

UNDP Moldova

**Improving the Quality of Moldovan Democracy through
Parliamentary and Electoral Support Programme
Final Evaluation**

Final Report

31 March 2017

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Abbreviations

ALRC	Agency of Land Relations and Cadastre
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CCET	Centre for Continuous Electoral Training
CEC	Central Electoral Commission
CoE	Council of Europe
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EU	European Union
GOPAC	Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption
GPECS	Global Programme for Electoral Support
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
IRI	International Republican Institute
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LOA	Letter of Agreement
MP	Member of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NIM	National implementation modality
PCIO	Parliamentary Constituency Outreach Office
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SAISE	State Automated Information System “Elections”
S.E.	State Enterprise
TA	Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
UNPF	United Nations- Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	US Dollar
WIP	Women in Politics Project

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support (“Democracy Programme”) was a 4.75 year project (2012 – 2017) designed to strengthen the institutional capacity of Parliament for its legislative, oversight and representational functions, and to improve the capacity of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) to deliver inclusive and professional elections. It was a USD 8,766,573 project supported by five development partners: Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as well as the Government of the Republic of Moldova (hereafter referred to as the Government or Government of Moldova).

The overarching goal of the project was to *improve the quality of the Moldovan democratic processes and systems in line with European standards* as Moldova had adopted a pro-European reform agenda with the ultimate goal of joining the European Union (EU). There was a main focus on mainstreaming gender and human rights in the project’s design, and project implementation was divided into separate components for each institution (Parliament and the CEC). The project was a joint United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) with UNDP responsible for overall project execution and UNICEF responsible for a component on child rights with Parliament. The project used a national implementation modality (NIM) with Parliament and the CEC as the implementing agencies supported initially by two Chief Technical Advisers (CTAs), one per component, and a small programme support team managed by UNDP. A project amendment in 2014 added the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET), Agency for Land Relations and Cadastre, State Enterprise “Cadastru”, Civil Status Service, Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications, State Enterprise “Registru”, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence, as partners.

UNDP Moldova commissioned this independent final evaluation of the project. The evaluation took place in February – March 2017. The parliamentary component terminated in July 2016 and the electoral component will terminate 31 March 2017.

Findings

Component 1: Parliament

Building capacity. Although the project design focused primarily on human rights and gender, it provided a broader range of capacity building activities that helped to strengthen the institutional structures of the Secretariat and the professional expertise and knowledge for some of its staff and Members of Parliament (MPs). This was appropriate and relevant. Results included increased awareness on issues of EU approximation, gender equity, child rights and anticorruption. It also successfully supported the creation of a Women’s Caucus and a Moldovan chapter of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). However, some of the capacity building activities lacked integration into a larger strategic vision which limited their effectiveness and potential impact.

Strengthening legislative and oversight functions. Project support helped strengthen the work of the Legal Department and parliamentary committees through the development of standardized procedures, such as for the legal review of legislation and public hearings. It also increased sector knowledge and a better understanding of the potential of the oversight process. This provided a number of concrete results including increased questions to Ministries and state institutions by some committees, such as for budget, human rights, national security, foreign affairs and agriculture over their reporting and activities. If continued, these types of efforts should substantially increase

the effectiveness of Parliament's legislative and oversight efforts and eventually increase the accountability of the executive.

Strengthening representational functions. The development of four Parliamentary Constituency Outreach Offices (PCIOs) under the project created a useful tool for MPs' and parliamentary outreach. These were used by other projects, and other development partners, and supported public hearings and meetings with constituents. However, they were underutilized by Parliament itself and under-appreciated by MPs who use their own party channels for outreach. The Parliament's communications strategy and some MPs and staff skills were strengthened through strategic communications planning, training and equipping Parliament for the live streaming of sessions. Its interactive website is not yet functional but is expected to be active in a month. However, outreach efforts have not translated to an increase in citizen trust in Parliament which has been affected by the general political and economic environment, and which fell from 22% in 2012 to 6% by the end of the project.¹

Component 2: Elections

Building capacity. The institutional capacity of the CEC was strengthened as a result of the project as well as the capacity of its training institute, the CCET. The project supported the development of the CCET's training programmes and its e-Learning Platform as well as the systematic training of all electoral staff, at all levels, which was more than 40,000 persons. It also strengthened the CEC and CCET's institutional management systems through its reorganization and development of standard procedures. It also facilitated the CEC to achieve International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification for the quality of its management systems and data security. This directly resulted in more proficient and consistent electoral administration. There were also notable achievements in mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equity as noted in Box 1. Efforts to increase the accessibility of persons with disabilities (PWD) and marginalized groups also improved access and likely participation among some.

Box 1: Gender Achievements

Parliament:

- * Creation and functioning of cross party Women's Caucus
- * Gender Audit of Parliament
- * Draft Gender Action Plan
- * Adoption of legislative package for gender quotas for political party candidate lists and other gender-related actions (15 laws & codes)

Elections:

- * Gender audit of CEC, district and polling commissions
- * Gender Action Plan and gender mainstreaming within the CEC/CCET
- * Gender-sensitive curricula at CCET and gender mainstreamed in electoral training
- * Gender disaggregated data and analysis of elections and elected offices
- * Ability to disqualify a party list that does not meet the gender quota
- * Creation of the International Association of Women in Electoral Management Bodies

Strengthening strategic and legal frameworks. The CEC with project support developed an impressive and comprehensive IT electoral management system with its State Automated Information System "Elections" (SAISE). This system automates many parts of the process, increasing their standardization. This leaves less room for manipulation of sensitive electoral data and makes systems more efficient, reliable and accurate. It is not yet completed and this support should continue. The project also supported the development of a feasibility study for internet voting that is expected to be piloted for out-of-country voting where a sizeable number of Moldovans have had difficulties accessing voting sites. Some notable electoral legal reforms were undertaken with project support but a comprehensive look at the legal framework still remains to be taken.

Strengthening state IT systems. The project undertook a strategic and comprehensive approach to improve the quality of the voter registry. This included legislative amendments to give the CEC

¹ Institute for Public Policies, *Public Opinion Barometer*, May 2012 and October 2016

responsibility for the voters' lists, support to strengthen the quality of data in other state databases that contribute information to the voter registry, and support for the concept of data interoperability that would allow for the automated exchange of data between these institutions. This work is in process, but if completed, it will have strengthened the state registry of civil status acts of the Civil Status Service which is an essential element to improving the accuracy of the voter registration lists; the system for address allocation and its databases; the personnel state register for the Ministry of Defence; and sped up these parts of the process for the e-governance effort underway in Moldova. If completed, this will reduce the burden on citizens for documents, reduce time for these administrative processes, provide more accurate information for policy makers, and reduce opportunities for corruption.

Strengthened public trust, participation and information. The standardization of ballot boxes and booths added fairness to the elections by eliminating the partisan nature of some voting set ups. The project contributed to some voter information efforts undertaken by the CEC/CCET and two networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) targeting PWD and marginalized groups. There is not enough data to assess the effectiveness of the voter education efforts, but 82% of persons surveyed in a CEC poll reported having seen one of their video spots, which shows a good reach.² The CEC appears to be more open than the overall political environment and there is improved access to information by the public through its posting of documents and information on its website. However, as with other state institutions, the level of trust in the CEC has also decreased from 70% (2010) to 49% (2015).³ Although this level is significantly higher than that found for Parliament, much work still remains to be done with civic education and communications.

Project design and management. The design provided for an integrated 'Democracy Programme' that combined UNDP's previously separate efforts to strengthen Parliament and the CEC into one project, managed by one Programme Board and with one overarching objective. However, for all intents and purposes, they were implemented as two separate projects. The UNICEF component was also implemented completely separately. The design also largely continued the work of the previous projects and lacked a cohesive strategic framework that tied all of the activities together into one cohesive programme. The project had good synergies with the UN Women-UNDP "Women in Politics (WIP)" project which strengthened the results for both projects. A 2014 amendment expanded the electoral component and revised its outputs. It also provided a strategic vision for the supplemental assistance that was absent from the original document.

Embedding the project management team and technical advisors in both institutions was a best practice and facilitated the building of relationships and the project's activities. The CEC owned and drove its part of the project to a much greater extent than Parliament. Much of this was due to the visionary nature of the CEC head at the time and the project's flexibility to adapt to the situation. This also happened within Parliament, but more at individual levels than institutional. The different natures of the institutions were another factor. The CEC had a clear leadership structure and chain of command, while Parliament was a political institution with many political interests and actors that needed to be navigated. Parliamentarians also changed in the middle of the project and new relationships needed to be built, making continuity of work difficult in some cases. In this politicized and complex environment the project, staff and experts were able to maintain a reputation for impartiality and for providing objective expertise. This 'outside' perspective was useful for institutions to find consensus between different groups on ways forward in some cases. The project was a NIM executed by UNDP. The CCET received funding through letters of agreement (LOA) or a HACT to implement some activities directly. The management structure for the project was inadequate for the scope of activities undertaken and lacked one senior level person who could lead

² UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Progress Report, Electoral Component* 2015, p 19

³ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Image of the CEC and the Perception on Act of Voting*, Power Point, p 7

the entire programmatic effort and maintain the strategic vision of the programme across the components.

Conclusions

The Democracy Programme was needed and highly relevant with the Moldovan context and timeframe. The national partners were key institutions in the democratic processes and their effective functioning was critical to strengthening the quality of democracy in Moldova. The areas targeted—legislative, oversight, representation, participation, equity rights and electoral reform—were key components of improving those democratic processes.

Many activities would not have taken place without the project and its funding. State budgets are limited and some of the elements supported by the project were not institutional priorities, such as gender mainstreaming in the Parliament. The project also provided internationally recognized best practices and expertise that sparked new ideas and ways of approaching issues.

UNDP had value added for the project beyond managing development partners' financial resources. It brought a development perspective, ability to recruit relevant national and international experts, and global and regional knowledge and practitioner networks. As an organization of the United Nations, it could also convene groups across divides and work for consensus on the way forward. However, this comparative advantage was not recognized by some stakeholders and needed to be more visible in the project design and during implementation.

The 'democracy programme' elements of the project were not fully developed in the design or during implementation. Although the project undertook many activities and achieved most of its intended outputs, a more cohesive programmatic effort between the different elements and with other governance programmes in the sector likely could have strengthened the project's higher level outcomes, particularly for the parliamentary component.

Project results were more substantial where there was an institutional counterpart with a vision that corresponded with the project's activities and that saw the project as a partner in achieving that vision. Those results are likely also to be more sustainable due to the institutional ownership of the effort.

Outcome level results are likely the cumulative efforts of UNDP's projects with Parliament and the CEC and other development efforts undertaken in the sector which make attribution difficult. Measuring results is also difficult due to the number of other factors that affect outcomes. This project also started processes that will likely yield their most substantial outcomes in the years to come. Nevertheless, using the output indicators in the Project Document, it is likely that this project:

- *strengthened Parliament's legislative and oversight functions for the areas assisted;*
- *increased the degree to which gender and the human rights dimensions were taken up by Parliament and within the CEC;*
- *increased the opportunities for outreach by Parliament and MPs; and,*
- *improved the electoral administration of the electoral process in several areas.*

Using the indicators in the project amendments, this project:

- *improved the assessments of the election administration done by independent international election observers; and,*
- *decreased the number of complaints made against the election administration.*

The last amendment indicator was on increased trust in the electoral administration. As noted, issues of trust were negatively affected by the political instability and national corruption scandals. It is unknown if the standardized materials helped to increase trust as there were no pre or post

measurements taken on voter attitudes towards the polling sites, but the standardization of materials likely:

- a. *reduced the perception of partisan bias at the polling locations* thus likely increasing the perception of fairness of the process during voting.

This final evaluation largely **validated the direction of the new parliamentary support project and the concept for continued electoral support**. However, the new electoral component should not lose focus on the important element of ‘credibility’ within the process of ‘electoral modernization.’

Recommendations

Continued support to the institutions and principles of strengthening Moldovan democracy. Work still needs to be done to improve the quality of the parliamentary functions, oversight, accountability and the fairness of the electoral system. The project should also complete the work started on interoperability and with the state institutions and their elections-related databases assisted under this project.

Ensure the strategic vision for projects are clearly articulated in the project documents, that the outputs chosen directly contribute towards achieving that vision, and that this vision is shared by the partner institutions. This can build a more effective programme and increase sustainability.

Use a programmatic focus in project delivery so the different activities within and between components are synergistic and build on each other so that they can make a more substantial contribution towards achieving the higher level outcomes sought. Develop more synergistic programming with other UNDP and development partner projects to expand the project’s reach and to reinforce efforts, such as was done with the WIP project. This can also strengthen the demand side (including advocacy) for the institutional and legal changes being supported. Provide more detailed programmatic budget information in project reporting, such as annual reports, so that it is clear in those reports how the funds were used and contributed towards the achievement of the results reported.⁴

Expand Moldovan efforts for civic education beyond voter information/education by linking efforts with other donor-funded projects, education system and CSO efforts, to leverage cost-effective ways of increasing civic awareness and knowledge on the issues addressed through the project by Parliament and CEC. Developing partnerships with the media to increase reporting on these issues could also be effective.

Look for innovative solutions for sustainability issues given the limited budgets of most state institutions. This could be through the payment for services (such as for e-learning) or in some cases through public private partnerships as well as through strengthened support for strategic and prioritized planning, and the development of budgets and their justification for increased funding through the state budgeting processes for partner institutions.

Strengthen programme management and ensure logical reporting lines on programmatic as well as operational levels. A multi-component project such as this would benefit from having one senior level programmatic person oversee the entire effort to provide strategic direction and ensure all of the components were on track and contributing to the anticipated outcomes.⁵ The number of project staff also needs to commensurate with the level and scope of activities.

Maintain the current method of implementation but increase use of HACTs and letters of agreement with implementing partners to start the transition towards more national implementation. At the same time, direct execution is UNDP’s corporate default implementation

⁴ Along the lines of the component breakdown in Table 3 and the sample table provided in Annex 1

⁵ CTA-type, but one that would cover the project as a whole.

mechanism for electoral support, and UNDP Moldova's implementation modality of "support to NIM" should be maintained, especially for assistance to the more polarized and politicized aspects of the parliamentary and electoral processes.

Increased use of and visibility for UNDP's comparative advantage in the design and implementation of these programmes, in particular for its strategic position as a development agency of the United Nations, the use of its knowledge networks and products, global resources and network of country offices to find experts, information, mentoring and support for study tour recipients.

More systematic tracking and monitoring of project performance beyond achievements of activity outputs. This can inform project management if the activities undertaken resulted in the desired changes, made no changes or sparked unintended ones. This helps to track progress made towards achieving the higher level outcomes as well as to better target efforts such as capacity building. Among others, information can be gathered through pre- and post-tests and/or measurements to identify changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices before and after activities such as training, voter education, awareness raising, study tours and institutional reorganization. The use of surveys should be expanded and include the parliamentary component. Consideration should be given to adding a few questions for this purpose to the regular polling done by other organizations to make this type of measurement more cost-effective.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Political and electoral context within Moldova

Moldova today is a reflection of its totalitarian past and geographic location which have shaped its institutions and the nature of its political and electoral processes. It is divided between east and west and borders the European Union. Most of its population share ties with Romania and the country has moved towards European integration. However, it still has a frozen conflict in the breakaway Transnistria region which wants closer ties with Russia. Almost a quarter of Moldovan citizens are national minorities (Ukrainians, Russians, Gagauz, Bulgarians and Roma) who often use the Russian language.⁶ The Gagauz are concentrated in the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia (hereafter referred to as Gagauzia) which has its own elections for local legislature and Governor but which also participates in the national general local elections as well as in the national elections for parliament and president.

Since its independence in 1991, Moldova has gone through three governance systems: presidential, semi-presidential and parliamentary. Its elections are run by a Central Electoral Commission which now is a permanent body led by a commission with its members nominated by the political parties in Parliament. Parliament is based on a single national constituency of 101 members elected under a proportional representation system. The election for president of Moldova has shifted back and forth between direct and indirect elections, with frequent political stalemates in Parliament which has resulted in

Table 1 Recent Political Events	
Date	Event
April 2009	Parliamentary elections followed by mass protests
July 2009	Anticipated parliamentary elections
Sept 2009	Vlad Filat nominated as Prime-Minister
2010	Parliament dismissed due to its failure to elect a President and new parliamentary elections held
2011	General local elections
2012	Majority coalition elects the President Nicolae Timofti
March 2013	Filat Government dismissed
May 2013	Iurie Leanca becomes Prime Minister
Late 2014-2015	Mass protests as information on the bank theft becomes public
Nov 2014	Parliamentary elections
2015	4 Prime Ministers during the year (2 of them interim)
2015	General local elections
Jan 2016	Pavel Filip becomes Prime Minister
Fall 2016	Presidential elections, Igor Dodon elected

⁶ OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, 2010 p 17

their early termination and new elections, such as in 2010. The election for president was changed back recently to direct elections by a decision of the Constitutional Court and a direct presidential election was held in 2016.

Parliament's early years were marked by constitutional changes and fragile political coalitions. This led to a strong majority in Parliament by the Communist Party for almost a decade. Problematic parliamentary elections in 2009 resulted in protests and post-electoral violence and a change of governments. The past several years have been marked almost by continuous political turmoil and instability. Since 2010, Moldova has had seven Governments, three presidents, seven elections and one nation-wide referendum (Table 1). This political instability directly affected the nature and scope of the assistance provided to these institutions, including by this project, and in particular for Parliament which has been fully embroiled in these political issues.

Although Moldova is a lower middle income country and has made significant progress towards reducing poverty and promoting economic growth, it is still the poorest country in Europe. An estimated 40% of its population is working abroad and their remittances comprise a quarter of Moldova's Gross Domestic Product.⁷

The successful implementation of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan allowed for visa liberalization with EU countries as well as the signature of the EU Association Agreement in 2014. This included the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement which is helping to diversify exports and improve the legal framework for a market economy. Starting in 2011 Moldova embarked on an ambitious programme for the e-transformation of its governance. Financed by the World Bank, the e-Government Centre has planned the digitization and reengineering of public services, interoperability of data as well as for the security of governmental data storage, among other activities. This programme is well underway but progress has been slowed by the different levels of preparation among the public institutions.

At the same time, economic and political progress has been marked by a series of shocks resulting from the theft of USD 1 billion from three Moldovan banks, and the inability of the governing coalition to have prevented it. The total loss was about 12% of Moldova's GDP, resulting in the bankruptcy of the three banks which had accounted for one third of the banking system's assets, the reduction of Moldova's foreign exchange reserves by a third, a 25% depreciation in the national currency, double-digit inflation and an increase in the state debt. In addition, many development partners froze or cancelled their financial support which triggered severe budget austerity.⁸

Information of the theft triggered protests and fostered widespread perceptions of endemic corruption with media allegations of a state captured by oligarchs. This in turn has led to a steady decrease in overall citizen trust in Parliament, which fell from 22% in 2012, to 11% in 2015 and to a mere 6% in 2016.⁹

The severe public dissatisfaction with the governing pro-European coalition further fuelled the geopolitical divide in the society, which is now more focused on the strategic movement of Moldova rather than on issues of identity. The pull between the supporters of EU integration and those for joining the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union has exacerbated tensions in society and marked the recent parliamentary elections. This polarization and events influenced the outcome of the 2016 presidential elections, leading to the election of a pro-Russian Socialist president, Igor Dodon.

