

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
for selecting a consulting company  
to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the

**National Strategy for Regional Development (NSRD) and  
the three Regional Development Strategies (RDSs)**

## 1. Context

Since the beginning of 2010, the GIZ Project Modernization of Local Public Services (MLPS) supports various Local Public Administrations of the Republic of Moldova in extending and modernizing service provision in water and sanitation, solid waste management and energy efficiency of public buildings.

The project is funded and commissioned by the Government of Germany, namely, the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and receives additional support from the European Commission, Government of Sweden and Government of Romania. It is (currently) supposed to end in December 2015.

The overall objective of the project is as follows:

**“Local public services in selected towns and villages in the three priority sectors waste water management, water supply and sanitation and energy efficiency are improved.”**

The project comprises two intervention areas:

Intervention Area 1 (IA 1) has the objective:

*“Local Public Authorities effectively cooperate and manage the improvements of local public services.”*

The major focus of the activities is on the introduction and pilot implementation of appropriate development measures in the three priority sectors and the cooperation with Local Public Authorities. Partner institutions (Regional Development Authorities (RDA) and Local Public Authorities (LPA)) are intensively supported in the implementation of pilot projects in order to achieve sustainability. Advisors of the project are working in 12 LPAs and the RDAs North, Centre and South.

Intervention Area 2 (IA 2) has the objective:

*“Regional and Local Public Authorities effectively plan strategic investments in the three priority sectors water and sanitation, solid waste management and energy efficiency of public buildings”.*

The main intervention under IA 2 is focused on the improvement of planning and implementation capacities of the three RDAs and relevant LPAs. Capacity development activities aim at improving planning, programming and development of investment projects in the five priority sectors of the project:

- water supply/sanitation,

- solid waste management,
- energy efficiency of public buildings and
- local/regional roads
- complementary private sector support

To achieve the objective the project supports the partner structures in the development of procedures of a participatory and integrated regional development.

The main counterparts of the MLPS project are the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction (MRDC) and the Regional Development Agencies (RDA) from North, Centre and South Regions. Since 2010, the MRDC together with partner agencies has been implementing the National Strategy on Regional Development. According to the 2006 law on regional development, the NSRD is “the main document for regional development planning, reflecting national policy in this area and setting national mechanisms for regional development”. Two NSRDs have been developed since the 2006 law on regional development was passed. The first covered the period 2010-2012 and the second the period 2013-2015. The MRDC is about to start on the process of developing the next NSRD which should be approved by November 2015. The NSRD. It is therefore proposed that both the first and second strategies be evaluated before the new NSRD is finalised.

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS), according to the 2006 law on regional development, is “*a medium-term (7 years) regional development policy document at the regional level, which identifies priorities, includes projects and specific measures for the implementation of regional development policy within the development region*”. Thus, the RDS is the main document for laying out the three development regions’ vision, strategy, results and targets. The RDSs were elaborated in 2010 for all three development regions (North, Centre and South) and cover the period up to 2016. They were all updated in 2012 and will be re-written in 2015/16 to cover the next seven year period. Given that the RDSs are closely connected to the NSRD, it is proposed that they all be evaluated together, as one integrated exercise.

In line with the above, GIZ seeks to commission a consulting company/organisation or two companies/organisations which have proven expertise in the development, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of strategic/policy documents in order to support MRDC in carrying out this complex assignment.

## **2. Overall Objectives of the Assignment**

This assignment has the overall objective to provide support to MRDC and RDAs in carrying out an independent, nationwide evaluation of the two NSRDs which covered the periods 2010-2013 and 2013-2015 and the three RDS which cover the period until 2016. This is expected to be carried out in accordance with the result-based monitoring (RBM) and evaluation, DAC criteria and national regulations/guidelines regarding the evaluation of policy documents.

### Specific objectives<sup>1</sup>:

- Evaluate the extent to which planned objectives, results and outputs (regarding the main priorities) were achieved and report on the status of the achievement of indicators;
  1. *Have the established objectives been achieved and to what extent they are related to the given development intervention?*
  2. *Have the needs of target groups been satisfied and what changes have been observed?*
  3. *What is the impact of this public policy (economic, social, environmental etc. ) and it is sustainable enough?*
  4. *What are the lessons learned from the implementation of the public policy?*
  
- Evaluate the extent to which planned activities and actions have been implemented and are relevant for this development intervention
  
- Describe the good practices of partnerships, coordination, capacity development, regional projects, and technical support for the implementation of the NSRD and RDS;
- Assess the degree to which the implementation of the strategy has adequately addressed such principles as: transparency, non-discrimination, gender equality, collaboration and inter-sectorial approach to regional development needs;
- Identify factors that facilitated and/or hindered the achievements of the results and elaborate lessons learned;
- Present comprehensive recommendations for the next strategic documents on regional development both at the national and regional level

