

EVALUATION OF UNDP OUTCOME IN MOLDOVA

OF

CAPACITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS
OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE ACTORS
DEVELOPED IN URBAN/RURAL AREAS
FOR TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
POLICY FORMULATION, SERVICE DELIVERY
AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

PROJECTS ADDRESSED:

LOCAL AGENDA 21
MESMERIZING MOLDOVA
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN
INFORMATION AND LEARNING NETWORK

ALEXANDRU MURAVSCHI
ERIK WHIST

CHISINAU AND OSLO, DECEMBER 2005

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1.	Background and purpose of the evaluation.....	3
1.2.	Methodology for the evaluation	4
2.	CURRENT SITUATION IN MOLDOVA REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNANCE	5
2.1.	Challenges to local governance.....	5
2.2.	Government policies of relevance to local governance	7
2.3.	DIFFERENT DONORS' ONGOING AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF IMPROVED LOCAL GOVERNANCE.....	9
2.4.	UNDP in Moldova and local governance	13
3.	PRESENTATION AND OBSERVATIONS OF PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION	14
3.1.	Introduction and overview	14
3.2.	Local Agenda 21 (LA 21)	15
3.3.	Mesmerizing Moldova (MM).....	18
3.4.	Sustainable Tourism Development (STD).....	20
3.5.	Better Opportunities for Youth and Women (BOYW).....	21
3.6.	Information and Learning Network (ILN).....	24
4.	ANALYSIS OF OUTCOME.....	25
4.1.	Introduction	25
4.2.	Outcome status	25
4.2.1.	The extent to which outcome has been achieved.....	25
4.2.2.	Innovative approaches and capacities developed through UNDP assistance	26
4.2.3.	Relevance of UNDP outputs to the outcome.....	27
4.2.4.	Progress of outputs and factors that have affected the accomplishment of these	29
4.2.5.	Underlying factors	30
4.2.6.	UNDP contribution	31
4.3.	Outputs status	34
4.4.	Output-outcome link	35
4.5.	Partnership strategy	36
4.6.	Sustainability of UNDP interventions related to the outcome	38
4.7.	Conclusions and key findings	39
4.7.1.	Relevance of the UNDP projects.....	39
4.7.2.	Efficiency of projects with the view to outputs and outcome.	39
4.7.3.	Effectiveness of projects with the view of outcome.....	40
4.7.4.	Capacity development.....	40
4.7.5.	Past results and future perspectives.	41
5.	PERSPECTIVES FOR FUTURE UNDP COOPERATION IN SUPPORT TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE	41
5.1.	Framework for support to local governance	41
5.2.	Recommendations for UNDP cooperation to strengthen local governance in Moldova	42
5.2.1.	Lessons for future interventions in the sector;.....	42
5.2.2.	Outline main areas of focus for next stage UNDP projects in support of local governance	44
5.2.3.	Propose improvement of the coordination between donor-supported interventions in meeting national requirements;.....	46
Enclosure:	1 Terms of Reference	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and purpose of the evaluation

This is an independent outcome evaluation, which is part of the evaluation plan for the Second Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) in Moldova. The Terms of Reference follows as enclosure 1, which presents the purpose of the evaluation to be:

to learn from the experience of UNDP-funded activities in Moldova in the area of local development, including participatory planning for development, economic initiatives, social development initiatives, in order to: clarify underlying factors affecting the situation, highlight unintended consequences (positive and negative) and better design UNDP-supported interventions at the next stage. The Country Office is determined to make use of the exercise as a learning opportunity not only for its staff but also for key partners and stakeholders, as inclusively as practically possible.

This is an outcome evaluation. The outcome to be evaluated, which is stated in the Second Country Cooperation Framework (2002 – 2006) is:

“Capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”.

The evaluation analyses how five projects are contributing to this outcome. The projects are:

- Local Agenda 21
- Information and Learning Network
- Sustainable Tourism Development
- Mesmerizing Moldova
- Better Opportunities for Youth and Women

The projects are presented in chapter 3.