⁷ World Bank, *Moldova*, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/overview#1>

⁸, Expert Grup, *State of the Country Report*

⁹ Institute for Public Policies, *Public Opinion Barometer*, May 2012, April 2015 and October 2016

2.2. Assistance to parliamentary and electoral processes

Improvement of the democratic processes in Moldova is supported by many development partners. The EU is the largest donor overall, providing € 310 million worth of assistance to Moldova (2014 – 2016). This assistance is tied to achieving Moldova's reform commitments under the Association Agreement and conditional on progress made towards achieving the country's reform agenda. It only recently resumed its budget support that was suspended after the banking fraud. It had no specific assistance project targeted at Parliament or the electoral processes during the life of this project but its efforts crosscut the legislative and oversight areas assisted by the project because of the need to bring Moldova's legislation in line with EU standards.¹⁰

The Council of Europe (CoE) assists the CEC, focusing mainly on supporting curricula development for the CCET as well as for its public outreach and communication efforts. It also supported a number of election-related conferences on post-election reflections and electoral reform. The Venice Commission provides expertise and reviews draft legislation for Parliament. Its opinions carry weight because of the EU approximation. Its experts also visit Parliament on occasions to discuss their opinions as well as to accompany delegations from the Council of Europe in observing the elections.

USAID supports inclusive and participatory political processes through work done by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). This indirectly supports Parliament's activity through supporting, for example, the capacity building of political parties. IRI works to strengthen the capacities of the political parties as well as to improve their communication with constituents. NDI works at the grass-roots level to build democracy and civic engagement from the bottom-up, as well to connect local civic groups to local authorities and political parties. NDI also conducts electoral and political processes public opinion polling.

The Women in Politics¹¹ project, implemented jointly by UN Women and UNDP, also contributed to strengthening the Parliament's and CEC's capacities in promoting gender equality. Its objectives are to strengthen the legal frameworks to advance women's rights to participate in decision making and to support advocacy for gender equality to increase women's leadership and political participation.

The World Bank supports the e-Governance Centre and its e-transformation agenda. This supported the reengineering and digitization of public services, securing safety of governmental data storage as well as working towards the interoperability of data between different governmental institutions.

2.3 Democracy Programme

'Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support' was originally a USD 4,731,610 four year project (July 2012 to July 2016) intended to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Parliament and CEC to improve their main functions and entrench gender and human rights considerations in formal political processes.¹² It was based on the work done and lessons learned in the previous UNDP projects: the *Support for Parliamentary Development in Moldova Project* (2008 – 2012) and the *Electoral Support to Moldova Project* (2008 – 2012).

The project document was amended twice in 2014. The main amendment was intended to provide "Additional support to electoral component of the Programme Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy parliamentary and electoral support" and added USD 2,844,835 to the electoral component. It intended to start 1 September 2014 and extended the end date of the project to 31

¹⁰ EU, *External Action, EU – Moldova Relations 12/02/2017 Factsheet*

¹¹ The full name of the project is "Enhancing women's political representation through improved capacity and enhanced support in Moldova"

¹² UNDP Moldova, *Democracy Programme, Project Document*, p 1

December 2016. The other amendment was to Increase trust in the electoral process through the provision of unified ballot boxes and voting booths. This added USD 477,318 to the project, making the total programme budget USD 8,763,573.

The overarching goal of the Programme was to *improve the quality of the Moldovan democratic processes and systems in line with European standards*. To accomplish this goal, support was focused on two main areas: Parliament and the elections. Each Project Document has its own components and list of activities, and there is no one integrated results and resources framework that covered the entire programme as the additional elements added to the project in 2015 had their own results frameworks.

The objectives listed in the original Project Document were:

1. Improving the institutional capacity of the Parliament and Central Electoral Commission to meet European standards of gender and human rights and strengthening the legislative and oversight functions of the Parliament.
2. Fostering the quality of the representative role of the Parliament and promoting more interaction between Members of Parliament, citizens and civil society.
3. Improved institutional environment for electoral management bodies that can deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes.
4. Improving the public registration process for Moldovans and supporting modernization of Moldovan electoral processes.
5. Support to develop an inclusive process for constitutional reform.

The ballot box component in 2014 added in one output:

1. Increasing trust in electoral process through provision of uniform ballot boxes and voting booths for the Republic of Moldova.

The additional support for the electoral component added in 2014 listed four outputs:

1. Improved capacities of electoral administration on central, territorial and local levels to deliver inclusive and professional elections and mainstreamed gender and human rights.
2. Strategic and legal framework conducive to trustworthy and transparent electoral process based on official data using modern technological developments.
3. State IT systems ensure electoral administration in line with strategic and legal framework and modern technological developments on a sustainable basis.
4. Public better informed and engaged in electoral processes on central, territorial and local levels.

The project was also to contribute to the United Nations-Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) outcomes (Box 2).

The project used a cost-sharing model with contributions from five development partners, UNDP and the CEC (Table2). This included funding that was left over from the previous parliament project from Denmark and carried over for use in this project. The project was fully funded. Some of the funds were earmarked for specific activities, such as for the ballot

Box 2: Expected Outcomes

UNPF Outcome:

Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities (2012 & 2016)

State bodies and other actors effectively promote and protect human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, with particular attention to the marginalized and the vulnerable (2014)

CPAP Outputs:

Institutional capacity of the legislative and executive strengthened for the approximation of national legislation with European laws (2012)

Table 2: Financial Contributions

Donor	Amount USD
CEC	199,970
Denmark	1,253,707
Netherlands	40,003
Norway	1,609,174
Sweden	5,470,890
UNDP	164,589
USAID	28,240
Total	8,766,573

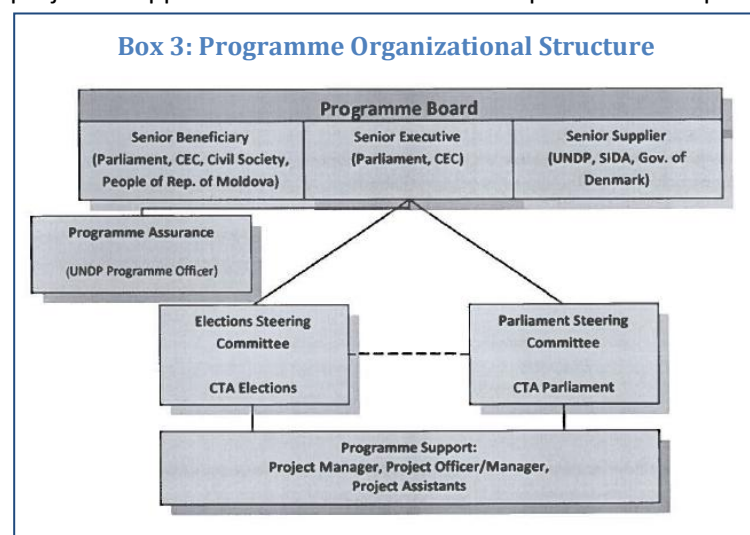
boxes and booths and for the 2014 expansion of the electoral support elements.

Originally almost 70% of the estimated budget was allocated for Parliament. This changed with the funding that was added for electoral support in 2014, with almost 60% of the total project funds being used for the electoral component by the end of the project (Table 3).¹³ The electoral component also continued working for eight months after the end of the parliamentary component in July 2016.

The project is executed through a national implementation modality. The national counterparts (Parliament and the CEC) were to be responsible for decision-making and the implementation of project activities, and UNDP was responsible for quality assurance. The number of partners was expanded in the 2014 amendment to include the CCET, Agency for Land Relations and Cadastre, S.E “Cadastru”, Ministry of Information, Technology and Telecommunications, S.E., “Registru”, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health.¹⁴

UNICEF was an executing agency with UNDP and was allocated a three year budget of USD 205,950 including its indirect costs. It received this funding through a Letter of Agreement with UNDP and managed it separately. The project was to be managed by a Programme Board and separate Steering Committees for the Parliament and electoral components. (Box 3).

Two CTAs were to be hired and embedded in each institution. UNDP was also to provide the project’s support team which was to be responsible for reporting to the project’s donors as required



by their cost-sharing agreements. Staffing was not detailed, simply listed as a project manager, project officer/manager and project assistants. The CTA positions were downgraded to technical expert level after the initial CTAs left early in the project.

The project was to have independent midterm and final evaluations. The midterm evaluation was done in 2014 and the activities were revised slightly afterwards to reflect the recommendations. The activities

¹³ The estimated budget table is for illustrative purposes only and may differ from the actual project budget as the project evolved. It is based on the project documents and reflects the estimated budget, not actual levels of expenditure. There were more aggregated budget estimates available for the electoral component, which is why it was possible to separate out its Advisory Services which include recurrent payroll costs for IP staff and contractual services for some individuals.

¹⁴ The project had not yet worked with the Ministry of Health as of the date of the evaluation.

with Parliament ended in July 2016 and a separate follow-on project started immediately. The activities with the CEC were extended to 31 March 2017 through a no-cost project extension. UNDP is currently developing a follow-on project for the electoral component.

2.4. Democracy Programme Final Evaluation

UNDP Moldova commissioned this independent final evaluation of the Democracy Programme. The final evaluation was intended to provide UNDP and its project partners with an independent assessment of the programme that is expected to be used to strengthen future programming.

In particular, the evaluation was asked to:

1. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Programme interventions taking into consideration the project objectives;
2. Assess the contributions of the Programme in achieving gender equity; and,
3. Provide best practices and recommendations that may be used for future programming.

The Inception Report for the evaluation was done in December 2016 and the final evaluation took place in February- March 2017 with the field work done from 6 to 17 February, 2017. The evaluation was conducted by Sue Nelson, International Consultant, and Olesea Stamate, National Expert. The team undertook a qualitative assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Democracy Programme and the factors that affected project performance. It used a triangulation methodology and mixed methods of analysis to draw conclusions and make recommendations based on stakeholder perceptions and the information available. In particular it:

- Collected information and perceptions of the project through interviews with UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, Project staff and consultants, development partners, the Parliament, CEC, other relevant state institutions and CSOs. The interviews were done in Chisinau in person and people in other locations were reached by Skype, phone and email (Annex 2);
- Reviewed Democracy Programme project documents and other relevant documentation on the project, and on the parliamentary and electoral processes in Moldova (Annex 3); and,
- Validated information through the interviews and document reviews as well as through the use of additional data sources and third party interviews.

The methodology for the evaluation is provided in the Evaluation Inception Report (Annex 4). The final evaluation's Terms of Reference (TOR) are provided in Annex 5. The evaluation was limited by the time available for the review and write up, and the availability of project partners and stakeholders for interviews.

The evaluation team produced this draft Evaluation Report. The evaluation findings are organized by the two main components of the project (parliamentary and electoral support), and include issues of project design and implementation. This report uses the output components for Parliament listed in the original project document and the revised outputs used in the 2014 revision to organize the findings for the electoral component. The evaluation report closes with the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations.

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1. Component 1: Support for Parliament

The objective of Component 1 was to *improve the quality of Moldova's formal political processes by mainstreaming gender and human rights in parliamentary development and electoral assistance*. It also planned to *foster quality of the representative role of the Parliament and strengthening the capacities of the Parliament to deliver on its functions*. This project built on UNDP's previous

experience of working with Parliament since 2006. The earlier phases helped Parliament take its initial steps towards a more modern parliament, with a functional review and helping it to meet its immediate needs following the damage to the parliament building caused by the 2009 riots. This project intended to focus on institutional capacity building and on strengthening Parliament's ability to deliver its statutory functions at a higher level, while safeguarding and mainstreaming human rights and gender. This was to be done through the provision of technical assistance (TA) to the Secretariat to strengthen its operating procedures, training, strengthening the legislative and oversight functions of parliamentary committees, and mainstreaming gender by developing a Women's Caucus, as well as by investing in outreach and increased transparency efforts. The main partner for Component 1 was the Parliament (Secretariat, MPs and parliamentary committees and staff). There were also important synergies developed with the Women in Politics project during implementation.

A key factor that affected the implementation of the project was Moldova's political and economic crisis, which made it difficult for MPs to focus on some of the project priorities. While the period from 2012 to 2016 was relatively stable for Parliament in terms of elections, as only one was held in 2014 on an ordinary basis, the overall political instability in the country and frequent changes of Government, coupled with the corruption scandal of the "theft of the billion" increased tensions within Parliament and among MPs, and hardened political positions which made legislative progress difficult. As noted, this in turn led to a steady decrease of overall citizen trust in the Parliament, from 22% in 2012 to 6% in 2016.¹⁵ Another factor that affected project implementation was that 68% of the MPs were replaced in the 2014 elections, which impacted on the ability of the project to implement its work plan and required the building of new relationships with the incoming MPs.

Component 1 was allocated USD 3,273,475 in the budget estimates listed in the project document. This included USD 250,000 for supporting an inclusive process for constitutional reform which did not take place. This line item was also never covered by a donor.

This evaluation report groups its findings for Component 1 around the outputs used in the project document for its illustrative budget by component. These were: capacity building, strengthening institutional functions and strengthening representative functions.¹⁶

3.1.1. Capacity building

The project planned to *improve the quality of Moldova's formal political processes by mainstreaming gender and human rights in parliamentary development*. It intended to achieve this by strengthening the capacities of the Parliament through supporting, *inter alia*, the following areas: mainstreaming gender, including through supporting the creation of a cross party Women Caucus; and, ensuring a shared approach to human rights mainstreaming by Parliament through building specific human rights knowledge among MPs and parliamentary staff, as well as improving its cooperation with the Ombudsman's Office. The estimated budget for this output was USD 937,900.

Although the focus for the objective was to mainstream gender and strengthen human rights, the project provided general institutional and professional capacity building for the MPs and Secretariat staff (Box 4).¹⁷ This was an appropriate and relevant as this type of general capacity building was not only needed according to the previous project's assessments and should have been included in this design, it also contributed to Parliament's interest and engagement in the project. Addressing gender and human rights would have only targeted a small part of the capacity needs within Parliament and likely would have been perceived as something imposed from the outside and any gains made would have likely disappeared when the support ended.

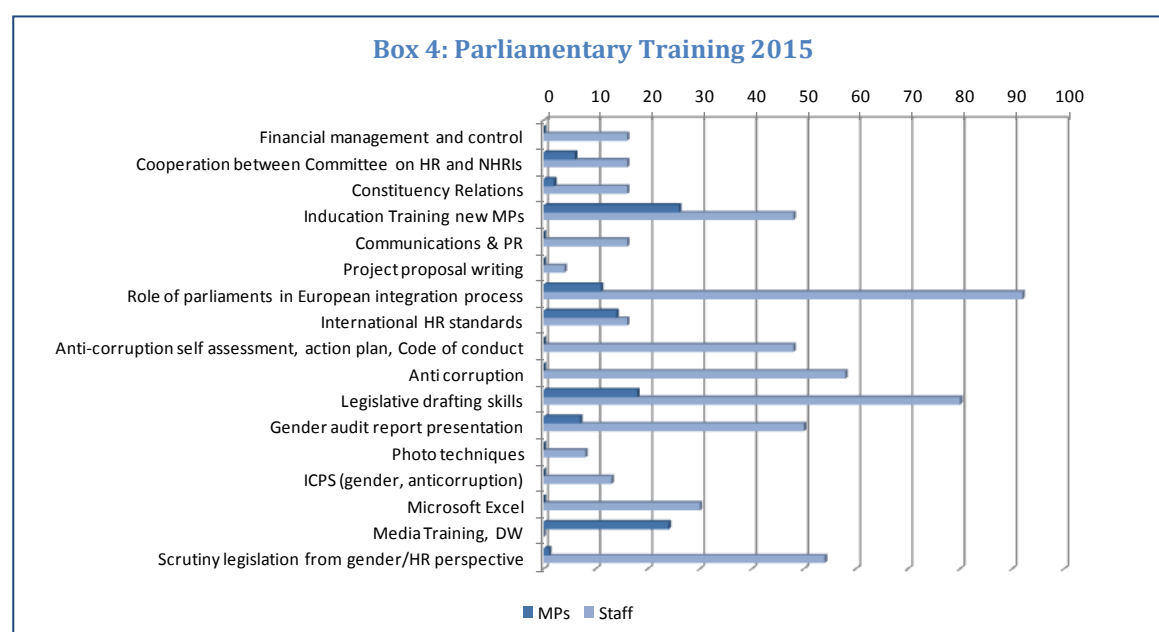
¹⁵ Institute for Public Policies, *Public Opinion Barometer*, May 2012 and October 2016

¹⁶ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Project Document*, p 13

¹⁷ Chart from *2015 Parliamentary Component Annual Report*, p 18

The previous project undertook a functional review of the Secretariat and this project continued this work by supporting the implementation of some of its recommendations. This included developing a set of internal governance tools that included standard operating procedures for the Secretariat and its subdivisions, internal regulations and job descriptions for posts as well as a revised version of Parliament's Rules of Procedure. This work provides a solid foundation for Parliament to carry out its day to day duties in a more consistent and systematic manner. This is notable because most of public institutions in Moldova lack internal operating procedures which help the institutions to function more efficiently and this standardize should allow for the development of a results-based management system in the future. Standard procedures are also important elements of institutional memory and ensuring the effective functioning of an institution despite changes of administration, thus contributing towards sustainable outcomes.

The project supported an updated institutional analysis of the Secretariat in 2016. This report is comprehensive, identifying organization and functional areas that still required strengthening as well as providing a set of practical recommendations to address them. Among the issues identified was the need for a more strategic approach by the Secretariat to its work and prioritizing the use of its staff and resources. It notes that Parliament has a comparatively large staff and its subdivisions are appropriate, but its most important areas are not provided with adequate resources. The report provides a good foundation for further refining the work of the Secretariat, and was something the Parliament was unlikely to have undertaken on its own according to interviews. The next strategic development plan of the Parliament was developed taking into account the recommendations of the functional analysis, and concrete measures, such as designing the inter-departmental operating procedures are expected to be implemented in 2017. However, many MPs are leery of the proposed reorganization of the Secretariat which would bring their committee staff members under the Secretary General. Wider consultations and discussions on the report and its findings could help to stem some of these reservations as some of the plan's elements were not clear to everyone in the evaluation interviews.



UNDP's role in this process was valuable beyond the funding of activities. UNDP is perceived within Parliament as a trustworthy partner that can provide objective advice. This makes it more likely that the recommendations from its experts are given more consideration than if they had been generated from other sources, such as civil society, or from within Parliament where they would have been suspected of political partisanship. This assistance helped to reorganize and improve the functionality of the Secretariat. Most of project's interventions were in line with the Strategic

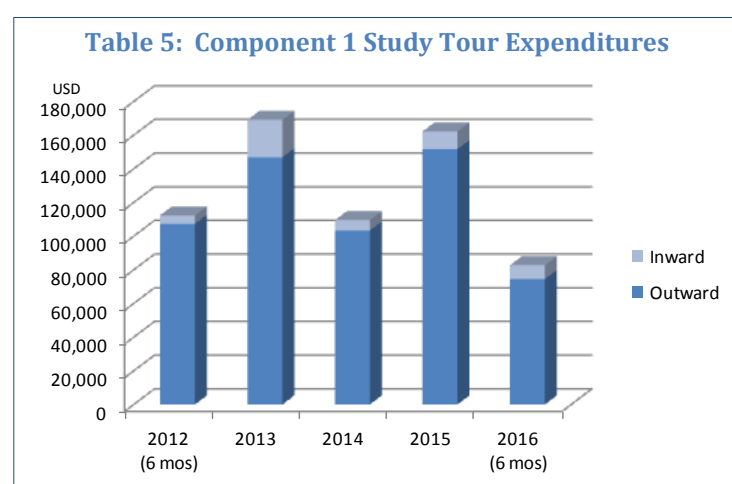
Development Plan of the Parliament Secretariat (2012-2014). The extent of the changes is difficult to assess but there has been progressive progress according to interviews.

