

Terms of Reference

Senior Technical Expert

Project: Local Public Administration, Citizen Engagement (PACE Local)

About SALAR International

SALAR International is a subsidiary of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), representing all 290 municipalities and 21 regions in Sweden. As the international branch of SALAR, we work globally to support local democracy and good governance in developing and transitioning countries. Our expertise covers areas such as capacity building in municipal management and service delivery, local and regional development planning, support for local government associations, decentralisation policies and European integration. Geographically, SALAR International's projects cover countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Middle East and the Sub-Saharan Africa.

Description of the assignment context

Project: Local Public Administration, Citizen Engagement (PACE Local) a four-year project (2025–2028) to support local governance in Moldova. It is based on discussions with Sida and the Swedish Embassy in Chişinău and on the results of an ongoing inception phase that began in June 2024 and has included consultations with a broad range of domestic and international stakeholders. The State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova (SC) has been closely consulted on the government's strategy for local public administration reform (PAR) while local perspectives have been provided by the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM) and representatives of local public authorities (LPAs).

In line with Sweden's reform strategy for Eastern Europe, the project will foster better democratic governance, better conditions for accountability and transparency, improved compliance with EU legislation and standards, improved prospects for a gender-equal society, and (depending partly on the policy areas selected by LPAs under the second component below) inclusive local economic development, climate resilience and environmental sustainability through improved local services and infrastructure for example in waste management, energy efficiency, water supply and sanitation.

The overall goal of the project is: **Strengthened LPAs within an enhanced framework for local governance improve service provision to citizens in line with the country's strategic orientation towards EU accession.** There will be a focus on support to the central government, thematic support to clusters of local public authorities as well as support for local engagement in the EU accession process.

Organisational set up

The project is a joint Swedish-Moldavian initiative with management structures in both Stockholm and Chisinau. The team in Moldova will consist of the International Team Leader, a Senior Technical Expert (local self-government), a project coordinator, a communication officer and a project assistant. The project manager is based in Stockholm, together with the institutional

support functions of SALAR International for administrative, financial and quality assurance purposes.

The project encourages a flat organisational structure, meaning a high degree of autonomy and responsibility for involved experts, as well as strong local ownership among beneficiaries.

Conditions of the Assignment

Location: The Senior Local Government Expert shall be based at the SALAR International office in Chisinau, Moldova. On-site presence in the project office is a requirement.

Scope and Duration: The assignment is for 12 months, **from April 2025** (depending on funding being approved by the donor). Extension for the remaining period of the project (until December 2028) shall be agreed with the Project Manager on an annual basis.

A consultancy contract will be signed between SALAR International and the expert which will outline the conditions for the position in detail. Please note this position is not an employment position, meaning that applicants must be established as consultants and will be liable to pay all relevant taxes and insurances.

A competitive consultancy fee will be offered to the successful candidate.

Role description

The Senior Technical Expert is a senior national position requiring good thematic experience of the ongoing reform process in Moldova related to the Public Administration Reform Strategy local level PAR and capacity building for LPAs.

The role includes frequent travel within Moldova and when needed (or feasible) to other countries in the region (as well as Sweden).

Main responsibilities

- Advise and support the project to manage, develop and monitor its activities with the framework of the PAR strategy implementation and related policies. This also includes acting as an advisor to the institutional support coordinator on setting up CUPs in LPA clusters.
- Provide expert advice and input to selected relevant national policy discussions, for example the PAR roadmap, and the ongoing dialogue between local, regional, and central level governments related to the ongoing amalgamation process.
- Identify opportunities, capacity needs and interests of stakeholders to move forward with the PAR Strategy action plan and related processes.
- Develop and implement capacity building activities for LPAs within the project framework and be a lead expert on PAR within the project.
- Together with the Team Leader, maintain ongoing communication with partners, donors and critical stakeholders within the area of PAR and decentralisation reform in Moldova;
- Establishing and maintain contacts with key Moldovan stakeholders across line ministries, parliamentary standing committees, where relevant but primarily on the implementation of the PAR strategy 2023-30;
- Supervise and manage short and long-term experts engaged in the project as agreed with the project Team Leader.

- Jointly with the SALAR I team prepare content for workshops, events and joint exercises with Moldovan and stakeholders and international organizations
- Support to enhanced cooperation and knowledge exchange between Associations of local authorities in the Eastern Trio and Eastern Partnership countries
- Keep abreast of progress vis-à-vis project implementation related to the Results Framework including preparing written reports.
- Provide additional comments and strategic advice to the TL/Project Manager during the process, incorporate any needed changes in the work plan and incorporate possible feedback on suggested changes from Sida.
- Assist the Team Leader in the implementation of the project, where necessary and relevant.

Reporting and Communication

The Senior Technical Expert is expected to maintain close communication and collaboration with Team Leader in Moldova and reports to the Project Management in Stockholm during the assignment.

Qualifications

- Post-graduate / graduate qualification in political science, economics, law or related field and over 10 years' experience of working with issues concerning regional and local governance and development cooperation.
- Professional experience in Moldova or in other post- Soviet country contexts
- Excellent understanding, knowledge and experience of good governance principles and public sector reform, preferably including both national, regional and local levels.
- In depth knowledge and experience on the processes and modalities of the PAR Strategy 2023-30.
- 10-15 years' experience working with local governance and decentralization in Moldova is a requirement;
- Advanced understanding of EU institutions, processes and accession modalities as well as fundraising processes.
- Fluency in Romanian and English (verbal and written communication) is a requirement.
- Moldovan nationality is a requirement.

Merits

- Experience in a municipality, region, municipal association or state authority is an advantage.
- Working experience from international development cooperation projects, preferably in Moldova
- Previous experience working with intermunicipal cooperation or municipal governance from other reform contexts in Eastern Europe.

Selection Criteria

The selection of candidates will be based on the following criteria: technical skills and experiences, communication and organisational capacities, ability to travel in Moldova.

Application: Send your application with max 3-page CV and max 1 page cover letter to moldova@salarinternational.se Please note “Senior Technical Expert Moldova” in the subject line. **Deadline: 13 April 2025.** Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, and the position may be filled prior to the application deadline.

The interviews will be conducted on an ongoing basis. Only shortlisted applicants will receive a response by email when the recruitment has been finalised.

For any questions or clarifications, please contact: moldova@salarinternational.se Personal information provided by the applicant in the recruitment process will be handled by SALAR International.

Diversity and equal opportunities

SALAR International embraces diversity and respects human rights in all areas of its work. SALAR International strives to create a gender-equal and diverse working environment. Team members shall respect equal rights of individuals and strive to create an atmosphere where people’s differences are accepted and valued. SALAR International supports working arrangements that enable personnel to combine work with family commitments.