff evaluation	Within 14 calendar days from the date of contract signing	Approved by the State Secretary, or other delegated person from MIRD
Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report	Within 15 days after approval of the Methodology and the form/template for staff evaluation	Approved by the State Secretary, or other delegated person from MIRD
Draft Capacity Building Plan for WSS Policy Department staff	Within 20 days after approval of the Capacity Development Needs Assessment Report	Approved or after presented comments and proposals from the MIRD representatives
Final version of the Capacity Development Plan for WSS Policy Department staff	7 calendar days from receipt of comments to the draft Capacity Development Plan	Approved by State Secretary, or other delegated person from MIRD

All the documents should be presented in Romanian language. The Capacity Development Plan will present the training activities based on the gaps identified and their importance on a time scale: (i) urgent trainings, (ii) medium term, (iii) to be done during 12 months.

VII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant shall submit Capacity Building Needs Report in Romanian. The drafts of the report circulated for comments will be submitted to the Client in electronic format, Word 10 file (or more advanced version). Final approved draft in pdf format.

IX. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

General experience – 30 points:

- Advanced university degree in economics, public policy, WSS engineering or any other relevant fields;
- Previous experience working with government institutions.

Specific experience – 50 points:

- Experience in implementation of two (2) assignments covering training needs assessment or capacity buildings plan for public organizations;
- Experience in collecting and working with complex datasets;
- Good analytical and writing skills, with the ability to present results in a simple language, using visual means (maps, charts, and other visual tools);
- Experience in capacity building, especially in social policy;
- Ability to facilitate training sessions with public authorities.

Language and region – 20 points:

- Excellent command of both spoken and written Romanian and English; knowledge of Russian is an advantage;
- Strong communication skills (both oral and written);
- Working experience in the region;

Qualified women, with relevant skills for this activity, are strongly encouraged to apply.

VIII. TIMING

The implementation of the present assignment is for a period of maximum 2 months (*this period shall include: Consultant's mobilization and commencement of services, development and submission of deliverables, examination and approval of deliverables by the Client/MIRD, final acceptance of services and payment procedures*).

IX. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Consultant's activity will be carried out in close cooperation with and under the guidance of the delegated personnel from the MIRD, and also in close cooperation with the PIU. Since all deliverables should be approved by the MIRD, the PIU/NORLND will be responsible for contract management.

NOTE: Qualified women, with relevant skills for this activity, are strongly encouraged to apply.