The project also provided a large number of capacity building activities for MPs and staff. This included media training, project writing, financial training, communications, constituency outreach, and English language (Box 4).¹⁹ It also provided induction training for the newly elected MPs along with a handbook which the MPs found useful. Those who took the course said it was extremely useful. However, there was limited MP engagement in this effort as less than a third of the new MPs participated, the remainder were staff.

There was a large number of external study trips (Table 4).²⁰ More than 71 different study and peer-to-peer exchange visits were taken by almost 300 persons, some of these going on multiple trips for a total cost of USD 583,842.²¹ Several of these were to attend organized training courses as well as several one week internships. Some were on

topics covered by various committees, such as national security, human rights, and agriculture. Others were on scattered topics and their strategic value is unclear in some cases beyond general awareness raising.

According to the lessons learned listed in the project's 2012 annual report, both project components "changed modalities" for the study visits in order to bring practitioners into Moldova from different



EMBs and parliaments. This was to "provide for broader and deeper learning in the institutions."²² There were a number of inward visits each year as noted in Table 5, but the preponderance of study visits were still to areas outside the country. According to the project, it worked with the Permanent Bureau to adopt regulations for the study visits. Participants were required to complete a Back to Office Report for the Secretary General and provide an in-house presentation for their

¹⁸ Data provided by the Project. Two trips and 10 MPs for the Media Training may have been covered by the WIP project.

¹⁹ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Project Progress Report 2015*, 18

²⁰ Data extracted from information provided by the project.

²¹ According to the records provided by the project.

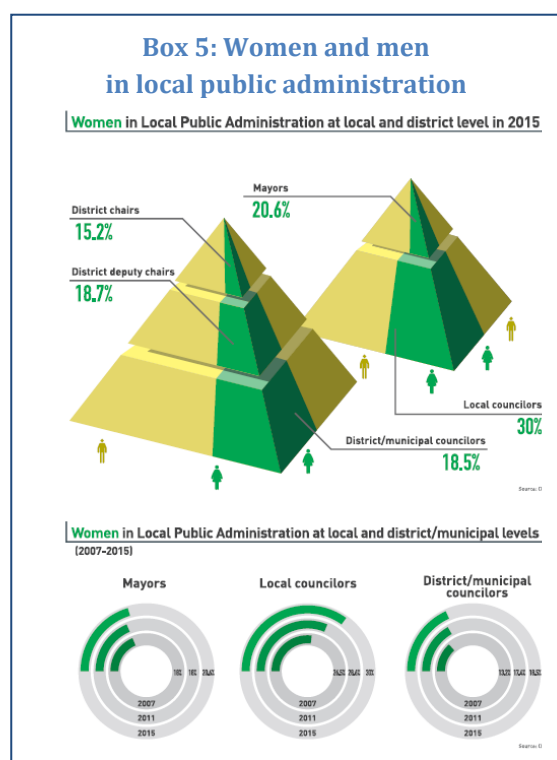
²² UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme *Annual Report 2012*, p 11

colleagues upon their return to share their experience. Their reports were archived in the Foreign Relations Department for future reference.

According to interviews, committee and secretariat staff did not have access to many trainings other than those provided by this project and they appreciated the opportunities. However, the effectiveness of the project's trainings, workshops and exchanges is uncertain and likely very uneven. This is difficult to determine without systematic pre- and post-testing for the different capacity building elements or the tracking of participants after training to see what they learned, how they applied this to their work and if it resulted in any changes within the institution. Anecdotally, most of the MPs interviewed could provide examples of applying knowledge acquired in trainings or visits. Secretariat staff had more difficulties although a few had some anecdotal examples. Factors might be the complexity of the parliamentary environment, the diversity of its staff and their different levels of capacity, pointing to a need to approach training in a more tailored manner as well as to ensure that the most basic training needs for the staff were covered.

While the project made an effort to tie the trainings to specific assessments and action plans, some appeared to be demand-driven and accommodated by the project. It is extremely useful for a project to be flexible enough that it can adapt to needs as they arise, but at the same time, training needs to be grounded in a cohesive programme of professional capacity development that contributes directly towards achieving the strategic objectives of the project. This need for more strategic direction was also noted by the programme's Midterm Evaluation.²³

The project made a significant effort in its support to mainstream gender. Moldova had committed itself to the UN Millennium Development Goal to "promote gender equality and empower women" promising to achieve women's representation of 40% in local councils, 25% in rayon councils and 35% of mayors by 2015. In the 2011 elections, only 18.5% of the elected mayors were women.²⁴ At the time, the CEC did not keep gender disaggregated statistics which are now available after project support. According to the recent CEC analysis, Moldova did not meet its MDG targets (Box 5).



In Parliament, the project successfully supported the development of the cross party Women's Caucus. This was not an easy task. An attempt at establishing a Women Caucus took place several years ago but failed, reportedly because the women MPs could not overcome their party divides. This time, the project was able to help several active women MP's to drive the effort and create a caucus for all women parliamentarians. It also provided secretarial support to ensure its functioning. This took a lot of sensitizing ground work which the project did in coordination with the WIP project.

Gender however, has not been the unifying factor for women MPs that it has been in other parliaments. All parliamentarians must rely on their party's leadership for a high enough position on their party's electoral lists to ensure their re-election. In Moldova's highly divided and

contentious political system MPs are unlikely to break with their parties on many positions, including

²³ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Midterm Evaluation Report*, p 9

²⁴ OSCE/ODIHR, *Election Observation Report 2011*

gender. The women MP's did unite in their efforts to have the Temporary Special Measures (known as draft law package 180) adopted. This established a 40% gender quota on party lists, as well as providing some provisions for paternity leave and prohibited sexist advertisement. The women MPs persuaded their male counterparts to vote for the legislation, but its passage was also the result of advocacy by civil society and international community.

The project also supported the first gender audit of Parliament and assessed the effectiveness of Parliament in mainstreaming gender and human rights principles in public policies and legislation. This identified critical gaps and challenges, and provided recommendations to make the Parliament a more gender-sensitive institution. Following the audit, a *Gender Equality Action Plan* was designed and endorsed by the Committee on Human Rights and Interethnic Relations (hereafter referred to as the Committee on Human Rights) which is expected to be adopted by Parliament's Permanent Bureau in the coming months. Results are still fragile, but there is progress; both in terms of overcoming the initial resistance of some male MPs to even discuss the subject, and increased understanding of gender issues among female and male MPs. However, as one of the interviewees mentioned, this activity would not have had any continuity if not supported from the outside, not at this stage at least.

There was also a significant focus on human rights. The project strengthened the capacity of the Committee on Human Rights to mainstream a human rights based approach in its work and the work of Parliament. An international expert assessed the draft laws against international commitments and best practices and provided a baseline report. This serves as an important tool for MPs, particularly those from the specialized committees. Several training programs and study visits were organized by the project for MPs and staff on subjects related to human rights, anti-discrimination, and for the protection of persons with disabilities, as well as on child rights.

Through UNICEF the project supported the creation of the position of Ombudsman for Children's Rights and monitored the selection process for the Ombudsman. Further, the project offered parliamentary staff the possibility to learn from other countries' experiencing in cooperating with the Ombudsman's Office. An interesting initiative taken by the project was to organize a retreat with the participation of members from the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, the Ombudsman's office and the Equality Council aiming to enhance cooperation and communication between these institutions. At the end of the retreat, the institutions agreed to appoint an officer dedicated to cooperation and mutual information sharing. An officer was not appointed however cooperation between the two bodies intensified as a result of this activity and there are more frequent communications and exchanges of information.

All of these efforts likely contributed to increasing the knowledge of Parliament in general about its international obligations and best practices on human and child rights, gender equality, combating domestic violence, and providing justice for children.

3.1.2. Strengthening institutional functions

The project intended to strengthen Parliament's *oversight capacities on human rights*, in particular regarding the implementation of the *National Human Rights Action Plan 2011-2014*, on the progress and implementation of the Justice Sector Reform as well as on budget implementation. The project also planned to strengthen the law making functions of Parliament through, *inter alia*, support to selected committees by international/national consultants to work with their staff and MPs, and seminars focusing on the legislative amendment and drafting process and on following the committee process in order to foster the capacities of MPs and staff. The anticipated budget for this output was USD 1,111,700.

The program applied a multi-faceted approach to strengthening Parliament's law-making function. This practical assistance was extremely relevant and useful for Parliament. On the one hand, it supported the development of procedures for the review of the draft legislation, such as the

methodology for the endorsement of draft legislation. Interviewees felt these methodologies had been needed, but they had neither the staff nor the resources to be able to do them themselves. The methodology provides them with clear rules for reviewing draft laws, while the electronic template will be the first step towards having communications among committees on the review of drafts in electronic format, instead of paper-based.

On the other hand, the project provided thematic expertise, which helped the MPs to become more knowledgeable about some of the subjects and to be able to propose better-grounded solutions and to make more informed decisions. One case in point here is the comprehensive analysis on the implementation of the law on personal data protection, undertaken by an expert contracted by the project. Following the report's recommendations, the Committee on National Security, Defence and Public Order (hereafter known as the Committee on National Security) made specific recommendations to the Government on the implementation of this law in its decision. Another example is the assistance provided to the Committee on Budget, Economy and Finances (hereafter referred to as the "Budget Committee"). There is no independent budget office within Parliament that can provide MPs with analysis on budget and other data except for the staff of the Budget Committee. In this case, a project expert provided analysis of the budget law and familiarized Committee members with analyzing budgets and identifying issues. Interviewees noted that this helped the participating MPs to better understand the contents of the budget law and thus be able to determine if their policy priorities were appropriately reflected in the budget as well as to identify other issues that needed attention.

The project's work with committees and Secretariat staff produced some concrete results. It solved a long-standing dilemma for the Legal Department that would have to defend the interests of Parliament in the Constitutional Court when a law was adopted despite a negative legal opinion from the Directorate. The head of the Department thought of a solution for this problem during a study visit to another country where he saw how the other country had addressed the same issue by hiring an outside lawyer to defend the law. Upon his return, he successfully lobbied the Speaker to change the rules for this 'moral' issue, which now requires the committee that disregards the legal opinions to defend it in the Constitutional Court if it is challenged. Such an approach will likely have a direct impact on improving the quality of law-making, and increasing the accountability of the MPs for their decisions.

Some of the trainings and study visits targeted parliaments in more recent EU accession countries. The issue of approximation is extremely relevant to the Moldovan Parliament given Moldova's reform agenda. This likely helped to increase the awareness of the participating MPs and staff on the issues and processes related to legal approximation. Being able to discuss directly with those who underwent the same process is a good way to learn best practices, and avoid mistakes. The inward visits by European parliamentarians and staff to Moldova to share their experiences on EU accession and other parliamentary practices were likely more useful than outward ones institutionally as they allow for more persons in Parliament to benefit from the expertise and experiences. The project had a significant emphasis on EU integration training for 2015, with over 100 persons (11 MPs and 92 staff) participating in trainings on the role of national parliaments in EU integration.²⁵

The project provided a broad range of support to strengthen the oversight functions of Parliament. Initially targeting a few committees, this effort was broadened following the recommendations of the midterm evaluation. This has provided some interested MPs and committee staff with a better understanding on how oversight functions should be carried out. However, the most significant work was done with the committees initially targeted as they received a more complete package of assistance.

²⁵ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Annual Progress Report 2015*, p 18

As an example, the project supported the Committee on Human Rights to visit to Penitentiary No. 13 in Chisinau. There it gathered information on the state of human rights in the penitentiary and identified the difficulties faced by the prison administration in its efforts to comply with the minimum international standards for detention. The visit triggered discussions around the need to amend a number of laws²⁶ but, more importantly, promoted a decision of the Parliament to allocate financial resources for the construction of a new penitentiary that could meet the international standards for the human rights of detainees. To this end, the design of the new penitentiary was approved.

In another instance, Committee members from the Committee on National Security visited the Norwegian Parliament to learn about their parliamentary oversight over their security sector. Upon their return, they have called the Ministry of Interior and Defence to testify before their Committee when there are security incidents. This was a first for Parliament. They also developed a guide which will help to standardize their committee oversight work. The project also supported other public hearings such as on the implementation of the *Action Plan of the National Anticorruption Strategy*. In this case, a project consultant developed a report that served as a basis for the discussions.²⁷ Later, the Committee took the initiative to organize public hearings on its own, as, for instance, the one on assessing the implementation of the Law on Special Investigative Activity.²⁸

While public hearings are not new to the Moldovan Parliament, the project helped to increase their frequency and effectiveness for some through technical assistance and the development of guidelines for parliamentary oversight. For instance, a significant shift was made in the way the MPs examined the reports of the Court of Accounts. The usual practice was for the Court of Accounts to respond to committee questions on the institutions audited in its reports. After a technical expert worked with the Budget Committee, the Chairperson realized that the audited institutions should be attending the hearings and responding to questions rather than the Court of Accounts. Recently it invited the audited institutions to the plenary session of Parliament to respond to questions. According one of the interviews, “these authorities were shaking – but responding to questions in Parliament makes them more accountable.” Another result of this work was that the reports of the committees have become more consistent and complete. As an example, the decisions of the Parliament on the reports of the Court of Accounts now include specific instructions to Government that it needs to implement.

The increased awareness and understanding of the processes of budget and account reviews also resulted in the establishment of a subcommittee on Public Accounts within the Budget Committee. This subcommittee will allow for a more focused approach to cooperation with the Court of Accounts, and the development of more in depth expertise among committee members and staff on assessing budget reports. This should contribute to more substantive oversight in the future.

In its component, UNICEF with CSOs, worked with several parliamentary committees: Social Protection, Health and Family; Culture, Education, Research, Youth, Sport and Mass-Media; Human Rights and Budget. Experts provided policy analysis on issues related to child protection, focusing on four key areas: social protection, education, health and justice for children. According to its report, UNICEF provided in-depth analysis that was to be used to amend the draft legislation on: the Code of Education; Challenges of Fiscal Decentralization for Social Services Financing; Policy Options and Challenges for Supporting Families with many Children, and Development Opportunities of Pre-School Education.²⁹

²⁶ Law on Procedure of Execution, the Law on the Execution of Sentences, the Law on the Prison System

²⁷ Interlic, Acțiunile anticorupție discutate în cadrul unor audieri publice organizate de Parlament

²⁸ Sputnik, Discuții cu ușile închise la Parlament despre interceptările telefonice;

²⁹ UNDP Moldova, *Press Report* 2014

The changes supported by the project in these areas are important, but it is essential that they become institutionalized within Parliament so that they can continue in the next legislature regardless of the changes in committee membership. Building the institutional memory of Parliament, through continued focus on developing standard operating tools and guidelines for parliamentary oversight, is helping to lay the foundation for sustainable outcomes in the future.

Corruption within Moldova is still a significant problem. Moldova ranks 123 out of 176 countries on Transparency International's *Corruption Perception Index*.³⁰ With the aim of strengthening the role of Parliament and parliamentarians in combating corruption, the project in partnership with the Committee on National Security, Defence and Public Order, conducted an anticorruption self-assessment of Parliament, using the Anticorruption Assessment Toolkit, developed by UNDP and the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC). This was the first time an activity of this nature had been undertaken in Parliament. Based on its findings an *Anti-corruption Action Plan of the Parliament for 2015-2018* was developed and approved by Parliament, followed by a draft *Code of Conduct and Ethics for MPs*. The development of the Code of Conduct was preceded by a comparative study on codes of conduct of MPs in different parliaments. The first draft underwent numerous consultations but became embroiled in political discussions once it was put forward for approval. The new UNDP project has the intention to support the MPs to develop their own code based on this draft that could be accepted by all the members, which is a positive step.

The project then supported some of the more active and interested MPs to open a GOPAC chapter in Moldova. There was a lot of preparatory work, including consultations, explaining the added value of GOPAC, as well as bringing in the founder of GOPAC to Moldova for discussions. This effort is still nascent, but so far, there are five MPs in the GOPAC national coordinating council and nine in the national chapter. The program is continuing to support their efforts to learn more about other countries' experience in reducing corruption and ensuring effective and transparent oversight. The Moldovan GOPAC chapter raises the anticorruption profile within Parliament which is important nationally as well as internationally. It also raises the awareness of MPs on the importance of the issue and provides a learning and support network for MPs. Although the sustainability and effectiveness of this effort is still unsure, the approach taken for this effort of supporting agents of change and anti-corruption champions is a best practice, and this work should be continued under the new project.

According to most of the experts interviewed, as well as those inside Parliament, the processes within Parliament are more efficient and participatory, if compared with the state of affairs five years ago. According to the *World Justice Index* indicator: "Constraints on Government Powers by the Legislature," Moldova's rating has increased from 0.5 in 2012 to 0.61 in 2016. While it is difficult to attribute the changes in Parliament to a particular project, the parliamentary support provided by UNDP through its projects over the last decade has played a central role in this. However, there is still work that needs to be done. In 2016, civil society experts assessed the transparency in Parliament's decision-making, underlying a series of issues including:³¹

- Parliament does not publish the entire package accompanying the draft law;
- It is difficult to track the path of a draft law from its registration up to its voting in plenary;
- There are very rare public consultations, or very formalistic ones;
- Suggestions submitted by interested parties are ignored most of the time, with no justification;
- Unjustified delays in examining some draft laws, or, on the contrary, examining and voting rashly, without making them public or consulting with interested stakeholders;
- Meetings of the specialized committees are not sufficiently transparent;

³⁰ Transparency International *Corruption Perception Index*, 2016

³¹ IDIS Viitorul, *Transparency in Parliament's decision making: clear rules for everybody*

- Draft laws submitted by MPs do not undergo all stages and as well as transparency procedures.

3.1.3. Strengthening representative functions

The objective for this output was to *foster the quality of the representative role of the Parliament and promoting more interaction between Members of Parliament, citizens and civil society*. The project intended to do this through the establishment of four constituency offices for MP and staff to interact with citizens. In these centres, the MPs could also hold decentralized public hearings to hear citizens' views. The expected result was *more interaction between members of Parliament, citizens and civil society*. The anticipated budget was USD 405,385.

The project undertook a feasibility study on the creation of the constituency centres and developed a road map that underwent parliamentary discussion and approval. This was a new concept for the MPs who traditionally undertook outreach through their political parties, rather than through the institution of Parliament. In 2014 the concept was approved and the project helped to establish the four Parliamentary Constituency and Information Offices. The Parliament decided to place them in different areas of the country and they were located in Edinet, Orhei, Leova and Comrat (Autonomous region of Gagauzia). The main goal of the assistance was for the offices to improve the dialogue between MPs and citizens. Once established the project assisted the PCIOs in procuring the necessary equipment, developing standard operating procedures and providing capacity building for its staff. The PCIOs were initially designed as a two-year pilot project which took them to the end of the project in July 2016.

At the end of 2016 the PCIOs were assessed. The results were largely positive and some of its findings resonate with the findings of this evaluation. For instance, it noted the PCIOs were underutilized, which was also found by this evaluation. The report notes that between 2014 - 2016, 18 MPs visited the PCIOs at least once in order to meet with citizens, while through the WIP project 40 MPs participated in regional parliamentary forums, public hearings and met citizens outside of the capital without using the PCIOs. It seems evident from these statistics and from the information collected in interviews that the PCIO's capacities are not fully appreciated or used by MPs and there is limited demand for their assistance. At the same time, the PCIO staff are willing and able to offer analytical support in addition to being used for logistical purposes, and awareness raising on their benefits is needed.³²

There seemed to be little information provided to the MPs or the public about what the PCIOs could offer. None of the PCIOs have a page on social media or on Parliament's website.³³ In addition, the PCIO assessment report noted that there was no cooperation between the parliamentary committees and PCIOs. While the PCIOs welcomed the idea of organizing public hearings and committee sessions in the territories, they were not proactive and did not submit any initiatives in that respect to the committees. The PCIOs were however utilized by the project and for other donor/project events in these areas when requested. This included 15 regional parliamentary forums, organized under the WIP Program which brought together MPs and citizens to discuss high priority problems and the public hearings in the territory organized by the Committee on Agriculture and Food Industry with the project's support.