These five projects constitute the UNDP Local Development Programme, whose main purpose is to capture results achieved under the projects working at local level, with communities and for the communities, extract best practices and disseminate the accumulated knowledge to a wider community of actors and potential partners with the purpose to increase the impact of activities planned for local and regional development towards localizing the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (EGPRS), EU-Moldova Action Plan, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The Local Development Programme treats development of communities as an integrated process, and identifies the following key dimensions of this process:

- a) Participatory planning for sustainable development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of best practices

- b) Economic development
- c) Social development

The purpose of this outcome evaluation is not to evaluate the five projects, but to analyse how each of these individually and together contribute to the achievement of the stated outcome. The five projects are presented in chapter 3.

1.2. Methodology for the evaluation

The outcome statement is compound and consists of several elements as shown in table 1.1. As may be observed, we are talking about two main things to be developed: Capacities and Partnerships, both for three types of activities: Transparent and accountable policy formulation, Service delivery and Resource management.

Table 1.1. Outcome structure and elements

Capacities of local governance actors developed for:			Partnerships of local governance actors developed for:		
Transparent and Accountable policy formulation	Service delivery	Resource management	Transparent and Accountable policy formulation	Service delivery	Resource management

The term “local governance actors” is quite open. We define this to include both local government and civil society at large, including private business. The outcome limits the local governance actors to those operating in urban and rural areas, which means that local governance actors at central or national levels are not included in the outcome.

It should be noted that the UNDP Local Development Programme was not designed as a coherent programme. Three of the projects were designed and launched in 2000 and two projects were launched in 2004 and one is not a part of the UNDP Moldova country Programme. However, from a methodological point of view the Local Agenda 21 project constitutes the pillar of the Programme. The LA 21 participatory approach based on partnerships has been instrumental in the design and development of the other projects. But of course, each of the projects represents special characteristics and approaches as well. Mesmerizing Moldova is the urban planning component, Sustainable Tourism is the component focusing most heavily on local economic development and Better Opportunities for Youth and Women is the project which specifically targets support to especially vulnerable groups.

Thus every project was not designed to address all the elements of the outcome, but together they should all be directed to achieving the outcome as a whole. This is what the evaluation attempts to do by looking at how each of the projects contribute to the different elements of the outcome.

The Terms of Reference presents the approach for data collection to be applied and which has consisted of:

- Review of project documents, which has included project documents, annual reports for 2004 and other information material
- Interviews of project staff in Chisinau and selected sites
- Field visits in Chisinau and to Cahul, Ungheni, Orhei and Tribujeni
- Interviews of partners in Chisinau, Cahul, Ungheni, Orhei and Tribujeni
- Interviews of beneficiaries in Chisinau, Cahul, Ungheni, Orhei and Tribujeni
- Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations at the UNDP Local Development and Civil Society Program Annual Review meeting

Report drafts including conclusions and recommendations have been submitted to UNDP office in Moldova for comments and checking of factual errors. This notwithstanding, the Evaluation Team has the full responsibility for the content of this report.

2. CURRENT SITUATION IN MOLDOVA REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNANCE

2.1. Challenges to local governance

The Republic of Moldova continues a transition process towards a market economy and democracy and is still facing a series of significant development issues and difficulties both at the central and local levels. These difficulties are high inflation, high level of unemployment and migration, weak governance, high level of corruption, low level of decentralization and local autonomy etc. In addition, serious environmental degradation and pollution problems were left due to ineffective sectoral policies. Thus, there is strong necessity to promote sustainable development principles at all levels in order to achieve a sustainable economic growth, leading to a social relief for the present and future generations. Local public administrations and other stakeholders of local governance will have to play very important role in this process.

The territory of the Republic of Moldova under the administrative aspect is organized in administrative-territorial units which are: raions, municipalities, villages and communities. At this moment the territory of the RM is divided into 32 administrative-territorial units of the level II (raions). The municipality Kishinev, administrative-territorial autonomy with the special status “Gagauz-Yery” and localities from the left bank of Dnestr River (Transnistria) also belong to level II. (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Administrative-territorial structure of the Republic of Moldova.