### 3. Tasks and responsibilities

In order to achieve the objectives of this assignment, the consulting company/companies or organisation(s) is/are expected to:

- Carry out a desk review of the strategic, operational and regulatory documents related to regional development and the existing monitoring & evaluation (M&E) system in MRDC and three RDAs. These documents include annual and other reports, procedures and tools applied by State Chancellery, MRDC, RDAs, as well as the best practices and lessons learned captured by GIZ and other relevant international counterparts in the regional development and RBM area – **by 15 April;**
  
- Develop a brief inception report with clear description of time and resources needed, a detailed work plan, methodology, clear evaluation questions and tools used during the evaluation, to be discussed and agreed with MRDC, State Chancellery and GIZ - **by 22 April;**

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<sup>1</sup> This mid-term evaluation should take into account the national procedures developed by the State Chancellery and described in the Guidelines on the methodology for ex-post evaluation of public policies.

- Participate in / organise meetings, site visits and interviews with the relevant MRDC/RDAs representatives, the relevant line ministries, subordinate institutions, beneficiaries, as well as relevant representatives of GIZ, donors or other counterparts (according to the agreed list of representatives to be interviewed) - **by 15 July**;
- Organize specific focus groups in chosen priority areas (to be agreed) to cross-check the preliminary evaluation findings- **by 15 May**;
- Analyse the collected data/information; seek clarifications from different sources to complement the findings. In the absence of data related to the baseline and targets, use available data collection methods as much as possible to compile the evaluation results of the strategy implementation from beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
- Develop and submit the content of the draft mid-term evaluation report for approval- **by 20 April**.
- Develop and submit a draft mid-term evaluation report according to the agreed format which assesses the current status of the NSRD and the three RDS implementation, the achievement of results, targets and provides recommendations for the next strategic documents on regional development for the period 2016-2020 – **1<sup>st</sup> draft by 15 June**.
- Develop a final mid-term of evaluation report that incorporates these recommendations for the improvement of the final evaluation report – **by 15 July**;
- Present the preliminary and final findings and recommendations during internal and public meetings – **by 30 July**.
- Present the assignment report – **by 30 July**.

#### **4. Key deliverables:**

- Inception report with work plan based on provided methodology, evaluation questions and tools to be developed and submitted
- Participation in all meetings with MRDC and stakeholders
- Interview guiding sheet
- Summary of interview results, site visits
- Draft and final mid-term evaluation report to be developed and submitted
- Presentations on preliminary and final findings and recommendations
- Assignment report (intermediary and final) with the key findings and recommendations on the development of the new NSRD/RDS including M&E system.

## 5. Timeframe / Tentative Work Plan (6 April – 30 July, 2015)

Start of the assignment	6 April
End of the assignment	30 July
1 <sup>st</sup> draft evaluation report	15 June
Final draft evaluation report	15 July
Assignment report	30 July
Handover of draft work results by the expert	In accordance with the tasks deadlines ( <b>by e-mail</b> to the GIZ responsible advisor, copy to the PAU Senior Advisor);
Number expert days	Up to 170 days

## 6. Management arrangements

The evaluation will be managed by the MRDC in close coordination with GIZ and the findings will be presented to the National Co-ordination Council for Regional Development (NCCRD).

It is proposed that the MRDC sets up a committee to co-ordinate the evaluation including representatives from: MRDC, NCCRD, RDCs and RDAs, State Chancellery and GIZ. The committee shall meet two times: the first meeting to agree on the scope and objectives of the evaluation and approve the terms of reference; the second meeting to review the draft final evaluation report. Following completion of the evaluation, the final report shall be presented to the NCCRD. The report will also be made available to the team drafting the new NSRD 2016-2020 and the three RDS.

## 7. Requirements for the assigned company:

- Extensive experience in monitoring, evaluations and/or development of strategic documents, projects or programme for at least 3 years for the company;
- Have a pool of national experts with proven backgrounds in the fields of economy, finance, social affairs, regional/local/rural development, legal affairs and cross-cutting issues (up to 4 experts);
- Proven experience in performing similar activities for at least 5 years for the individual consultants;
- Sufficient technical resources and human resources for the successful implementation of the proposed activity;
- Extensive knowledge of government, public, civil society organisations, local and regional representatives, as well as donors working in local/regional development
- Professional organisational skills and delivery in a timely and qualitative manner;

- Proven research, analytical and writing skills
- Experience working with international organizations;

**8. Main contact persons:**

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