At the time of this evaluation, project support to the centres had ended and Parliament was deciding if it wanted to continue to maintain the centres or close them. They appeared to be leaning towards keeping the centres, but wanted to well define their mission. . The assessment report noted that the

³² UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Assessment report on the activity of the Parliamentary Constituency and Information Offices between 2014-2016*.

³³ *Ibid*

costs were not high for the centres (1 % of Parliament's budget), particularly when compared to its potential contribution to Parliament's work and outreach.³⁴

The project also provided extensive support to strengthen the communications capacities of Parliament. As an example, about 50 parliamentary staffers and 20 MPs benefited from trainings in communication, presentation and advocacy skills, altogether. Most of the activities were organized at a very high level, with well qualified media and communications experts contracted by the project. Several of these were organized with Deutsche Welle in Germany. There was considerable interest in these courses. As noted by one: "even those MPs who are themselves 'experts' in communication found the training interesting and remained until its end." Other participants, including MPs, reported that the trainings had enhanced their self-confidence and they were much more open now to communicating with the media.

The project also assisted Parliament to draft its *Communications and Outreach Strategy* and in a co-funding exercise with the Dutch Government, assisted the establishment and equipping of Parliament's Media Centre. This provided modern audio-visual equipment, including video cameras, PC workstations, professional desktops, and a server for streaming. According to the report on the effort, the provision of the equipment for the Media Centre of the Parliament is a long-term investment that will contribute to a better working environment for the journalists and provide them with modern working tools. As result, it found that conveying the information on the parliament's activities improved. This is important as the media is needed to convey basic information on Parliament's functions to the citizens and to act as a watchdog on its efforts.

The project supported the development of an internal newsletter of the Parliament which some staff considered as a useful tool. It also supported an external newsletter "Parliament INFO" in 2014 but there did not appear to be any editions beyond then, which raises question of sustainability and level of commitment to the effort.

Despite the project's efforts to strengthen Parliament's outreach and communications, it did not seem to transfer into increased public confidence in the institution. As noted, the surveys show a negative trend with trust at 6%. But public perception is also directly affected by Moldova's prolonged political crisis, banking scandals and overall public distrust in politicians.

The creation of the new website of the Parliament supported by the project, has the potential to improve outreach but is not yet completed. There were several reasons provided for this interviews. One of explanations was that Parliament wanted such a complex website that it was beyond its possibilities to maintain. Nevertheless, it is expected to be launched in May 2017, and to offer a wide range of materials and information to citizens as well as to MPs. This is expected to include: facilitated access to draft laws; minutes of parliamentary sessions; committee meeting agendas; records of deliberations locatable through an easy search engine; separate sub pages for each MP, faction and committee to manage and promote their own information and interact with their constituents; and to allow for feedback from citizens, companies, CPAs and LPAs on Parliament's activities (such as collecting suggestions, questions, and petitions from the population).

3.2 Component 2: Strengthened electoral processes

The original objective for Component 2 was to *improve the institutional capacity of the CEC to meet European standards of gender and human rights and improve the institutional environment for electoral management bodies that can deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes*. It also intended to *improve the public registration process for Moldovans and support the modernization of Moldovan electoral processes*. These outputs were revised in two 2014 project amendments, one of which was to provide *Additional support to the electoral component of the programme*.

³⁴ Evaluation interviews with experts

These revisions organized the outputs along the lines of electoral management body (EMB) capacity development, strategic and legal framework and a better informed and engaged public. It also included an output to bring *State IT systems in line with the electoral administration* to improve the quality of the voter register. A separate amendment intended to *increase trust in the electoral process through provision of uniform ballot boxes and voting booths*.

This final evaluation report generally follows the four output areas used in the amendment and used in recent project reporting. However, for ease of discussion purposes, like activities are grouped together, which in some cases may be from different project outputs. In the original project document Component 2 was allocated USD 1,458,135. This was increased to USD 4,641,445 with the amendments.

The main partners for Component 2 were the CEC, CCET, CSOs, Civil Status Service Registry, Agency for Land Relations and Cadastru, S.E. "Cadastru", Ministry of Justice (Penitentiary Department), Ministry of Defence and the E-Government Centre. Programme support was provided through a combination of technical assistance, training and exchanges as well as LOAs and HACTs with the CCET (Table 6). One of the factors that affected the ability of the programme to implement its planned activities was the unexpected presidential election in 2016. This diverted focus and funding towards the issues involved in their administration. Another was the low levels of state funding for CEC/CCET activities outside of elections and low salary levels, making retention of trained staff an issue. In some cases, the training and exchange opportunities provided through the project were seen by the CEC/CCET staff during the interviews as incentives to remain with the institution, while in other cases, the project had to replace institutional capacity, such as with the provision of two long term IT experts for the CEC in order to help with the development and institutionalization of the electoral management IT systems.

3.2.1. Capacity building

The intention for this output was to *improve the capacity of the electoral administration on central, territorial and local levels to deliver inclusive and professional elections and to mainstream gender and human rights*. The project intended to do this through strengthening CEC capacity to gender disaggregate its statistical data; providing Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) training on gender and elections; and, supporting the CEC to undertake a gender audit and mainstreaming gender in its electoral management structures. It also intended to strengthen the CEC's capacities in relation to political party financing, and to build the capacity of the CCET and its ability to train electoral staff and poll workers. Support to build the professional capacity of the CEC in Gagauzia and strengthen its procedures through training, exchanges and the provision of other materials was also anticipated as needed.

The evaluation found that the project had strengthened the institutional capacity of the CEC, CCET and their staff through its continuous engagement and provision of technical expertise, training and other facilitated efforts. Overall, the

assistance was relevant, effective and made a difference. Improvements in institutional and

Table 6: HACTs and LOAs for Component 2

Agency	Date	Purpose	Amount USD
CCET	2014	Training, TOT & creation of specialized trainers for the 2014 parliamentary elections	64,908
CCET	2015	Electoral training (2015 Baskan elections in Gagauzia), TOT for 2015 general & local elections, post-electoral events & civic ed	197,090
CCET	3/16	Civic ed., training related to elections/voter registrars, help line	50,000
CCET	10/16	Civic Ed (schools, PWD, translation e-learning). Was addition to 3/16 agreement	17,805
Total Component 2			329,803

professional capacity were visible in the findings of the national and international observation reports on the CEC's overall performance, although the CEC had a very high baseline from the reports of the 2010 parliamentary elections.³⁵ The reports on the presidential elections in 2016 noted that the *"election administration undertook its duties in a professional and transparent manner, with voting and counting largely assessed positively."*³⁶ The CEC in Gagauzia had fewer opportunities with the project and results were less evident in evaluation discussions.

The project integrated capacity building elements throughout most of its outputs which contributed to the results found for this output. In addition, over the timeframe of the project, the assistance evolved from the more general and awareness-raising types of training/capacity building to more targeted and professionally focused assistance. A key factor in this was the strengthening of the CEC's training institute, CCET, which was established but not fully functioning at the start of the project. The assistance provided helped it to develop its curriculum, train its trainers, and develop a certificated training programme and e-learning component. The CCET has trained more than 50,000 persons during the life of the project, initially running a certification program for all CEC staff and poll workers within the country. This was a best practice. However, the certification requirement for staff was dropped early on when it was no longer required by law. The CEC wants to re-institute the certification process which should include in-service training for career CEC staff.

The CCET's e-learning platform component has attracted interest and users from other countries with 27 training courses available in Romanian and Russian. According to the Centre's management, it has 10 requests from other EMBs for information on its model. However, the sustainability of the institution is an issue. The project covered about 60% of its costs in 2014-2015 and a bit more in 2016 because of the Gagauzia Elections for People's Assembly and training of help line operators for the unexpected presidential elections. The CCET does charge for its online courses, but this does not yet generate enough income to compensate for the project subsidy. It does have a number of other donors including the CoE, Canada and the Netherlands for different bits and pieces so not all results can be attributed to this project. The Government does cover the core costs for the staff.

The CCET does not provide BRIDGE training although the project, and the previous UNDP project, invested in developing a pool of BRIDGE certified trainers within the CEC. As part of this, it provided a substantial number of BRIDGE training courses to CEC staff—some as an opportunity for the CEC BRIDGE trainers to get the hours of training needed for their accreditation. The Centre said it used the BRIDGE's participatory methodology but

Table 7: Component 2 Study Tours

Purpose	2014		2015		2016		Totals	
	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P
Exchange Info	2		1	5	2	13	5	18
Observation	1		1	4	2	3	4	7
Gender	2		1	2	2	3	5	5
IT	3		1	12	3	20	7	32
Cadastru	2		3	20	2	17	7	37
PWD	1		1	1	1	3	3	4
Party Finance	1		1	5	1	9	3	14
E-Voting	1		1	6	1	7	3	13
State IT			1	4			1	4
Total	13	N D	11	59	14	75	38	134

T: Trips P: Persons ND: No Data

³⁵ According to the observer reports *"The CEC operated transparently and efficiently, meeting legal deadlines and generally taking decisions by consensus. Overall, the DEC's also operated effectively and impartially, although they enjoyed less political party confidence than the CEC."* Most of the issues noted were at the lower polling station level and from errors in the voter registry. However, *"the CEC appeared unprepared to maintain systematic communication with lower-level commissions and other stakeholders"* for the local elections in 2011 and *"did not always coordinate electoral preparations in a timely manner"* and there were issues with minor procedural inconsistencies and overcrowding of polling stations not adequately arranged. Problems were also noted with electoral complaints where the CEC and the courts were *"often confused as to the correct procedures of the complaints and appeals process."* OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, Early Parliamentary Elections, 2010

³⁶ OSCE/ODIHR, Election Observation Mission Final Report, Presidential Elections 2016, p 1

tailored its learning to the professional needs of the CEC and electoral stakeholders. The CEC BRIDGE trainers interviewed saw their certification as a means to earn supplemental income as BRIDGE trainers in country and externally, rather than serving as a tool for the CEC's institutional use.

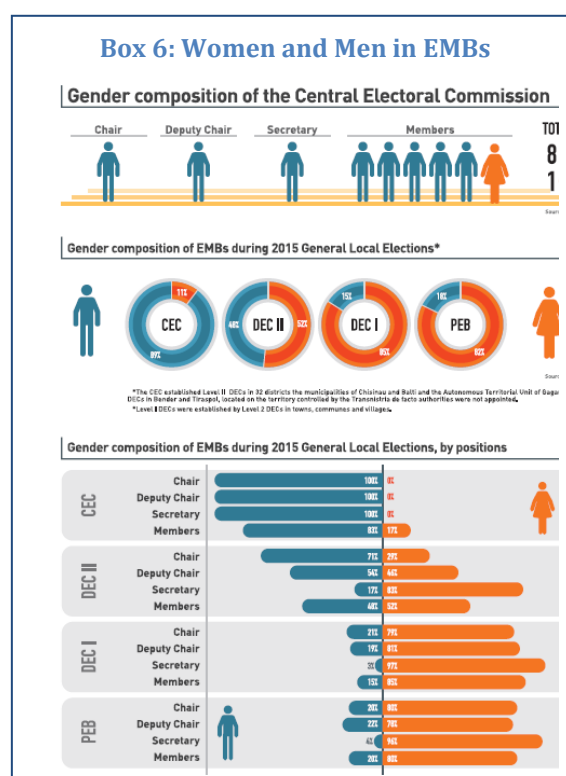
The CEC and CCET also benefited from a relatively large number of study tours given the size of the institution (Table 7). There was no, or limited data, available for trips taken in the first years of the project. There is also no expenditure data available for the total cost of these tours, however, for

2015-2016, the estimated budget for study tours was USD 60,000.³⁷ Most were to European locations which aligned with the project's intention to support the CEC to meet European standards for electoral administration and processes. From the information provided in interviews, it appeared that the study tours increased the awareness of the participants on how other countries dealt with similar issues. The cost-benefits and effectiveness of the trips are hard to estimate. There was no pre or post data for any of the trips on the level of participant knowledge; practices or attitudes to be able to measure change or to estimate effectiveness.

Project support increased CEC awareness on its responsibilities for political party finances and ability to handle these responsibilities. As of 2015, parties in Parliament receive public funding which the CEC administers. Outside of the training, study visit to Lithuania and TA provided by the project, it supported the adaptation of the CEC's electoral management system (SAISE) to include a political parties financing application. The ToR has been developed for the application to be implemented in the future. If implemented, it is expected to automatically analyse and validate the on-line financial returns submitted by political parties. This process is expected to reduce opportunities for collusion between electoral officials and political parties; facilitate the work of other state institutions such as the tax inspectorate and Court of Accounts; increase the accountability of political parties for the reporting of their financing; and, increase transparency as the reports will be available to the public.

The programme paid a significant amount of attention to building the capacity of the CEC to mainstream gender and to develop gender disaggregated data. This is a continuation of earlier activities and CEC efforts, which created a gender unit in 2006.³⁸ As a result, the CEC undertook a gender audit (2013), developed a gender mainstreaming plan, revised all internal procedures with a gender perspective (2014) which included "Instruction on ensuring gender equality in the work of the CEC", mainstreamed gender into the CCET training curriculum and produced gender disaggregated data and info graphics as noted in Boxes 6 and 7. These are all best practices and are directly attributable to the project as well as to assistance provided by the WIP project. Changes have been made institutionally and are sustainable.

The CEC, Women's Caucus and others lobbied for a gender quota for candidates and a 40% gender quota was adopted in April 2016. However, the risk is that in practice, parties will put most of their

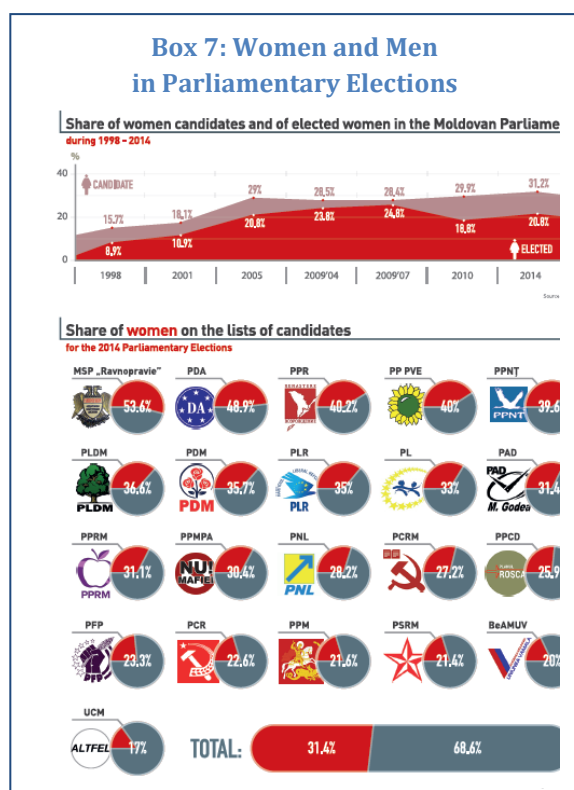


³⁷ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Project Amendment Document, Annex 2*

³⁸ CEC, *Strategic Plan, 2016 – 2019*, p 9

women candidates at the bottom of their party lists where they have little chance of being elected. These groups are now advocating for an amendment requiring the equal placement of genders on the party lists; otherwise the gender quota will have minimal impact on the number of women elected.

The project also supported the CEC's efforts to create the International Association of Women in EMBs. There are seven founding EMB members for the Association but the project supported the CEC with its creation, launch and international marketing. The effort is still nascent but has potential if it continues. The network can provide mentoring and support to its EMB members through the sharing of experiences and best practices on gender equity and mainstreaming in the electoral administration and electoral processes as well as serve as a global lobbying network to support women in EMBs trying to make change within their own countries.



The CEC capacity to make the elections more accessible for persons with disabilities was also strengthened through project activities. This resulted in the CEC developing regulations for PWD access in the electoral process and a number of remedial actions. These included, producing a Braille voter guide and special sleeves for ballot papers to be used by people with visual impairments. It also supported voter education and outreach targeted at PWD as well as marginalized communities such as Roma, as discussed in Section 3.2.4. There is no information on the increased number of disabled or otherwise marginalized persons who were able to vote as a result of these elements. The regulations took effect in 2016 and local authorities are now required to address accessibility issues for the polling stations in their areas, as well as ensuring the engagement of PWD as polling staff. The impact from these changes is likely to be more visible in future elections.

3.2.2. Strengthening the strategic and legal frameworks

The 2014 output number 4 intended to support a *strategic and legal framework conducive to trustworthy and transparent electoral processes based on official data using modern technological developments*. This output incorporated some of the original project document's intentions to *improve the institutional environment for electoral management bodies that can deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes* and to *improve the public registration process for Moldovans and support the modernisation of Moldovan electoral processes*. As a result, this section of the report will cover elements related to the CEC's institutional organization, its adoption of modern electoral technology and strengthening the voter registry. The assistance provided to other state institutions in support of a more accurate voter registry is discussed in Section 3.2.3.

Project support for the CEC and CCET's strategic planning, organization and ISO certification strengthened their internal management systems, institutional ties with district electoral councils and polling bureaus, and its ability to deliver professional, *“inclusive and modern”* electoral processes. This again was visible in improvements in CEC performance as noted in the observation reports. In particular, the project supported the CEC to conduct strategic planning for its Strategic Plans (2012 – 2015 and 2016 – 2019). For its most recent planning, it supported a very participatory

process both within the CEC as well as externally, with the CEC posting the draft on its website for public comment.

The CEC also went for ISO certification in two areas: management quality and information security management systems. This process requires meeting the international standards used by the ISO and passing annual quality control checks. Meeting these standards required restructuring and clarifying responsibilities within the CEC and ensuring quality control systems were put into place and functioning. This process strengthened CEC management systems and increased the security for the sensitive data it handles. Very few EMBs that receive UNDP support have ISO certification. This is a significant accomplishment that demonstrates institutional commitment to the security of sensitive electoral data and for the quality of its electoral administration. At the same time, the sustainability for ISO certification is uncertain as the project provided the financial support needed for the certification which the institution says it cannot cover through its state budget.³⁹

The CEC has developed an impressive and comprehensive electoral management system with SAISE. UNDP supported the development of this IT system under the previous project. However, according to project reporting, the system was 'outdated' at the start of this project, as it was developed in 2009 – 2010 based on the Government approved Concept from 2006. The intention was to renew the concept to make it cover more systems, including electronic/internet voting.⁴⁰ According to the CEC and project IT experts, the work is about 80% completed. To date the SAISE system covers a range of services including: a voters list for election day that is used to prevent double voting; generation of the candidate list and ballot prototypes; registering and issuing accreditation for national and international observers; and transmission and consolidation of the election results.