	Units
Localities, total:	1679
from which: localities Transnistria	146
Administrative-territorial units of the level I, total:	982
from which:	
- municipalities	5
- cities	60
- villages (communities)	917
Administrative-territorial units without localities from Transnistria:	903
from which:	
- municipalities	4
- cities	51
- villages (communities)	848
Administrative-territorial units of the level II	35

According to legislation the locality can be recognized as administrative-territorial unit and has right to form its own local administration if:

- it has population not less than 1500 inhabitants;
- it has sufficiently financial resources to keep administrative staff (primaria) and social institutions.

In reality all local authorities have few of their own economic resources and limited capacity to be able to consolidate the community and give its development a purpose and a vision. Transfers from the central budget represent the main part of local budgets. The social development at local level lags behind, and the reform of health, education and social services is not finalized yet, to allow for a flexible decentralized system where community could have a stake in running the services it needs. The existing employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns are limited and usually offer low salaries. All these factors fuel people's desire to leave community in search of better opportunities inclusive and migration from the country, in spite of high risk associated.

At the same time local public administration (LPA) does not know well the sustainable development principles. Population is very passive in resolving community problems. The NGO sector in rural area and small towns is situated only on the first stage of formation and includes very small part of population. Citizens' participation in the policy formulation and programs implementation process in majority localities of Moldova is weak. Policy formulation process on the local level has not enough transparency and accountability. LPA has no good capacity for good service delivery for population and also does not pay enough attention to resource management. Thus at this moment we cannot speak about existing good local governance in Moldova as a system of cooperation between LPA and different representatives of civil society. LPA remains to be exclusively the active actor in local governance with some small exceptions.

At the same time the actual reforms of LPA provide conditions for continuing the decentralization process. The rights and responsibilities of LPA are stipulated in laws regarding the drafting and approval of local budgets, the management of local public finance, guarantees of local autonomy, membership and powers of local councils and public administration authorities.

But there are multiple serious problems that need to be addressed over the medium term:

- a lack of clear separation of functions and responsibilities between central government and LPA;
- the insufficient professional level of local administration personnel;
- imperfection of training and retraining system for managers and local administration bodies' employees;
- the insufficient level of local NGOs sector development;
- low level of the population participation in the process of policy formulation and programs implementation.

Thus, the challenges to local governance are:

- strengthening the institutional framework and incorporating sustainable development principles into the local policy;
- building capacities for transparency and accountable policy formulation;
- building capacities for good service delivery;
- integration of social and environmental issues into economic development strategies;
- building capacities to implement local actions plans based upon community participation and local partnerships.

2.2. Government policies of relevance to local governance

The Government of Moldova has not yet put in place a coherent policy to address existing economic and social problems and, in a longer perspective, to enable communities to contribute to solve these problems in a sustainable decentralized framework. Sector-specific governmental strategies and action plans, often supported by donor-funded initiatives, are underway, both at central as well as the local level: the social protection reform, health system reform, education reform etc. The lack of coordination among different sectors and the lack of an environment enabling change are among main obstacles to a more dynamic development.

That is why strengthening the legal and institutional framework for local governance development; real decentralization and development of participatory processes became the most important parts of all strategies and programmes approved by the Parliament and Government of Moldova. They are:

- Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EGPRS);
- National Programme “Moldovan Village”;
- Action Plan “Republic of Moldova – EU”.

According to the EGRPRS approved by the Parliament of the RM in December 2004 at the level of local public administration bodies, continuing the decentralization process will involve the establishment of efficient self-government institutions and

mechanisms, which will be responsive, transparent and accessible for the public. In promoting the decentralization policy the following priorities will be taken into consideration:

- improvement of legislation for local autonomy and self-government;
- clear delimitation of functions and responsibilities between central government and LPA;
- increase of the fiscal and economic independence of LPA bodies;
- increase of the efficiency of the activity of LPA bodies.

The interaction between the public administration and society will be improved. Civil society, NGOs, independent media and population at large will be able to participate on the all stages of policy formulation and programmes implementation. There will be better transparency about public spending in general and for the social protection of population in particular. Permanent consultation groups have to be established to include representatives of LPA, NGOs, public and non-commercial organizations with the aim of summarizing and disseminating best practice in social partnership, local self-government and self-organization of the population in the territories.

