1. Background information

The Government of Moldova is implementing a Moldova Skills Data Capacity Building Project, financed by the World Bank (grant).

According to the Moldova 2020 National Development Strategy, skills development has been identified as a key priority for the country. The Moldova Skills Data Capacity Building Project is directly involved in reform agenda by supporting the collection and analysis of labor market data, the absence of which is currently hampering the reform efforts of the Ministry of Labor, Social Projection, and Family (MLSPF), NEA, and Ministry of Education (MoE).

The development objective of the Moldova Skills Data Capacity Building Project is to strengthen the Government of Moldova’s capacity for evidence-based policymaking in the area of skills and employment through supporting enhanced collection and analysis of data on workforce skills and labor market needs. The output will support the Government’s efforts to align the education system to labor market needs, thus promoting job creation.

The project consists of 3 inter-related components.
- Component 1. Revised Employer Surveys on Demand for Skills.
- Component 2. Revised Surveys of the Resident Working-age Population on Supply of Skills and Barriers to Employment.
- Component 3. Capacity building.

This assignment is focused on the second component and is related to socio-emotional assessment.

2. Objective of the assignment

The overarching objective of the assignment is to strengthen the Government of Moldova’s capacity for evidence-based policymaking in the area of skills and employment through supporting enhanced collection and analysis of data on labor market needs.

The assignment is to be implemented by a qualified individual consultant.

Specific objectives of the assignment are to:

a. To develop and help operationalize an instrument that can be incorporated as a module in a multi-topic household survey to assess the basic socio-emotional (aka non-cognitive or “soft”) competences of the adult population residing in Moldova;

b. To conduct empirical analysis to validate the instrument and construct basic scores to rank the levels of socio-emotional competences of individuals in the survey sample employing internationally valid methodologies.
The assignment covers:

1. Propose a socio-emotional assessment instrument for adults residing in Moldova (in both Romanian and Russian languages), using:
   1. Adaptation of existing module from WB STEP Skills Measurement Program
   2. Adaptation of existing Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test instrument
   3. Pre-tested additional socio-emotional skills instruments

2. Validation and scoring of final socio-emotional assessment instrument based on collected data

3. Consultant’s responsibilities

The Consultant will be responsible for the following steps:

1) Prepare a concise instrument to measure the socio-emotional (or ‘non-cognitive’ or ‘soft’) skills of the adult population residing in Moldova by:
   1) Translating the “Personality and Behavior” module of the STEP Skills Measurement Survey, and where needed, adapting the adjectives for Moldovan context using the existing database of Big Five adjectives;
   2) Adapting the Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test instrument, adapting the adjectives for Moldovan context, where needed;
   3) Propose additional socio-emotional scales, delving deeper on measurement of the socio-emotional skills that have been demonstrated to be more malleable in the adult population and that are correlated with labor market success in the Moldovan context.

2) Work together with a consultant hired to develop a cognitive module to ensure the conceptual consistency of the cognitive and socio-emotional skills survey instruments, drawing on the international experience with similar instruments/surveys (e.g. STEP, BLISS) to ensure that the phrasing of the questions are consistent and understood by participants with different education levels.

3) Elaborate training and administration manuals for the pilot test of the socio-emotional skills instrument as well as training field staff responsible for its administration.

4) Participate in the development of a pilot test of the socio-emotional assessment instrument, process the results of the pilot, and recommend final versions of the instrument.

5) Analyze the pilot program data, including conducting internal validity and reliability checks.

6) Produce a short report, including the final versions of the instrument that will be used in the study, and the revised training and administration manuals for the instrument based on the pilot as well as the test recommendations.
7) Train staff of the data collection team who will be in charge of the administration of the instrument in its final version.

8) Analyze the final collected data in order to show the psychometric characteristics and generate revised scores in order to be used in the research. The analysis will be focused in determining the validity and reliability of the instruments, including conducting confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and if needed, exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

9) Deliver a short report with the findings from the analysis in (8), together with the micro database incorporating the psychometric scores that can be used to rank individual levels of skills in the areas mentioned above, and/or the protocols or programs in STATA format that can be used to construct these.

10) Participate in meetings related to the development of the instrument and overall study as deemed relevant by MLSPF and/or data collection team.

4. Methodology

The Consultant will coordinate with the beneficiary (NEA and MLSPF) the methodology used.

The consultant shall perform the work in close cooperation with the NEA and Employment Policy Department of the MLSPF, and if requested, in consultation with other relevant institutions (NBS, Ministry of Education).

Data:
Evaluation will be based on data provided by the NEA and other relevant information. The Consultant will get access to the data sets and other documentation free-of-charge and will treat them as confidential. Access to other necessary databases or reports that are not owned by NEA, will be facilitated by the NEA.

5. Expected outputs

The consultant is expected to deliver:

- Proposed socio-emotional assessment instrument (based on tasks 1-3 above), with elaborated questions, response options, and scoring methodology for each scale;
- Training manual for pilot data collection team;
- Pilot report (5-10 pages), with annexes with revised instrument and training manual
- Final Report (10-20 pages) with findings based on analysis of collected data and revised scores based on psychometric validation of the instrument
- Database with individual data from the socio-emotional assessment module and scores for each scale

6. Period of the assignment and time input
The assignment is expected to be commenced in February 2017 and to be completed by the end of May 2017.

The total time input of the consultant shall not exceed 30 man-days.

7. Reporting requirements

The Consultant shall produce and submit to the Client the following reports:

- Inception report containing preliminary findings is to be presented by the end of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} week from the contract signing
- Interim report containing the results and outputs of the task 1)-6) specified in para.3 is to be submitted by the end of 7\textsuperscript{th} week from the contract signing
- Final report, including final version of the manual, relevant documents produced within the assignment (in attachment), as well as database specified in para.6, is to be submitted by the end of 12\textsuperscript{th} week from the contract signing.

All the reported activities of the Consultant will be considered completed only upon the acceptance and formal approval by the beneficiary. All reports should be presented in the Romanian language, the assessment instrument and other outputs are to be presented in Romanian and Russian.

8. Specific inputs to be provided by the Client.

NEA will provide all relevant documents and ensure access to the data necessary for implementation of the assignment.

If needed, the NEA will organize working groups with participation of representatives from the relevant institutions/organizations to inform consultant work and to accept the main development directions of the work.

9. Qualification requirements

The consultant will be selected based upon the following criteria:

- Graduate degree in psychology, education, or a related field
- Ample expertise on personality trait and socio-emotional skill assessment psychology and strong record of professional experience (at least 5 years) and publications in these research areas.
- Experience in developing and evaluating psychometric instruments.
- Familiarity with Moldova’s population characteristics and linguistics
- Proven experience in producing analytical reports, drafting manuals/guidelines.
- Experience in delivery of training.
- International experience in providing consulting services in the field of the assignment will be a strong advantage.
- Knowledge of survey instruments.
• Working experience with public authorities and in donor funded projects will be an asset.
• Proficiency in Romanian language.
• Fluency in Russian and English languages will be an advantage.