This work substantially increases the efficiency and accuracy of CEC performance which in turn builds citizen and party trust in the process. For instance, it reduces the possibilities for multiple voting, increases the speed of delivering the elections results and provides real time availability of those results to the public. This reduced the time for the announcement of the preliminary results from 24 hours to three or four. It also enabled the CEC to announce the final results of the first round within three days of the election.⁴¹ It has also streamlined the work of the CEC staff and poll workers, all of which reduce the room for human error in the different steps of the process, including consolidating the count and dividing the seats proportionally between parties. As an example, it used to take 40 CEC staff two weeks to lay out the 898 different ballots for local offices. This is now done quickly and automatically by the SAISE system. According to the observer reports for the 2016 elections *"the SAISE was available at all polling stations and provided a safeguard against multiple voting. In addition, the SAISE served as a tool for prompt tabulation and the announcement of preliminary results. The system, with very few exceptions, was fully functional, contributing considerably to the integrity of the process and enhancing trust."*⁴²

The SAISE system is further being refined to allow for electronic voting, which is especially relevant for Moldovans living overseas who now have to physically go to one of the Moldovan embassies or consulates. The project supported the feasibility study for the development of an internet voting system. The draft is now at the working group stage and a demonstration voting site has been established to familiarize lawmakers with the concept.⁴³

The CEC also undertook a systematic and strategic approach to improving the quality of the voter registry which was only as good as the base data provided to the CEC by the various state registries and databanks. This data was full of errors and created a number of issues as noted by the

³⁹ The project appears to have spent about USD 36,000 for the initial certification and its renewal to 2017.

⁴⁰ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Progress Report 2015*, p 22

⁴¹ OSCE/ODHIR, *Election Observation Mission Final Report 2016*, p 24

⁴² *Op Cit*, p 8

⁴³ 2018 Moldovote

OSCE/ODIHR observers in 2010: *“in addition to the decentralized and inconsistent system of voter list compilation... there are many ways in which voters can be added to supplementary lists on election day, leading to allegations that supplementary voters lists could be a source of manipulation and reducing confidence in the integrity of the elections.”* It concluded that *“overall, the voter lists remain one of the weakest points of elections in Moldova and led to diminished political and public confidence.”*⁴⁴

The project first supported the CEC and others to amend the legislative framework so that the CEC was given the main responsibility for the development of the voters list. Previously the local authorities would develop their own lists and there was no standardization. The lists were not regularly updated and errors in the lists were used as justification for losers to reject the election results, as they did in the 2009 parliamentary elections which required re-runs.⁴⁵ There is now one standardized list displayed by the State Register of Voters which has been completely automated since 2014. This enables voters to directly check the accuracy of their information and to find their polling location on line. Before the project this was only available in the pilot project in the capital. These improvements resulted in a 30% reduction in the number of voters who would be placed on a supplemental list at the polling station because they were not on the list for that station.⁴⁶

The project also supported the CEC review of related electoral legislation throughout its five year lifespan. This clarified the CEC’s responsibilities, such as in relation to the voter registry, but also strengthened the fairness and inclusivity of the electoral processes through attention to issues such as gender equity, equal access for PWD and other vulnerable groups, and now for the interoperability of the different state IT databanks related to the voter registry. This is still a work in process, and the electoral law still requires holistic review to ensure consistency.

3.2.3. Strengthening State IT systems

The intention for this output was *State IT systems ensure electoral administration in line with strategic and legal framework and modern technological developments on a sustainable basis*. This was part of the project’s comprehensive approach to *improving the public registration process for Moldovans*. This report section will focus on the assistance that was expanded to other state institutions beyond the CEC as a result of its intention to improve the quality of the State Registry of Voters. The low quality of the register was due to a number of factors, including problems in the State Population Register maintained by the S.E. Registru from which the voter lists were drawn. There were also national issues with addresses and street names managed by the SE Cadastru, and a growing number of Diaspora who wanted to vote abroad.

With project assistance, the CEC was able to get agreement on a comprehensive whole-of-government approach to address the quality of the State Registry of Voters. Continuing the efforts started under the previous project, UNDP provided technical assistance, study visits, training, legal assistance and facilitation to help the CEC and other institutions with this process. This was still underway during this final evaluation. It was an extremely ambitious effort to connect different state institutions with different perspectives and vested interests. As noted by one interlocutor, the project did not pick the easy path, but it picked a path towards a comprehensive resolution of the problem. This assistance helped the CEC to develop and formalize a long term national vision for the full digitalisation of the Moldovan electoral processes based on an integrated ICT system based within the CEC (SAISE) and on the concept of one national registration system with multiple institutional users. This system would allow for the automated exchange of data between their different data bases and systems which also required updated legislation for e-governance and data

⁴⁴ OSCE/ODIHR, *Election Observation Mission Final Report 2010*, p 9

⁴⁵ Evaluation interviews with CEC

⁴⁶ Ibid

interoperability. This was expected to be a sustainable solution to the problems created by incomplete, inaccurate and out of date data related to elections.

The e-Government Centre is the designer and administrator of Moldova's move towards e-governance. This effort, supported by the World Bank, is expected to reduce and streamline 587 public services and 131 e-services into 220 public e-services.⁴⁷ The e-Government Centre developed the MConnect platform which is the core of the concept for interoperability and re-engineered public services within Moldova. This concept is also intended to fully align with the European Interoperability Framework and will connect 21 different government institutions and ministries which will contribute to and use state data according to their mandates. This will cover almost 90% of the data in the country.⁴⁸ UNDP played an important facilitating role in the process of getting all interested actors together to discuss interoperability and to come to a consensus on the way forward according to interviews. Its technical experts and their reports were seen as providing independent views on the value of interoperability related to the State Registry of Voters and that demonstrated its benefits. This was especially important as some of the institutions had been generating revenue by selling their data. The project also helped these other institutions to assess their data systems and develop institution-specific measures to improve them and to allow for interoperability. The project also provided legal assistance for needed legislative and regulatory revisions, such as for the new address system and for data exchange and interoperability framework. The e-Government Centre credited UNDP's assistance with helping them to advance faster in their work.

UNDP helped the Civil Status Service to develop its *Strategic Development Plan 2016 – 2020* and the concept of the Register of Civil Status Acts. This is now complete along with the cost-benefit analysis. Their concept is based on the Austrian model which they saw during a project-supported study tour. They felt the model was the most appropriate for their needs and easy to adapt to the Moldovan context. They still face issues with mayors' offices registering people/acts on paper and then re-entering the information on line, instead of inputting the data directly. It takes about 72 hours now to update the registry on average. However, the consular system is not connected, and their data is sent in hard copies through the mail and takes longer to get into the system.

The Agency of Land Relations and Cadastre (ALRC) and the State Enterprise Cadastru have four systems for addresses, each of which has to be updated manually. After discussions with the CEC the ALRC undertook a pilot with its own resources, comparing their lists with the State Registry of Voters, and found significant discrepancies in the addresses between the lists. The project then supported them to review and update the legal framework for how addresses are determined and to develop a new ICT system that will automatically update all of the address data. It was unlikely that this system would have been developed within the near future without project assistance, as the agency and SE "Cadastru" lacked the funding to do the work on their own. Cadastre institutions also appreciated the technical assistance provided by the project which they felt had helped to clarify their role and authority with the other state institutions. They felt the changes were sustainable because of the changes to legislation. The Cadastru expects the updated legislation will be adopted within a few months. It has already developed a practical guide for public authorities on address allocation with the project's help which it expects to publish as soon as the law is passed. This system is expected to provide all citizens with accurate addresses which are needed not only for a more accurate the State Registry of Voters, but also for emergency services such as police and/ or the ambulance.

The project is also supporting the Ministry of Defence to redesign and update its state register of resource mobilization. This was intended to provide the CEC with updated information on the

⁴⁷ Government of Moldova, *Opening New Frontiers in e-Governance*, p 2

⁴⁸ Evaluation interview with e-Governance Center

location of military personnel for assignment to polling stations. In previous elections, the military estimates that about 10% of its soldiers were prevented from voting as they were in different locations than where they were registered. This effort has been whole heartedly adopted by the military which sees it as an opportunity to update its Soviet era systems not only for tracking its personnel, but also to track its assets such as vehicles. Moldova has a military draft process which requires the registration at local levels for all citizens aged 18 to 60. This process has been open for pay offs for local officials by those who want, or do not want, to join the military. If completed, this systemization and automation should reduce corruption in the conscription process and allow the military to make more timely and informed decisions, in addition to ensuring their deployed personnel are able to vote. According to the project document amendment, it also intended to assist other institutions to ensure access for voting for those in the penal and health care systems but this has not yet happened.

The ripple effect from this support to other state institutions should produce some significant results for the country as a whole assuming the work continues and is institutionalized. In addition to strengthening the quality of the State Registry of Voters, it should significantly strengthen the ability of participating institutions to provide more efficient and reliable services to the public; and increase evidence-based decision making by making more accurate and up to date information available to policy makers. The automated systems will also standardize services, reducing the opportunities for side deals and corruption. Several of the institutions commented that they were jumping from old Soviet systems directly into the modern era of e-governance. This transformation is also linked to international standards and concepts of open data which in turn will increase the transparency and public scrutiny of their operations. This should then increase the accountability and oversight of the state institutions. It is also expected to reduce the burden on citizens who now have to produce numerous documents for state-related transactions and shorten the time needed to obtain services.

3.2.4. Strengthening public trust, participation and information

The project intended to *increase awareness of elections among special groups of voters and ensure understanding of electoral processes in relation to elections in ATU Gagauzia and for civil society to monitor political party finances*. It intended to do this through support for the CEC to increase the participation of national minorities, such as Roma, Gagauz and Bulgarians, and to provide targeted voter education for the 2015 local and Gagauz Assembly elections. It also intended to provide small grants to CSOs to monitor political party finance legislation. The project was also amended to add in a one-time purchase of standardized ballot boxes and voting booths. In addition, much of the capacity building support provided to the CEC and CCET discussed in the previous sections were also intended to build public trust in the process and increase participation in the processes.

CSO monitoring of political party finances was cancelled because of a parallel activity financed by the British Embassy. Instead the funds, plus another USD 35,000 from the CEC's own budget, were used to contract a public relations firm for voter education outreach for the 2016 presidential elections.⁴⁹ This was an appropriate choice as it avoided the duplication of activities and extended the project's voter education efforts to the 2016 presidential elections.

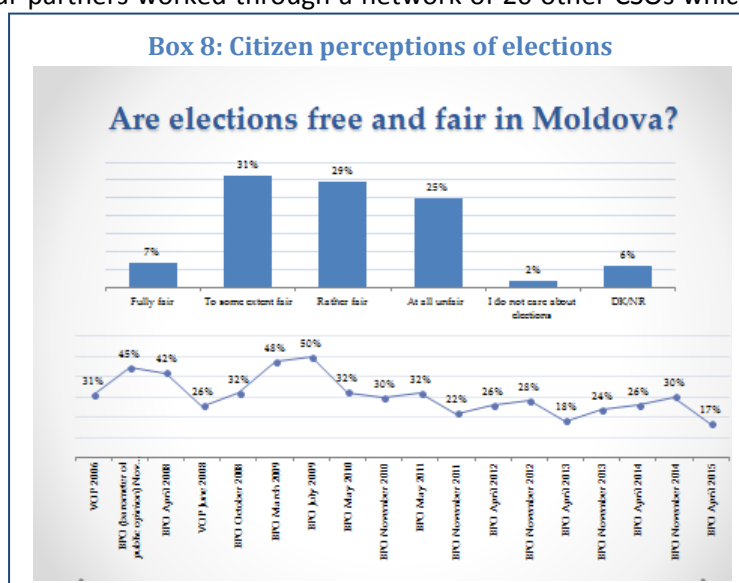
There is not enough data to be able to assess the effectiveness of the voter education efforts or to attribute changes in voter perceptions or turnout to the project given the number of other actors working on similar efforts and the different factors that contribute to citizen participation and perception. The project funded informational activities for the 2014 Parliamentary Elections, 2015 general local and Gagauzian Governor elections, as well as for the 2016 presidential elections. In all campaigns these included banners, billboards, voter guides, promotion materials, TV video spots and

⁴⁹ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Progress Report, 2016*, p 24

posters. The CEC and CCET also toured the country in a mini bus to encourage citizens to turnout for the elections and holding question and answer sessions, reaching 12,000 persons directly.⁵⁰

According to project reporting for the 2015 effort, 82% of persons surveyed had seen the video spots, followed by the posters (65%) and flyers (64%). It was not possible to determine the cost benefit of the different modalities used to reach voters as project expenditures are not disaggregated by programmatic elements. However, it was clear from the public survey data commissioned by the project that most respondents were reached by the mass media campaigns while the in-person efforts (such as the mobile tours and flash mobs) reached about 19 – 20%.⁵¹ The work in the schools reached 11%. It needs to be noted though, that the demographics likely varied for the different activities as the school sessions would have targeted first time voters while other person-to-person efforts should have reached marginalized groups.

For the elections in 2015, two grants were awarded competitively to: (1) the NGO Institute for Democracy to implement a civic education campaign for ethnic minority groups and PWD in the south of Moldova, and (2) Coalition of Community Centres for Access to Information and Training (a consortium of four NGOs) to implement a civic education campaign for the hearing impaired and PWD for the local elections in 2015. The use of networks was especially relevant for the campaign targeted at PWD, in particular the four partners worked through a network of 20 other CSOs which gave them national reach and the ability to contact 4,000 beneficiaries directly, and another unknown number through their video spots, training for TV operators on the special communication needs of the deaf, and for the provision of sign language interpreters for official CEC broadcasts during the June elections. Reporting did show a slight improvement in the turnout for Gagauzia in their elections for Governor (58% in 2015 compared to 56% in 2011).⁵² However, voter participation dropped for the general local elections (49% for 2015 compared to 54% for 2011).⁵³



As part of its communications support, the project supported public polling on public attitudes towards the CEC and the quality of the elections. These polls show a decrease in levels of trust and confidence among most state institutions (29% to 13%). This trend was also visible for the CEC. For example, those who knew of the CEC declined from 90% in 2010 to 83% in 2015 and confidence dropped from 70% to 49%.⁵⁴ Thirty five percent of those who thought the electoral process was unfair thought the CEC was responsible and 13% felt it was the fault of the precinct level election bodies. The majority of respondents blamed the political parties (43%) and the voters (38%) who let

⁵⁰ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Progress Report 2015*, p 19

⁵¹ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, Power point, *Penetration of social campaigns* p 30

⁵² UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Progress Report 2015*, p 18

⁵³ OSCE/ODIHR, *Parliamentary Elections 30 November 2014 Final Report*, p 21, and *Local Elections, 5 and 19 June 2011, Mission Report*, p 22

⁵⁴ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, Power point, *Evolution of reputation and confidence in the CEC*, p 7

themselves be manipulated,⁵⁵ demonstrating the need for more comprehensive and systematic civic education programmes, including for political parties, in the country. This negative trend also correlates to polling done in 2015 by NDI which concluded that the difficult national climate impacted on nearly every political actor and institutions, finding that nearly 75% of Moldovans interviewed believed their country was headed in the wrong direction.⁵⁶ This makes building the trust of an institution working within that context extremely challenging. At the same time, the polling data shows that holding free and fair elections is very important for 95% of those surveyed. This is up from 88% in 2014 (Box 8).⁵⁷

There was some sustainability in the efforts for this output found during the evaluation. The CEC now has a line item for voter education in its state budget which makes it less dependent on donors (estimated now by the CEC at 50%). The procurement of the standardized ballot boxes and booths for the elections was done in time for the legislative elections in 2014. This standardization added fairness to the elections by eliminating the partisan nature of some voting set ups, such as the use of

Box 9: Best practices

- Embedding the project management team and technical advisors in the Parliament and the CEC to strengthen relationships, provide on the job mentoring, and facilitate project implementation.
- Supporting agents of change to drive the democracy agenda forward and achieve progress towards meeting the project's goals. Project-supported reformers created a Women's Caucus in Parliament that lobbied for gender legislation, created an Association of Women in EMBs that is expected to promote the role of women in the electoral process, and created a national GOPAC chapter that will work on anti-corruption.
- Supporting the development and institutionalization of an in-house training programme within an EMB, that has a standard curriculum, trained trainers, certificated courses and nation-wide availability at low cost through online e-learning opportunities.
- Building institutional capacity and interest in mainstreaming gender and continuing this effort through successive projects to institutionalize gains and continued forward momentum.
- Using the electoral cycle approach allowing the project to address reforms and institutional capacity building in the periods between the elections and providing flexibility to address other stakeholder's needs that can strengthen the process as a whole.
- Making the commitment to support a holistic solution to a systemic issue such as improving the data that contributes to the accurateness and reliability of the voter registry. This process is likely to make a lasting impact that will reach far beyond the electoral process.
- Supporting the strategic planning process cycle for the Parliament and Secretariat, providing support for initial planning, follow-up support to implement the structural and systemic changes needed to implement the plans, and evaluating results to inform the development of the next strategic plan.
- Remaining impartial and respected in a highly partisan and politicized process in sensitive national processes such as parliamentary and electoral processes in project management, implementation and in the provision of advisory services.
- Encouraging and supporting a partner institution to seek international certification for their processes, such as ISO certification. This provided a goal for the institution to meet and the certification is demonstrable proof of its professionalism and ability to meet international standards for the areas of certification which is extremely useful in contexts with low levels of trust.

partisan colours as voting screens. It is also sustainable as the boxes are reusable and stored for use in each election. The networking and relationships developed by the CSOs for the voter education

⁵⁵ Ibid, Power Point, *Actors responsible for unfairness of elections*, p 16

⁵⁶ NDI, *Public Perceptions of Politics and Government*, p 7

⁵⁷ Ibid, p 15

efforts are also likely to last and be replicated in future elections assuming funding is available for their efforts.

3.3. Democracy Programme design and management

3.3.1 Programme design

The project design incorporated two previously separate assistance efforts undertaken by UNDP – one to Parliament and the other to the CEC. This was done, according to interviews, at the request of the main donor, Sweden, which thought this would be easier to manage from their perspective and result in mutually reinforcing programming and better coordination. UNDP saw this as an opportunity to test a new approach, and to learn lessons that could be further shared regionally and globally. The design had one overarching goal: *“Improved quality of Moldovan democratic processes and systems in line with European standards”* and one integrated component with the two institutions: *“Improving the institutional capacity of the Parliament and CEC to meet European standards of gender and human rights and strengthening the legislative and oversight functions of the Parliament.”* It also intended to have one overarching Programme Board with the two institutions. Otherwise, for all intents and purposes, the parliament and electoral components were separate, each with their own steering committees, CTAs, work plans, activities and reporting. The design also envisioned a joint effort with UNICEF which would support the child rights issues with Parliament, but those activities were also perceived as a separate output which was implemented separately and directly by UNICEF.⁵⁸

The design continued the efforts already underway by UNDP in its earlier projects. It was based on the premise that the previous projects had provided commodity and advisory support after the damage to the parliament building in 2009, and that the next step in Moldova’s development was the institutional development and consolidation of these two key institutions. Specifically *“to support their aspirations to be modern, efficient, European democratic institutions.”* However as noted in the project’s Midterm Evaluation, the design did not identify their institutional needs and only stated that it would *“assist both institutions to realize their own stated goals.”*⁵⁹ This is extremely broad although the previous UNDP projects had helped both institutions with their strategic plans which could have provided some further direction. At the same time, the project embedded Moldova’s intentions to move toward EU accession into its objectives and throughout its approach, including efforts to support the institutions to meet EU standards, and in particular for gender and human rights. The underlying assumption was that the move towards EU standards would improve the *“quality of Moldova’s formal political processes”* as otherwise; the only norms directly articulated in the design are for gender and human rights mainstreaming. The design could have been strengthened considerably if it had had an overarch strategy that could have tied all of the different elements together so that they all would contribute towards achieving that strategic objective. The results and resources framework is also unclear and objectives and outputs differ within the document, and are missing elaboration of the resources for the different results. These issues are clearly reflected and further elaborated in the findings of the Midterm Evaluation.