Taking into account the fact that majority of Moldovan peoples live in the rural area the Government of Moldova has elaborated the National Programme “Moldovan Village”. The main objectives of this program are:

- assurance of sustainable economic and social development in the rural area of the country;
- poverty reduction in the rural area;
- building capacities of the LPA in the rural area in good service delivery;
- assurance of good resource management and environment protection.

National programme “Moldovan Village” is based on the statement that only an active participation of all local governance stakeholders will lead to the successful implementation of the programme.

The same principles and priorities are included in the Action Plan “Republic of Moldova – EU”. The plan in this field is targeted to the continuation of administrative reform and strengthening of local self-government in line with European standards, notably those contained in European Chapter on Local self government and drawing in particular on the expertise and recommendations of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe, including management of local budgets by LPA and attribution of budgetary competence.

The Government of the RM has included in the programme of its activity for 2005-2009 “Modernization of country – welfare of people” the special chapter “Public sector reform”. The main purpose of this reform is to establish modern system of public administration oriented to the consolidation of the democracy and market economy. The government programme is targeted on the strengthening of the LPA, development of the decentralization process and more active implication civil society, NGOs sector, business community and population as a whole in the transparent policy formulation and programme implementation at all level, but especially at the local one. The first important step in this direction was already done. Government started the process of the legislation revising in order to exclude obstacles on the way of creating and activity economic units, NGOs, people associations etc. The elaboration

of the EGPRS and National Programme “Moldovan village” were organized on the citizens participatory principles. The President of the Republic of Moldova once more stressed the necessity of real decentralization and improvement of local governance in his speech on the seminar “Local public administration – current situation and perspectives”, organized by the Association of the rayons’ presidents and Association of the primars in November 2005.

Thus we can conclude that all steps taken by the central government in the direction of decentralization and strengthening local governments are very relevant for the LPA and all others local stakeholders.

At the same time the Evaluation Team considers that some serious actions have to be taken in order to achieve good results. The interaction between the public administration and society has to be improved. Civil society, NGOs, independent media and population at large have to be directly involved in the policy formulation and programmes implementation process. More transparency is needed about public spending in general and for the social protection of population in particular. Permanent consultation groups have to be established to include representatives of LPA, NGOs, public and non-commercial organizations with the aim of summarizing and disseminating best practice in social partnership, local self-government and self-organization of the population in the territories.

2.3. Different donors’ ongoing and planned activities in support of improved local goverance

Improving local governance is one of the important conditions for successful realization of the EGPRS and future sustainable development of the country. That is why different donors have in their plans of activity a lot of projects directed to the support of public administration reform, building capacities of local governance in transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management.

The World Bank (WB). The WB develops and finances projects at the request of the Government of Moldova. An appraisal of the project’s feasibility and loan terms is followed by negotiations, WB Board approval and signing. The loan becomes effective after it has been ratified by the Moldovan parliament.

Since the 1993, the WB has financed 23 operations in Moldova for a total commitment of US\$592.01 million. The main project of WB directed to the support of local governance is the Social Investment Fund Project (SIF). The purpose of SIF is to develop social infrastructure in rural area and thus to improve the living conditions of population. The development of participatory processes is an important component of SIF. SIF considers that this is the crucial factor in the community development. This leads to involvement of a significant number of persons, which participate in the policy formulation at the community level and contribute to the implementation of projects. According information from the SIF report 590 000 citizens participated in decision-making, conducted at general community meetings. 22.5% of beneficiaries became members of Community Users or Beneficiary

Associations. UNDP LA21 project and SIF have signed the agreement of collaboration for social service development in the rural areas.

The local governance development is very important part of the new Country Assistance Strategy for Moldova for 2005-2008. Along with the continuation of support SIF activity the WB will place emphasis on improving transparency and accountability in the management of public funds, expenditure programming and evaluation practices at the central and local level. It will support greater involvement of civil society in exercising accountability over public action and the delivery of public services, focusing attention in particular on community-driven development and stronger local government ownership and leadership.

Planned new lending over period 2005-2008 will total US\$90 million for the base case, and will consist of selected interventions to improve the quality of the access to social services and community infrastructure, foster a good investment climate, and address public sector governance issues.