The project amendment in 2014 also appeared to have been added on top of the existing project document rather than being integrated into an ongoing programme. Although the amendment noted that the intention was to expand the project’s electoral activities, it used different outputs

⁵⁸ During implementation, there were separate mid-year steering committee meetings and one joint annual board meeting until 2014. Once the board membership was expanded in the project amendment, the project decided to have separate annual board meetings to be efficient.

⁵⁹ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Midterm Evaluation Final Report*, p 18, and *Project document*, p 12

and it was not clear if this new framework replaced the original one or if it was to be used in addition to the original framework. It seems to have replaced it in practice as subsequent project reports used the amendment outputs rather than the original ones or both. The amendment also expanded the overarching goal of the project to *“further improve democratic and governance process in the Republic of Moldova through democratic elections that represent the will of the people and which are realized in line with improved legal framework, international commitments and best practices.”*⁶⁰ This provides the normative framework that was missing from the original project document, but only for the electoral component. It also provides a strategic vision for this component and the four outputs selected clearly would contribute towards achieving that strategic objective if they were achieved.

The electoral component is based on an electoral cycle approach which is a best practice. This allows for the project to work on sensitive issues such as electoral law reform and capacity building for staff in the EMB full time between elections. Although in reality there were elections held almost every year of the project which affected the ability of the project to fully implement some of these capacity building and reform elements.

The One UN approach within the design followed the institutional comparative advantages of the two UN agencies, with UNDP providing the parliamentary and electoral expertise, while UNICEF provided the expertise on child rights. It is notable that UNICEF’s participation in the design was limited to promoting child rights in parliamentary work and that it was not included in the electoral component for efforts such as voter education in the schools for first time voters which was ultimately undertaken during implementation by the CEC and CCET. It is also notable that UN Women was not initially included as a partner in this project, given the design’s emphasis on institutional and policy gender mainstreaming in both the parliamentary and the electoral process. A separate UN Women - UNDP Women in Politics project started in 2014 (USD 3,485,690) that coordinated with this project and which undertook joint activities, but it was developed and managed separately. Given that this project was designed as a “democracy programme” and the fact that it was amended in 2014 to expand the electoral assistance component and provide a vision, that would have been an opportune time to conceptualize it as a more genuine ‘democracy programme’ and include the women in politics elements that were missing from the project. According to UNDP, thought was given at the time, but as that effort included a large CSO component, it was felt it would be too cumbersome to add to the existing project management structures, and because it also used a different implementation modality.

3.3.2 Programme implementation and management

This was a nationally implemented project, with UNDP and UNICEF as the executing entities and Parliament and CEC as the implementing agencies.⁶¹ This was reflected in the design of the programme management structures (Box 3). It was implemented as a “support to NIM” as clarified in the 2014 Project Amendment. This implementation approach was appreciated by the CEC more than by Parliament which was looking for more direct control over the funding in evaluation interviews, and which did not seem to connect its approval of the annual work plans with authority over the project and its activities.

Direct implementation is the default mechanism for most electoral support programmes given the politicized nature of the process and the fact that the majority party (government) is a contestant in the elections. UNDP’s execution of the support to NIM project in Moldova helped to insulate it from

⁶⁰ UNDP Moldova, Democracy Programme, *Project Amendment*, p 2

⁶¹ UNDP, Programme Document, Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support, p1

being used by one group or another within the very politicized context of Parliament during the time period as well as in the electoral processes.

The CEC perceived UNDP as a type of contractor, which could efficiently and effectively deliver desired services and commodities which saved them from the administrative burdens of doing it themselves. UNDP's management of the project also provided quality control assurance for the donors which was important in the context of national corruption scandals and limited accountability.

The project did provide the CCET with direct funding from 2014 - 2016 to implement some activities, most notably for voter education efforts. This was provided through several letters of agreement and HACTs that transferred funds to the CCET to administer within the context of a well-defined project agreement (Table 5). This is a good way to increase national administration and ownership of the project but still retain the quality control functions required by the situation. Maintaining UNDP as the executing agency also gave the project the flexibility to adapt the programme to windows of opportunity, such as for the support to the other state institutions to improve their data related to the State Registry of Voters. This flexibility increased the ability of the project to be responsive to emerging opportunities which also contributed to its effectiveness.

Programmatically, the two components were implemented separately, as was the UNICEF component. There was a noticeable difference in the project's relationships and implementation efforts between the CEC and parliament according to the interviews. Implementation started slowly with Parliament and there was very little institutional buy-in for the earlier work visible during this evaluation. Some felt the project's priorities had been determined by external experts and led by UNDP even though they were done in consultation with Parliament. Some also questioned the strategic value of UNDP's earlier assistance and felt that UNDP had been too responsive to some individual demands and not tied enough to supporting the institutional development plan. In this, they included some of the study tours that they felt needed to be more in line with parliamentary priorities and committee work. There was a change of parliamentarians and party alignments during the project, which changed some of the project's national counterparts which might account for some of these feelings. However, this issue was also noted during the project's Midterm Evaluation that recommended that *"any future support to Parliament and CEC should be more inclusive in terms of planning, more strategic and focused with regards to what such a Programme can offer."*⁶²

Although the project did a good job of supporting a process of development for certain areas assisted, such as anticorruption, where it systematically undertook an assessment, developed an action plan based on that assessment, then looked to implement that plan, all done in consultation with the individual staff and/or members involved, its activities crisscrossed a broad range of areas and lacked the strategic focus and programmatic integration that could have turned it from a series of activities into a more integrated and effective institutional development programme focused on achieving those higher level goals. As a result, it produced a large number of activity outputs which is the level where most of its results are found.

The current national managers for Parliament felt the situation had improved after the project's Midterm Evaluation which they stated had been used to generate changes in project implementation. They thought the new parliamentary project, which started in July 2016, reflected their institutional input and had a three-year action plan so they knew where the project was going and what it wanted to accomplish. This project also includes the modality for the transfer of some funds to the Secretariat for it to administer through HACTs and letter of agreements which they thought was appropriate.

⁶² Ibid, p 9

The work with the CEC was also driven by activities, such as the development of the SAISE electoral management system, but many of these were better integrated into the strategic vision of the CEC of where it wanted to be in terms of administering a reliable and trusted electoral process. These activities then contributed more directly to achieving those higher level outcomes. By the time of this final evaluation, the CEC also saw the project staff as a part of its team. It was completely embedded within the institution and they were working together to achieve common goals. This is a best practice. The project staff also sat within the Parliaments' buildings but did not seem to have the same level of integration. The different nature of the institutions is a key factor, but the CEC also had a strong leader with a strategic vision for much of the project, who was open for assistance and saw the project as a useful tool that could help the CEC achieve its vision. Even though the CEC leadership has since changed, the relationship has remained intact which is an indication of the level of its integration into the work of the CEC and its continued relevance for the institution.

The nature of project implementation was also directly affected by the nature of the CEC and Parliament. The CEC is an administrative body, with a clear leadership structure that sets policy that is administered by its staff. Parliament is a political institution, with many actors, factions and internal differences. As characterized by one interlocutor, *"all with different interests and agendas, all at play in a diverse and internally conflicted institution."* This added a layer of complexity to the project's work with Parliament that required political acumen to navigate and persistence to gain the multiple layers of approvals needed to undertake the activities, especially at the start of the project. It is especially notable that within this politicized and complex environment, the project, staff and experts, were able to maintain a reputation for impartiality and objective expertise. That is a delicate balance that is difficult to achieve and maintain and significant credit needs to go to the project staff and to UNDP and its experts for being able to achieve this position, and to be able to maintain it over the life of the project.

Some of the more engaged persons in the project noted UNDP's ability to convene groups across political or administrative divides, and the value of its regional and global networks, but most did not. They saw the benefit of UNDP's assistance as its financial resources that allowed them to undertake activities, trainings and study tours that were not possible within their own budgets. As an organization of the United Nations, UNDP is, and should be, perceived as much more than an implementing agency for donors or a convenient tool for government. UNDP has extensive experience in parliamentary and electoral support and produced a large number of knowledge products and tools. UNDP's value added needed to be better acknowledged and leveraged in the project's design, during implementation and in its communications with its partners and stakeholders.

UNDP did use some of its networks in implementation which directly increased its efficiency and effectiveness in delivering experts, arranging for study visits and marketing the successes of Parliament (such as the creation of GOPAC, and the Women's MPs Caucus) and the CEC (such as the creation of the Women's EMB Association). Without UNDP's global and regional network and support, in the current context, it is unlikely that these efforts would have happened by themselves or been successful. These efforts also would not have been possible without the efforts of national counterparts that wanted change and who were able to use the project to support their work for change - key examples include the work with the CEC, the creation of the Women's Caucus, the changes made in some committees and the creation of the GOPAC Chapter.

The CEC was also able to benefit early in the project from UNDP's Global Programme for Electoral Support (GPECS) that provided regional BRIDGE trainings that some CEC staff attended as well as the technical advice from the GPECS gender advisor who visited Moldova in 2012. According to project reporting, this regional approach helped neighbouring EMBs to share experiences and strengthen

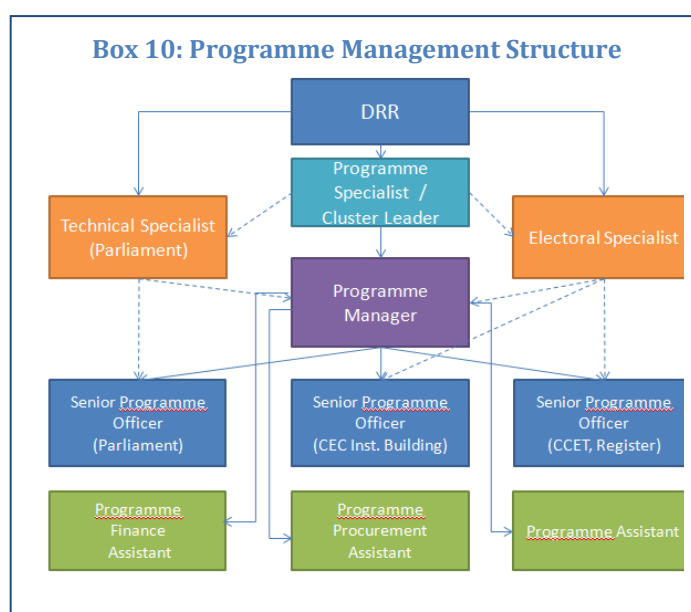
their networking and was also seen as a cost-effective way to provide training when it was a specialized area that only a few persons per country needed to attend.⁶³

At the same time, it was notable that some trips were only with one party or another and that the opposition party (Communist Party) did not participate in many of the project's activities until several years into project implementation. According to the project staff, invitations had been sent equally to all political groups to participate in the tours. One of the lessons learned cited in the Midterm Evaluation was the need to ensure inclusion of the opposition parties. This reportedly was due to their political reluctance to work with the governing parties but is nevertheless an issue that needs to be addressed in parliamentary and electoral assistance project work. If efforts are blocked at the technical level because of political considerations, these are issues that the UN Resident Coordinator and the development partners' Ambassadors should take up at the policy levels to ensure that all parties are able to benefit from the opportunities offered by the project.

The beneficiary institutions appreciated the international and national expertise and reports provided by the project. They saw the assessments and reports as proving valuable information that they could use in their work and that were also useful in the political context as they provided an 'outside' and 'expert' perspective and could be used to find consensus between the different factions on the way forward in some cases. One example is the latest functional review of Parliament, which recommends the restructuring of the Secretariat and bringing the committees' staff under it. While the solution was not favoured by everyone (and in particular not by some MPs), the fact that the analysis was provided by an outside expert, who thus had no vested interests in the process, is helping to explain the rationale for the change.

The staffing patterns for the project were not clear and were not fleshed out in the project design which listed very few project staff. It mentioned only a CTA for each component and programme support provided by a project manager, a project officer/manager and project assistants (unknown quantity). The Midterm Evaluation noted that this was not enough staff to manage and monitor a complex and multifaceted project.⁶⁴ According to interviews, the CTA's were originally seen as at too high a level, which the beneficiaries complained took too much of the budget, and which was subsequently reduced in grade. It also appeared difficult to maintain the CTAs for the project as each component had at least three CTAs during the life of the project. The current Parliament project is also having difficulties finding a well qualified person to head it.

Nevertheless, several staff were present for the duration of the project and provided the institutional memory and continuity for relationships.



⁶³ UNDP Moldova, *Electoral Support to Moldova*, 2012, p 2

⁶⁴ UNDP Moldova, *Democracy Programme, Midterm Evaluation Final Report*, p 8

The project structure was amended after the Midterm Evaluation (Box 10).⁶⁵ This structure better reflects the reality of the management system and how the project was being implemented. However the degree this was implemented was unclear as information gathered in the interviews about project management conflicted with this design. Nevertheless, if a project were to be implemented as a cohesive 'programme' rather than separate components, it needed one higher-level CTA for the project who could manage it as an integrated programme and ensure it worked together as a cohesive whole towards the outcome level goals of the project. This person then should report to the Project Board and serve as the programmatic interface for the project with the UNDP Country Office. The number of project staff was also low compared to the scope of work and number of activities undertaken.

UNICEF is not included in either of the project structures (Boxes 3 and 10) even though it was one of the agencies jointly executing the project. UNDP provided the funds to UNICEF to manage directly. UNICEF did not hire any staff for this project and instead used its own persons as part time managers for their activities. This person sat with UNICEF and not with the project team embedded within Parliament. The UNICEF work was intermittent and separate from the broader effort although it did keep UNDP apprised of its work. There appears to have been limited oversight by the project for the work done by UNICEF. According to interviews, there was a lack of a well defined institutional ownership and a dedicated person within UNICEF to drive it programmatically. Instead it was first allocated to someone in the UNICEF adolescence program and when she left, it was given to someone in their education section. Each person provided a different focus for the activities and there was limited institutional memory for this component. As a result, UNICEF achieved some activities but felt its work had limited outcomes beyond some awareness raising.

The limited number of donors to this project facilitated coordination issues. Although it was noted in interviews that UNDP managed the donor coordination for the electoral process with the CEC, many of those working on related issues outside the project interviewed had limited knowledge about the project and its work. The project staff also said they coordinated with the UNDP governance programme through monthly meetings held at UNDP of all its projects under the Effective Governance Cluster that shared information. However, the project did not appear to develop any programmatic ties with other efforts outside of the close coordination and work done with the Women in Politics project.

The main donor to the project, Sweden, was very engaged in the process and saw it as a team effort. Its Ambassador worked with the UN Coordinator on policy dialogue with the different institutions which facilitated the technical work of the project, such as on the discussions around e-governance and the sharing of data between institutions as well as on gender. The project contributed directly to Sweden's bilateral goals for Moldova and these goals were also promoted at the policy levels by the Embassy during its bilateral meetings with different policy makers and institutions. This teamwork and joining of efforts at the policy and technical levels is a best practice as without political buy in, many technical changes cannot be made within the politicized environment of Parliament and the electoral processes.

The project tried to build sustainability elements into its different components. This included support to the strategic development plans of the institutions, the follow-up with the SAISE system, the development of standard operating procedures and supporting changes in institutional structures and systems. This element was particularly notable in its approach to solving the quality of the databases that contribute to State Registry of Voters and for the development of the e-learning platform within the CCET. However, a main constraint to sustainable outcomes is the limited budgets of state institutions. Some of the staff with low state salaries saw the project

⁶⁵ Currently under the Project Manager there is one Senior Project Officer for Parliament and two for the electoral component (one for output 1 and 2) and one for Output 3 and 4.

Box 11: Lessons learned

- The project was most successful where it supported a driver of change who was open to support and used the assistance to generate a positive change
- Addressing problems holistically may take more time and effort, but result in more durable institutional solutions that will provide a greater impact than piece meal solutions
- Linking institutions to global networks, such as GOPAC, provide a framework and support network for reformers that can help sustain their efforts in difficult circumstances
- Parliaments are political institutions driven by their political actors, and their agendas might or might not coincide with the project's activities, even if decided in advance*
- Value of United Nations impartiality and convening ability in polarized political contexts that can cross divides and bring different interests together and the need to integrate this strategically into democratic governance programming
- Supporting institutions to prioritize their efforts and undertake strategic planning can help these institutions to make the best use of their resources when state budgets are tight.
- Projects with different components need one project-level head to programmatically oversee the different components and ensure they are on track, operate synergistically, and contribute to the higher level outcomes anticipated by the project
- Enhancing the visibility of the programme and its agenda, as well as securing wider stakeholders' involvement in consultations on key subjects can help build institutional ownership and maximize results
- Better coordination and information sharing among the different organizations and actors working in the same project areas such as on elections, voter education and parliamentary oversight would help to generate programmatic synergies and increase the effectiveness of all these programmes

* Midterm Evaluation Lesson

resources as an incentive as this provided them with opportunities for training and international study tours. In some cases, the project replaced capacity, and in particular with the long term IT experts in the CEC to develop their systems as the CEC could not attract the quality of IT experts needed with its own levels of remuneration. Some of the staff interviewed said they appreciated the trainings as it allowed them to do their work better, but most said it made them more marketable for other jobs or to moonlight as trainers. This is a systemic public administration problem, but needed to have been better factored into the project design and addressed more directly.

There is no easy solution, but generating income from providing services (such as the CCET's e-learning) or supporting the CEC to develop a stronger budget request and justification are elements that could have been considered in the design. Several of those interviewed thought the UNDP support was 'sustainable' because it had strengthened the institutions to where they could now come up with their own requests for donor assistance and manage donor funds directly. This likely reflects pessimism regarding the development of the country and could be seen as an exit strategy for a particular project, but sustainability should not be perceived as continued reliance on donor funding for an institution as an end-result.

3.3.3. Programme monitoring and reporting

The project provided regular reporting on an annual basis. The earlier reports provided an overview of the entire project, including reporting on the budget by activity areas. After 2014 the reports were done separately with each component submitting its own report. For the electoral component, reporting was comprehensive and reported on all of the activities undertaken. It provided gender disaggregated figures for all training and study tour events and listed activities against targets using the results framework. It also provided information about the processes and

institutions found during its public opinion surveying and monitoring efforts. There was a 2015 report for Parliament but there did not appear to be a 2016 report. The new parliamentary project started in mid-2016, however there should have been a report for six months in 2016 which were covered by this project. The 2015 report provided detailed information on project activities as well as useful graphics on the type of trainings disaggregated by gender and by MP/Staff participating. It did not seem to attach a results framework that provided the component's progress against targets. UNICEF did its own reports to the project, and the information was added into the 2012-2014 reports. There was no one report that covered the project as a whole after 2014.

All of the reports focused on the work done by the project (rather than the institutions or processes assisted) which is important to be able to understand the implementation of the project and its accomplishments. The financial information provided for reporting from 2014 on was only on the total amounts received and spent during the year for that component. There was no reporting on the overall budget for the project as had been done earlier that showed the planned budget and expenditures by different activity areas or that provided the overall total financial picture of the project, such as showing the use of project funds by years and line items up to that date. UNDP states that as it reports on an annual basis, this was standard practice. However, a more comprehensive format for reporting on estimated budget and actual expenditures should be considered for future annual reporting as one that covers the project as a whole can provide a better overall picture of the project, how it has evolved and where it has concentrated its funding.

The project monitored project activities but it is not clear that it systematically monitored progress towards achieving the projects objectives as detailed on the results and resources framework especially for the parliament component. The project did undertake needs assessments for most of the larger activities it funded before starting work or developing an action plan, and used those assessments to provide follow up work. However, needs assessments were not as evident for training and study tours which the project said were based on consultations with committee chair persons, heads of departments and the Secretary General, and which were then elaborated in the annual work plans. For elections, the project funded public opinion surveys that provided useful information that could be used to target voter education activities and measure its progress—assuming that these were undertaken before and after voter education efforts were done which did not appear to be the case. This would also be useful for purposes of designing a CEC communications plan. At the same time, NDI also undertakes periodic polling on similar topics. Consideration should be given to how these two efforts could work together to share questions and/or data to avoid parallel efforts. The public opinion polling could also be useful for the work with Parliament, especially in regards to outreach and identifying public concerns on issues being supported by the project.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

1. *The Democracy Programme was needed and highly relevant within the Moldovan context and timeframe.* The national partners were key institutions in the democratic processes and their effective functioning was critical to strengthening the quality of democracy in Moldova. The areas targeted within those institutions were key components of democratic processes: legislative processes, oversight, representation, participation, equity, rights and electoral reform.
2. *Many activities would not have taken place without the project and its funding.* State budgets are limited and some of the elements supported by the project were not institutional priorities, such as gender mainstreaming in the Parliament. The project also provided internationally recognized best practices and expertise that sparked new ideas and ways of approaching issues.

3. *UNDP had value added for the project beyond managing the development partners' financial resources.* It brought a development perspective, ability to recruit relevant national and international experts, and global and regional knowledge and practitioner networks. As an organization of the United Nations, it could also convene groups across divides and work for consensus on the way forward. However, this comparative advantage was not recognized by some stakeholders and needed to be more visible in the project design and during implementation.
4. *The 'democracy programme' elements of the project were not fully developed in the design or during implementation.* Although the project undertook many activities and achieved most of its intended outputs, a more cohesive programmatic effort between the different elements and with other governance programmes in the sector likely could have strengthened the project's higher level outcomes, particularly for the parliamentary component.
5. *Project results were more substantial where there was an institutional counterpart with a vision that corresponded with the project's objectives and that saw the project as a partner in achieving that vision.* Those results are likely also more sustainable due to the institutional ownership of the effort.
6. *Outcome level results are likely the cumulative efforts of UNDP's projects with Parliament and the CEC and other development efforts undertaken in the sector making attribution difficult.* Measuring results is also difficult due to the number of other factors that affect outcomes. This project also started processes that will likely yield their most substantial outcomes in the years to come. Nevertheless, using the output indicators in the Project Document, it is likely that this project:
 - a. *strengthened Parliament's legislative and oversight functions for the areas assisted;*
 - b. *increased the degree to which gender and the human rights dimensions were taken up by Parliament and within the CEC;*
 - c. *increased the opportunities for outreach by Parliament and MPs; and,*
 - d. *improved the electoral administration of the electoral process in several areas.*

Using the indicators in the project amendments, this project:

- e. *improved the assessments of the election administration done by independent international election observers; and,*
- f. *decreased the number of complaints made against the election administration.*

The last indicator was on increased trust in the electoral administration. As noted, issues of trust were negatively affected by the political instability and national corruption scandals. It is unknown if the standardized materials helped to increase trust as there were no pre or post measurements taken on voter attitudes towards the polling sites, but the standardization of materials likely:

- g. *reduced the perception of partisan bias at the polling locations thus likely increasing the perception of fairness of the process during voting.*
7. This final evaluation largely *validated the direction of the new parliamentary support project and the concept for continued electoral support.* However, the new electoral component should not lose focus on the important element of 'credibility' within the process of 'electoral modernization.'

4.2. Recommendations

1. *Continued support to the institutions and principles of strengthening Moldovan democracy.* Work still needs to be done to improve the quality of the parliamentary functions, oversight, accountability and the fairness of the electoral system. The project should also complete the work started on interoperability and with the state institutions and their elections-related databases assisted under this project.
2. *Ensure the strategic vision for projects are clearly articulated in the project documents, that the outputs chosen directly contribute directly towards achieving that vision, and that this vision is shared by the partner institutions.* This can build a more effective programme and increase sustainability.
3. *Use a programmatic focus in project delivery* so the different activities within and between components are synergistic and build on each other so that they can make a more substantial contribution towards achieving the higher level outcomes sought. Develop more synergistic programming with other UNDP and development partner projects to expand the project's reach and to reinforce efforts, such as was done with the WIP project. This can also strengthen the demand side (including advocacy) for the institutional and legal changes being supported. Provide more detailed programmatic budget information in project reporting, such as annual reports, so that it is clear in those reports how the funds were used and contributed towards the achievement of the results reported.⁶⁶
4. *Expand Moldovan efforts for civic education beyond voter information/education* by linking efforts with other donor-funded projects, education system and CSO efforts, to leverage cost-effective ways of increasing civic awareness and knowledge on the issues addressed through the project by Parliament and CEC. Developing partnerships with the media to increase reporting on these issues could also be effective.
5. *Look for innovative solutions for sustainability problems* given the limited budgets of most state institutions. This could be through the payment for services (such as for e-learning) or in some cases through public private partnerships as well as through strengthened support for strategic and prioritized planning, and the development of budgets and their justification for increased funding through the state budgeting processes for partner institutions.
6. *Strengthen project management and ensure logical reporting lines* on programmatic as well as operational levels. A multi-component project such as this would benefit from having one senior level programmatic person oversee the entire effort to provide strategic direction and ensure all of the components were on track and contributing to the anticipated outcomes.⁶⁷ The number of project staff also needs to commensurate with the level and scope of activities.
7. *Maintain the current method of implementation but increase use of HACTs and letters of agreement* with implementing partners to start the transition towards more national implementation. At the same time, direct execution is UNDP's corporate default implementation mechanism for electoral support, and UNDP Moldova's implementation modality of "support to NIM" should be maintained, especially for assistance to the more polarized and politicized aspects of the parliamentary and electoral processes.

⁶⁶ Along the lines of the component breakdown in Table 3 and the sample table provided in Annex 1

⁶⁷ CTA-type, but one that would cover the project as a whole.

8. *Increased use of and visibility for UNDP's comparative advantage* in the design and implementation of these programmes, in particular for its strategic position as a development agency of the United Nations, the use of its knowledge networks and products, global resources and network of country offices to find experts, information, mentoring and to support the handling of study tour recipients.
9. *More systematic tracking and monitoring of project performance beyond achievements of activity outputs.* This can inform project management if the activities undertaken resulted in the desired changes, made no changes or sparked unintended ones. This helps to track progress made towards achieving the higher level outcomes as well as to better target efforts such as capacity building. Among others, information can be gathered through pre- and post-tests and/or measurements to identify changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices before and after activities such as training, voter education, awareness raising, study tours and institutional reorganization. The use of surveys should be expanded and include the parliamentary component. Consideration should be given to adding a few questions for this purpose to the regular polling done by other organizations to make this type of measurement more cost-effective.

Annex 1. Example of multi-year financial utilization report for annual reporting purposes

The following is for illustrative purposes only, and uses the original components from the Project Document for ease of illustration purposes.

	Project Component	Budget	Revised Budget (date)	Expenditures					Cumulative Expenditures
		2012-2014	2012-2016	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
1	Parliamentary development								
1.1	Meeting EU standards								
1.2	Strengthening oversight & legislative functions								
1.3	Fostering representative role								
1.4	Promoting human rights								
1.5	Project management & support								
	SubTotal Component 1								
2	Electoral component								
2.1	Gender & Human Rights								
2.2	Institution environment								
2.3	Voter registry & modernization								
2.4	Project management & support								
	SubTotal Component 2								
	GMS								
	Totals								

Annex 2: Persons met

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Association for Participatory Democracy (ADEPT)

Botan, Igor, Executive Director

Infonet Alliance

Koroli, Victor, Executive Director

Institute for Democracy

Sergheeva, Tatiana, Executive Director

Borsevsski, Andrei, President of the Council

Promo-LEX

Panfil, Nicolae, Program Coordinator, Monitoring Democratic Processes Program

Independent Analytical Centre “Expert Grup”

Lupusor, Adrian, Executive Director

GOVERNMENT OF MOLDOVA

Bureau for Reintegration

Balan, George, Deputy Prime-Minister

Voinic, Daniel, Principal Advisor, Bureau for Reintegration

Gvidani, Alin, Office for Reintegration Policies

Central Electoral Commission

Russu, Alina, Chairperson

Ciubotaru, Rodica, Deputy President

Dr. Ciocan, Iurie, Commissioner and Former CEC President

Agrigoroae, Veasceslav, Secretary

Jumiga, Olesea, Deputy Head, Legal Directorate

Pasat, Corneliu, Deputy Chief, Communication, Public relations and Mass Media Department

Lupasco, Ludmila, Head of CEC Apparatus

Otel, Cristina, Deputy Head of Economic-Finance Directorate

Angheli, Cristina, Head, Directorate for Analysis and Records

Berlinschi, Alexandru, Head of Elections Management Directorate

Balmos, Alexandru, Head of IT and Voters Lists Management Directorate

Centre for Continuous Electoral Training

Iuras, Natalia, Director

e-Government Centre

Turcanu, Iurie, Advisor to the Prime Minister on e-Governance, and Chief Information Officer

Bedros, Sergiu, Coordinator for e-Services

Gagauzian Central Electoral Commission

Comur, Ivan, President

Ministry of Defence

Donica, Veaceslav, Head of Human Rights Directorate, Ministry of Defence

Lupasco, Roman, Head of Service, Main Staff of Army

Buruc, Alexandru, Head of Service, Main Staff of Army

Ministry of Justice

Ciobanu, Lucia, Director, Civil Service Status
Busuioc Volosatii, Veronica, Deputy Director
Tacu, Diana, Deputy Director, Civil Service Status

State Chancellery

Cujba, Victoria, Head of Directorate for Public Administration Reform

State Enterprise Cadastre

Ginju, Valeriu, Deputy Director, State Enterprise Cadastre
Lilian Mindov, Lilian, Head of Cadastre Directorate, State Agency Land Relations and Caster

PARLIAMENT OF MOLDOVA

Palihovici, Liliana, Deputy Speaker, MP
Botan, Roman, MP, Chairman, Committee on National Security, Public Order and Defence
Creanga, Stefan, MP and Chairman of the Committee on Economy, Budget and Finance
Stratan, Valentina, MP, Deputy Chairman, Committee on Social Protection, Health and Family
Supac, Inna, MP, Member of Human Rights and Interethnic Relations Committee, Chairwoman PCRM Parliamentary Group
Popescu, Ala, Secretary General of the Parliament
Berestean Olesca, Head of Visits and Information Centre, Communication Directorate
Bordeianu, Iuliana, Head of Communication Directorate
Creanga, Ion, Head of Legal Department
Dolinta, Elena, Principal Advisor, Legal Department
Iacub, Alina, Head of HR Directorate
Ursoi, Gheorghe, Head of Strategic Planning Unit, Parliament Secretariat
Saghin, George, Adviser, Speaker's Office
Cojocari, Gheorghe, Adviser, Committee on Economy, Budget and Finances
Costandachi, Andrei, Adviser, Committee on Economy, Budget and Finances
Fondos, Igor, Adviser, Committee on National Security, Public Order and Defence
Maxim, Victoria, Adviser, Committee on Foreign Affairs and European Integration
Nastas, Tatiana, Adviser, Committee on Agriculture and Food Industry
Rosca, Iulian, Adviser, Human Rights and Interethnic Relations Committee
Beletei, Stela, Head of Service, PCIO Edinet (by phone)
Luchianova, Zinaida, Senior Consultant, PCIO Orhei (by phone)
Mincu, Fiodor, Head of Service, PCIO Comrat (by phone)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Council of Europe

Herrero, Jose Luis, Head of Office
Condrova, Ala, Project Assistant

Democracy Programme (UNDP)

Hollstein, Tanja, Electoral Specialist
Galitchi, Sergiu, Programme Manager
Bounegru, Eva, Senior Project Officer
Zaharia, Diana, Senior Project Officer
Bernaz, Elena, Finance Associate
Birau, Elena, Procurement Associate
Armarfi, Ion, National Consultant, Cadastre, Ministry of Interior
Burghelea, Pavel, National Consultant, Interoperability Law

Crisciunas, Leonidas, National Consultant for Civil Status Service
DeVrieze, Franklin, International Consultant, Anticorruption, by Skype
Dubbrow, Geoff, International Consultant, Parliamentary Oversight, by Skype
Groza, Iulian, National Consultant, Internet Voting
Guzun, Ion, National Consultant, Parliamentary Oversight, by email and phone
Hommes, Johan, Former CTA Parliamentary Component, 2012 – 2014 by Skype
Kasterns, Oskars, Former CTA Parliamentary Component, 2014 – 2015, by Skype
Sullivan, Kate, Former CTA, Electoral Component, by Skype
Udras, Jonas, International Consultant, Internet Voting, by Skype
Vela, Blerim, Former CTA, Parliament Component, 2014 – 2015, by Skype

Embassy of Sweden

Orlova, Nina, Senior Programme Officer

Delegation of the European Union

Rodriguez Ruiz, Jordi, Attache, Project Manager

International Republican Institute

Sacovici, Nadia, Director

Gaur, Teodora, Senior Program Officer

National Democratic Institute

Young, Andrew, Head of Mission

Rusanovsky, Andrei, Deputy Head of Mission

UNICEF

Tilva, Margarita, Deputy Representative

United Nations Development Programme

Gercheva, Dafina, Resident Representative

Scvortova, Alla, Assistant Resident Representative

Ieseanu, Valeria, Programme Specialists, Cluster Lead Inclusive Growth

Terzi, Anatolie, Project Manager

US Agency for International Development

Puirci, Roman, Project Management Specialist, Democracy and Governance Programme

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Annex 4: Evaluation methodology

Final Evaluation of the UNDP Democracy Programme in Moldova

Draft Evaluation Inception Plan

17 December 2016

1. Introduction

This draft Evaluation Inception Plan was developed based on: the Terms of Reference (TOR) prepared by UNDP Moldova for this independent final evaluation of the UNDP Programme “Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support” (further referred to as the “Programme”); information provided by UNDP Moldova; UNDP evaluation guidelines; and, an initial review of the project documents and reporting.

1.1. Purpose for the Final Evaluation

The purpose for this final evaluation is to provide UNDP with a final evaluation report on the Programme. This was a four year (2012-2016)⁶⁸ USD 8,053,717 project intended to strengthen the legislative, oversight and representational functions of Parliament and the capacity of the Central Electoral Commission to deliver professional, transparent and efficient electoral processes. Specifically this evaluation will:

1. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Programme interventions taking into consideration the project objectives;
2. Assess the contribution of the Programme in achieving gender equity; and
3. Provide best practices and recommendations that may be used for future programming.

1.1 Background and context

The Programme was developed in 2012 to build on previous programming that supported parliamentary development and the electoral processes in Moldova. It was amended twice in 2014 to add additional support for the electoral component on the project and for the purchase of ballot boxes and voting booths. Financial support for the programme was provided by the Governments of Denmark (USD 898,110), Norway (USD 1,822,442), Sweden (USD 4,854,738), and the Republic of Moldova (144,927) and UNDP (USD 83,500).⁶⁹ As the constitutional reforms were not initiated, funds for this component were not mobilized, so the project was fully funded.

The overarching goal of the Programme was to improve the quality of the Moldovan democratic processes and systems in line with European standards. To accomplish this goal, the Programme focused on support to two main areas: Parliament and elections. Each Project Document has its own components and list of activities, and there is no integrated results framework for the entire project. The objectives listed in the original Project Document were:

6. Improving the institutional capacity of the Parliament and Central Elections Commission to meet European standards of gender and human rights and strengthening the legislative and oversight functions of the Parliament.
7. Fostering the quality of the representative role of the Parliament and promoting more interaction between Members of Parliament, citizens and civil society.
8. Improved institutional environment for electoral management bodies that can deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes.
9. Improving the public registration process for Moldovans and supporting modernization of Moldovan electoral processes.

⁶⁸ With the extension of the Electoral Component to March 2017

⁶⁹ Financial figures will be updated during the evaluation.

10. Support to develop an inclusive process for constitutional reform.

The ballot box component in 2014 added in one output:

2. Increasing trust in electoral process through provision of uniform ballot boxes and voting booths for the Republic of Moldova.

The additional support for the electoral component added in 2014 listed four outputs:

5. Improved capacities of electoral administration on central, territorial and local levels to deliver inclusive and professional elections and mainstreamed gender and human rights.
6. Strategic and legal framework conducive to trustworthy and transparent electoral process based on official data using modern technological developments.
7. State IT systems ensure electoral administration in line with strategic and legal framework and modern technological developments on a sustainable basis.
8. Public better informed and engaged in electoral processes on central, territorial and local levels.

The project is executed through a national implementation modality (NIM) with the National Counterparts responsible for decision-making and the implementation of the Programme activities, and with UNDP providing the quality assurance. It is managed by a Programme Board, and separate Steering Committees for the Parliament and electoral components. Two Chief Technical Advisors were to be hired and embedded in each institution. UNDP was also to provide the Programme support team which would be responsible for reporting to Programme donors as determined by their cost-sharing agreements. A midterm Programme evaluation was done in 2014.

1.2 Scope of the final evaluation

This independent evaluation will:

- Undertake a review of relevant documents, including the Programme's Project Documents, Midterm Evaluation Report, progress reports, project products and electoral observation mission reports.
- Undertake discussions with project partners, Government and non-government agencies, project stakeholders and others working in the sector on the project design, implementation, performance, challenges, lessons learned, best practices and results.
- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability of the project interventions taking into consideration the project objectives as well as its contribution in achieving gender equality.
- Assess the efficiency of Programme implementation and management and the factors that contributed to effectiveness (or ineffectiveness).
- Assess qualitative and quantitative data available on the results achieved and progress made, especially in terms of its contribution to the development of Parliament and the Central Electoral Commission.
- Identify the factors that facilitated or hindered the achievement of results and the lessons learned during implementation.
- Validate and discuss preliminary evaluation findings through a stakeholder workshop.
- Provide best practices and recommendations for future programming and for UNDP's knowledge base on good practices.

2 Methodology

2.1 Evaluation criteria and questions

With the evaluations scope detailed in Section 1.2 in mind, the evaluation team will seek to answer the following questions:

Outcome	Main Questions	Sub- Questions
Improved quality of Moldova's formal political processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the quality of the formal political processes strengthened /improved as a result of the Programme? In what ways? How did this impact parliamentary development and the electoral process? Was the institutional capacity of Parliament improved to meet European standards of gender and human rights, and strengthened legislative oversight? How were gender and human rights mainstreamed in the electoral processes? What impact did this have? How has EU Association Agreement affected parliamentary development and how has this process been assisted by the Programme? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was a cross-party women's caucus established as a result of the Programme? What was the result of its establishment? How gender issues were implemented as a cross-cutting theme in programming, and if the Programme gave sufficient attention to promote gender equality and gender-sensitivity What is the oversight role of Parliament and was its oversight capacity improved as a result of the Programme? In what ways? Has this helped to improve the quality of the political processes in Moldova? Which staff were trained by the project and how relevant was the training to their needs and those of Parliament? How effective was the anti-corruption self-assessment of Parliament and subsequent activities? What were the main factors for this? How has the Programme improved the work of MPs, committees and staff?
Quality of representative and oversight roles of Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the quality of the MPs' representative role and was this improved by the Programme? How? Was there more interaction between MPs and citizens and civil society after Programme support? In what ways? How effective was parliamentary oversight on human rights and gender after Programme support? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective are the outreach offices supported by the Programme? Are they used? What are the key factors that promote/deter issues of representation and were these adequately addressed by the Programme? How useful was the study tour to the Swedish Parliament? Was the new outreach website developed and used by MPs/committees for outreach? Did citizens use the system to obtain information? How were the committees, hearings and legislative processes strengthened by the Programme? How was cooperation between Parliament and Ombudsman's Office improved?
Improved Institutional environment for EMBs to deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes & Improved capacities of electoral administration on central, territorial and local levels to deliver inclusive and professional elections and mainstreamed gender and human rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the CEC's role and management structure improved from 2012? What are the factors? How has the Programme contributed to this? Was the CEC's institutional capacity strengthened as a result of the Programme? In what ways? How has this helped to improve the electoral processes? How did the Programme strengthen inclusive elections and mainstream human rights? Did this improve participation & representation in the processes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the Programme's role in the CEC's gender audit and gender action plan? How has this impacted the CEC and electoral processes? How effective was the BRIDGE and other training provided for institutional/ professional capacity development? How has the CEC addressed the issue of political party finance and has this made a difference in the quality of the process? How did the Programme contribute to this? What are the needs yet to be addressed in this area in the upcoming years? What was the role of the Programme in supporting the development of Gagauzia

Outcome	Main Questions	Sub- Questions
		<p>EMB capacity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the status of the CCET and its ability to cover the training needs of the CEC and other EMBs in Moldova? Is this training centre sustainable?
<p>Improved public registration process through modernization of Moldovan electoral processes</p> <p>&</p> <p>Strategic and legal framework conducive to trustworthy and transparent electoral process based on official data using modern technological developments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the status of the voter's register? • What was the role of the project in providing technological solutions for the CEC? Were these solutions appropriate to the context, effective and cost-effective? • What electoral reforms were supported by the Programme and how did this help improve the processes and electoral administration? • Have the electoral process and citizen trust in the processes improved since 2012? Which changes can be attributed to the Programme? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the factors that affected the Programme's ability to support an improved voter registration and more responsive voting services? • To what extent is CEC able to sustain and use the IT solutions established with the support of the Programme? • Did the Programme support development of research and policy capacity within the CEC? Did this result in strengthened implementation of CEC programmes and initiatives? • How did the Programme interact with political parties and civil society organization in terms of improving the electoral framework? What were the factors contributing to or hindering change in this field?
<p>Increased trust in electoral process through provision of unified ballot boxes & voting booths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did this effort increase trust in the electoral process? Did it reduce the number of complaints related to ballot boxes, secrecy of the vote, etc? • Are these commodities still available for future elections? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the equipment procured and did it provide more secure, reliable and uniform boxes and voting booths for the country? • Were they deployed throughout the country and used for elections?
<p>Public better informed and engaged in electoral processes on central, territorial and local levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of voter education campaigns/activities did the Programme carry out? Which of them were the most effective and why? • Did the Programme coordinate its activities in this respect with other actors? With whom? How? • What activities were undertaken by sub-grantee CSOs to oversee political party financing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much voter education done was supported by the Programme and what was the impact of this effort? Was this effort limited to engagement of minorities? • What were the changes in terms of political party financing (if any, yet) from the CSO reports/activities?
<p>Support to develop an inclusive process for constitutional reform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the role of the Programme in supporting constitutional reform? • What reforms still need to be made? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities did the Programme carry out under this component? Who were the champions for the reforms?

2.2. Approach

In answering the evaluation questions, the evaluation team will use mixed methods for analysis, synthesis and drawing conclusions. These include: trend analysis of key outcomes, analysis of associations between observed outcome and the Programme-funded efforts, assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Programme's assistance and validation through triangulation (validation discussions with UNDP, CEC/Parliament, Programme donors, staff and other partners/beneficiaries, by information provided in the documents reviewed and by the quality of the parliamentary and electoral processes reported by impartial national/international

observers). As a result, based on the information available and stakeholder perceptions, the evaluation team will make judgments on their value and the extent that these outputs contributed towards the achievement of the Programme's intended outcomes.

The questions outlined in Section 1.2 are specific yet general enough to allow for flexibility in questioning as well as to allow for flexibility in responses. This will enable the responders to voice their own issues and concerns. The team will start by asking brief general questions before going into the specific evaluation questions. Sensitive questions will be asked at the end of the interview after a rapport has developed between the interviewer and person(s) being interviewed. Issues identified in discussions will be followed up with additional questions to that individual/group, as well as by questions to other informants to corroborate the information as needed.

The evaluation team will interview available partners, stakeholders and Programme staff. This is expected to include:

- Speaker of the Parliament;
- Chairpersons and Members of parliamentary committees involved in the Programme;
- Secretary General of the Parliament and staff of subdivisions (i.e. strategic planning unit, human resources department; communications);
- Staff of committees and party groups involved in the Programme;
- Members of the Central Election Commission;
- Staff at the Central Election Commission;
- Technical Specialists and consultants for studies, handbooks, and strategy plans;
- Trainers and resource persons; and,
- Development partners and key donors supporting the Parliament, Central Election Commission and electoral processes (i.e. Council of Europe, NDI, IRI, key Embassies, relevant NGOs, key think tanks and individual experts).

In order to assess the progress made by Programme, the evaluation team also plans to interview UNDP Country Office senior staff, the Technical Specialist and Senior Component Manager, the project manager and project staff. Evaluation questions will be tailored to the different institutions, their mandate and their role in the project and/or sector. Particular attention will be given to the management challenges, time/political constraints, causes for delays in recruitments and procurement, the possible remedial actions that were undertaken, and the structural questions on partnerships and management structures emerging from these management challenges. Lessons learned from the management of other UNDP parliamentary support projects will be considered as additional references.

The evaluation team will be composed of two persons: an international team leader and a national expert. UNDP Moldova has recruited these experts directly. Both team members have substantial experience with democratic governance and/or electoral assistance programs. The team will work in a collegial manner with the team leader responsible for the overall direction of the team and allocation of evaluation tasks. The team leader will be responsible for the delivery of the main deliverables (Inception Report, Preliminary Findings, Draft and Final Reports) and will report to UNDP Moldova. The national expert will provide input and contribute to the drafting of these deliverables.

The workload for the evaluation will be divided up among the team members based on their professional expertise and experience with the different output areas of the Programme and their individual contractual terms of reference with UNDP. This will ensure that at least one of the team members has a good understanding of the Programme's assistance for each of the main output areas under review and is able to contribute to the writing and justifications for that section in the report. These allocations will be made in country after the team has had a chance to meet in person and discuss the work.

2.3 Measuring results

The evaluation team will use its professional judgment to assess the information collected and to answer the evaluation questions. Results will be measured in terms of the expected results outlined in the Project Documents and available Results and Resources Frameworks, as well as by the participants' perceptions of the project and the team's assessment of the results found. Attribution of results directly to the Programme may not be possible in some cases due to the time available for the evaluation, and the amount of work that has been done in the sector before this Programme, or by other organizations that are likely to have contributed to the same outcomes. However, where a direct correlation seems evident, this will be noted in the Evaluation Report. It is also likely to be difficult to assess cost-effectiveness of specific interventions or value for money within the timeframe.

2.4 Data sources and processing

The evaluation will use both primary and secondary data and a variety of data collection methods to gather the information needed to conduct the work. This is expected to include: desk review and analysis of the Programme and secondary data; in person interviews in Chisinau; and Skype and/or e-mail interviews for any key actors who may be in other locations. The team will review available documents before, during and after the field work as needed. It will spend time in country as a team to discuss findings and to review the data collected from the field.

The desk work portions of the evaluation will be done individually by the evaluation team members, but the content will be discussed by the team during the field work and in preparation for the development of the Preliminary Findings and debrief for UNDP and its partners. The team's in-country work is expected to be done during regular UNDP working hours except for the weekend which the team will use to continue its review of documents, discussions and analysis.

The persons interviewed will be the main Programme partners, staff and beneficiaries. Statistical data, public opinion surveys and analytical reports will be used where available to gain supplemental information on electoral and political attitudes, practices and knowledge.

The team will review the most pertinent documents related to the electoral and legislative processes in Moldova, which is expected to include the observer reports from recent elections; political analyses; public opinion polling data on electoral and legislative processes and civic participation; Government development plan, UNDP Country Programme Action Plan, and available project evaluation and progress reports. The data collected through interviews, observation and review of documents will be processed in team discussions, and the main findings extrapolated and listed against the intended outcome areas of the project. The team will synthesize those findings into the main points that will be discussed in the Evaluation Report. The evaluation team will maintain an impartial and professional view towards developing its findings, and will base them on the evidence found and against the anticipated outcomes according to the Programme Document. The team will arrive at its findings through consensus. If no consensus can be reached on a particular issue, this will be noted in the Evaluation Report.

The evaluation team will treat all information gathered as confidential and the Evaluation Report will not identify individual responses unless it has consent from that individual to use the information publically. The Evaluation Report will follow UNDP's standards for independent evaluation reporting.

2.5 Validation meeting

The evaluation team suggests a validation meeting with a selected number of key stakeholders of the Programme. The meeting could be held towards the end of the first mission to Chisinau. The objective of the meeting is to obtain comments and opinions on the main findings of the first mission in order to validate the key findings and initial recommendations.

3. Programme of Work

3.1 Phases and calendar of work

Time Frame	Tasks
Phase 1: Design, Plan and Develop Inception Report: 12 - 19 December 2016	
12 - 15 December	▪ Desk review of relevant program documents provided by UNDP
16 December	▪ Submission of draft Inception Report
19 December	▪ Submission of final Inception Report (following UNDP comments)
Phase 2: Data Collection and Analysis : 6 - 16 February 2017	
6 - 16 February	▪ Conduct in-country consultations
Throughout	▪ Evaluation team discussions to assess findings
15 February	▪ Develop Preliminary Findings
16 February	▪ Debriefing on preliminary findings, main recommendations
Phase 3: Report Writing: 20 February - 5 March 2017	
20 February - 5 March	▪ Draft report
6 March	▪ Submit draft report to UNDP
o/a 8 March	▪ Receive UNDP feedback and incorporate feedback into report
Phase 4: Presentation 14 - 15 March 2017	
14 - 15 March	▪ Final Report submitted and presented in Programme Board meeting

3.2. Evaluation deliverables

The main outputs of the DEP Terminal Evaluation are:

- This Inception Report which describes the overall approach to the evaluation, including methodology, work plan and proposed structure of the Evaluation Report. The Inception Report will be submitted electronically.
- Preliminary Findings to be presented during a debriefing meeting at the end of the field work. The overview of preliminary findings will be submitted electronically.
- Draft Evaluation Report of not more than 35 pages excluding annexes that present the Evaluation's main findings on the Programme, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations. This report will follow UNDP's standard guidelines for independent evaluation reports. It will include a stand-alone Executive Summary of not more than 5 pages. A draft table of contents is provided in Annex 1 to this Inception Report. This draft Evaluation Report will be submitted electronically.
- Final Evaluation Report of not more than 35 pages, excluding annexes. The final report will be submitted electronically and presented at a Programme Board meeting.

Annex 5: Terms of reference

United Nations Development Programme



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Terms of Reference

Final Evaluation of the Improving the Quality of Moldovan Democracy Programme

1. BACKGROUND

The UNDP Programme “Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support” (further referred as the “Programme”) aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Parliament and the Central Electoral Commission (further referred as the CEC), improving their main functions and entrenching gender and human rights considerations in formal political process.

In particular, the Programme/Parliament Component, is improving the legislative, oversight and representation functions of the Parliament, providing a solid basis for the improvement of the electoral process and supporting, when necessary, an inclusive process of constitutional reform. The Programme’s Component assists the Parliament to increase the participation of the civil society and citizens in policy making and oversight processes. It also builds the capacities of the Members of the Parliament in budget understanding, development and monitoring of its implementation.

At the Central Electoral Commission, the Programme/Electoral Component, supports the strategic development of the Central Electoral Commission of Moldova with the aim to strengthen the capacity of electoral administration to deliver professional, transparent and efficient electoral processes. Overarching goal of the Programme’s Component is to improve the democracy in Moldova through modernization of the electoral processes. This objective is to be reached through support in development of the national electoral strategic and legal framework conducive to organization of the elections using official data and modern IT tools.

The Programme implementation period is four years (2012–2016), with an extension of the Electoral Component until March, 2017. Financial support for the implementation of the Programme is provided by the Government of Sweden and Norway.

With the overall aim to ensure effective and timely external evaluation of the Programme, UNDP plans to hire an evaluation team (one international and one local individual consultants). The team will bear full responsibility for providing adequate evaluation of the Programme in efficient and timely manner.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of the end-of-programme evaluation is to assess programmatic progress (and challenges) at the outcome level, with measurement of the achievement (and non-achievement) of Programme outputs, including identification of factors that affected the implementation.

The specific evaluation objectives (please see details under key questions) are:

- To assess *the relevance* of the Programme in regard to consistency, ownership and congruency, technical adequacy, and complementarity of programme with other initiatives;
- To determine *the effectiveness* of the Programme in achievement of results, highlighting reasons for achievement and non-achievement of results and factors contributing/hindering achievement of the results;
- To assess *the sustainability* of the Programme including the participation of partners in planning and implementation of interventions, as well as assessing the measures taken to ensure that activities initiated by the Programme will be completed and continued on cessation of donor support;
- To assess the contribution of the Programme in achieving gender equality;
- To provide the best practices/recommendations that may be used in the future programming. The evaluation including its recommendations will be used as a resource by UNDP as knowledge base on good practices and to inform future programming and direction.

The end-of-programme evaluation will be carried out by an independent, external evaluation team comprising of an international consultant and a national consultant who will be responsible for delivery of the following outputs, comprising the main milestones:

Inception phase

- Draft Inception Report, including evaluation question matrix, proposed methodology, and work plan (with agreed upon deliverables and timeframe);
- Provide a Final Inception Report with finalized methodology, questions, and work plan.

Research & Data Collection

- In-depth document review as well as interviews with UNDP staff, donors, and other organizations.
- Conduct side project visits, including focus group discussions with key stakeholders/beneficiaries;
- Evaluate the risk mitigation and adaptation measures of the Programme;
- Identify and analyze the challenges and constraints which confronted the Programme during its implementation and draw lessons learned;
- Analyze short and long term effects, with special reference to the parliamentary and electoral reforms implications. If the results other than the planned one have been reached, whether they are positive and/or negative, these should also be described and analyzed;
- Evaluate the efficiency of the Programme implementation;
- Conduct an assessment of management decisions vis-à-vis the cost effectiveness and to which extend the Programme outputs have been effectively achieved;
- Assess the sustainability of results with specific focus on national capacity and ownership of the process;
- Evaluate the overall impact of the Programme and its contribution to the development of the Parliament and Central Electoral Commission;

Report Writing Phase

- Develop and present a comprehensive Evaluation Report with concrete conclusions and recommendations;

- Convene a meeting for debrief by evaluation team on preliminary findings, main recommendations, challenges, opportunities, lessons learned;
- Evaluation Team submits first draft Evaluation Report. The Final Evaluation Report should to the highest extent possible provide responses to the following questions, but not limited to:
 - Principal approaches and strategies that were employed in the Programme to meet the objectives of parliamentary and electoral reforms;
 - What progress toward the outcomes has been made?
 - What factors have been contributed to achieving or not achieving intended outputs and outcomes? (Coherence of the Programme, adequate human and financial resources allocated, capacity of the team, implementation challenges, etc.)
 - What was the added value of having a joint Programme Parliament – Elections?
 - To what extent UNDP outputs and assistance contributed to outcomes?
 - What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
- Undertake 2 missions to Chisinau, according to the tentative schedule:
 1. 6 – 17 February, 2017
 2. 21 – 23 March, 2017

The international consultant is expected to provide leadership in the execution of this assignment, according to the above responsibilities.

Methods

The working methods should include a wide range of data sources (including documents, field information, institutional information systems, financial records, beneficiaries, staff, funders, experts, government officials and community groups). The evaluation team is encouraged to use the following data collection tools:

- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Secondary document analysis
- Observation
- Multimedia (photography, drawing)
- Others

The consultants are particularly encouraged to use participatory methods to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted as part of the evaluation process. They should take measures to ensure data quality, reliability and validity of data collection tools and methods and their responsiveness to gender equality and human rights.

The evaluation team is expected to analyze all relevant information sources, such as annual progress reports, Programme documents, internal review reports, Programme files, strategic country development documents and any other related documents that may provide evidence on which to form opinions. The team is also expected to use face to face interviews as a means to collect relevant data for the evaluation report.

Evaluations in UNDP are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG) "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation" and the [UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results](#) . The evaluation team will take every measure to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of key information providers in the collection of data.

3. KEY DELIVERABLES AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE^{*}

Task/deliverable for international consultant	Tentative Timeframe
1. Inception Phase up to 5 working days	2 weeks (post contract signing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Inception Report, including revised evaluation question matrix, proposed methodology, and work plan (with agreed upon deliverables and timeframe) submitted • Final Inception Report with finalized methodology, questions, and work plan submitted 	
2. Research & Data Collection Phase up to 15 days	3-4 weeks (post Inception Report submission)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth document reviewed as well as interviews with UNDP staff, donors and other organizations conducted; • Side project visits, including focus group discussions with key stakeholders and beneficiaries conducted; • Summary key findings presented. 	
3. Report Writing Phase up to 15 days	4 weeks (post final data collection)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A debriefing meeting on preliminary findings, main recommendations, challenges, opportunities, lessons learned conducted; • First draft Evaluation Report submitted; 	By 3 March, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Evaluation Report (refer to Annex 1 for proposed format) developed and presented during the Programme Board meeting. 	By 29 March, 2017

*) This is a tentative timeframe, while the final dates for providing the deliverables will be confirmed after the consultations with the Parliament and CEC.

The timeframe for the work is tentatively planned through December, 2016 to March, 2017.

4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

According to the Programme Document, the Programme Board has the overall responsibility for the management, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme implementation. Thus, the draft evaluation report, main findings and recommendations will be presented during the Programme Board meeting in March, 2017.

On operational level, the consultants will work under the guidance of UNDP, Parliament and CEC coordinating authority for substantive aspects of the assignment, and under the direct supervision of the Programme Manager for administrative and financial aspects.

All deliverables must be submitted in English language electronic and hard copy and must be agreed with the Programme, Parliament and CEC.

5. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

I. Academic Qualifications:

- Master degree in Law, Public Administration, International development and related fields; Bachelor and at least 8 years of relevant experience will be also acceptable;

II. Years of experience:

- At least 7 years of relevant working experience in the field of democratic governance, public administration, development, including participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation;
- At least 5 years of practical experience in conducting evaluations of strategies, policies and programmes;
- Previous regional work experience in the evaluation of the assistance projects in the area of democratic Governance with a focus on Parliament and elections in Central and Eastern Europe or CIS, is a strong advantage;

- Previous experience in gender-sensitive evaluations is an advantage;
- Experience in working with UN agencies is a strong advantage;

III. Competencies:

- Demonstrated interpersonal and diplomatic skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders and to present ideas clearly and effectively;
- Excellent research and analytical skills;
- Facilitation and management skills;
- Leadership skills and ability to be a team player;
- Demonstrated strong knowledge about results-based management (especially results-oriented monitoring and evaluation);
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the Moldovan political/governance systems with a focus on Parliament and elections;
- Proven proficiency in English. Knowledge of Romanian and/or Russian is an asset.

Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations, in particular, respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status.

UNDP Moldova is committed to workforce diversity. Women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, as well as refugees and other non-citizens legally entitled to work in the Republic of Moldova, are particularly encouraged to apply.