UNICEF. UNICEF is the driving force that helps build a world where the rights of every child are realized. UNICEF has the global authority to influence decision makers, and the variety of partners at grassroots level to turn the most innovative ideas into reality. UNICEF works very closely with the central and local governments, NGOs, parents' and children's associations etc. UNICEF and its partners in Moldova have trained hundreds of health care workers in immunization, child health and prevention of mother-to-child transmission of infectious diseases. Parents have also been educated in how to monitor risks associated with the pregnancy and early childhood development. Due the UNICEF intervention a network of youth health centers and clinics has improved young people's access to information, advice and services relating to HIV/AIDS. The government of Moldova has adopted a UNICEF-endorsed Education for All strategy, which will increase access to quality primary and secondary schools. UNICEF is an important partner of the UNDP project "Better opportunities for youth and women".

UNESCO. According the Constitution of UNESCO "each state, member of UNESCO, undertakes the concrete measures that are adequate to its own conditions, regarding the cooptation of their central national organisms from the areas of education, science and culture for the achievement of the UNESCO's objectives, preferable setting up a National Commission".

The National Commission for UNESCO for Republic of Moldova was founded in 1993, immediately after the adhesion of Moldova to UNESCO.

The National Commission for UNESCO for the Republic of Moldova is by posture a promoter of the UNESCO values. It has a consultative role for the Moldovan government about national initiatives, which are rallied to the UNESCO objectives and in the achievements its activities and uses the possibilities of the governmental at promotion of the ideas of this international organization.

One of the priorities of the National Commission strategy for Moldova is to help central and local governance in the resolving problems of environment, ecology, developing rural tourism, as well as the capitalization and protection of the national

patrimony in all its material and immaterial forms. At this time National Commission collaborate with the UNDP Sustainable Tourism Development Project in order to support to include the National museum “Orhei Vechi” (v.Trebujeni, r.Orhei) in order to be included as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID). USAID is by far the largest grant donor to Moldova, with some US\$30 million per year, and contributes to the local governance improvement in Moldova. There are two projects directly oriented to the building and improving capacities of local governance and financed by USAID.

Local Government Reform Project (2000-2007) (LGRP) has three main tasks to: help establish legislation empowering local government and implementing regulations that clarify and decentralize authority to the local level; build the capacity of municipal officials to implement legislative, administrative and financial reforms through training in management of municipal services, assets, and strategic planning; and strengthen the capacity of indigenous NGOs and Mayors’ associations advocating local government reform while increasing public participation in the reform process.

The Moldova Citizen Participation Program (2004-2009) (CPP) is a training, mentoring and grant giving program which works with the citizens and citizen groups to use democratic processes to create visible and positive change in the local communities. CPP’s goal is to improve living and social conditions, where also demonstrating to citizens that they have the human potential to imagine and implement projects that make a real difference in their community. With USAID funding CPP will support a total of approximately 300 projects that will serve citizens outside of urban Chisinau. Preference in funding will be given to projects that:

- create partnerships between citizens, business, media, local government and non-profit organizations;
- promote collaboration within community and between neighboring communities;
- include underserved groups (such as youth, women, pensioners, minorities);
- provide opportunities for mentoring and/or replication

Beside these projects USAID is the single donor financing the project “Better opportunities for youth and women”.

TACIS. The TACIS Program is a European Union initiative for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, which fosters the development of harmonious economic and political links between the European Union and these partner countries.

The TACIS Program committed more than €100 million for Moldova over the 1991-2005 period, including national, regional and cross-border cooperation.

The ongoing TACIS Program involves an overall amount of €25 million. It provides for measures focusing on:

- institutional, legal and administrative reform, including civil society development and local governance strengthening;
- private sector development and economic development (in particular small enterprises development in rural and urban areas);

- alleviation of the social consequences of transition.

There is a new TACIS is a project which will start in December 2005 and which will be oriented to the regional development and strengthening capacities of the LPA. The project has to help Government to elaborate Strategy of Regional Development, create legal and institutional framework, to build capacities of the central and local authorities in the regional planning.

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID). DFID implements the projects of assistance for Moldova, beginning from the early 90's and now it is acting through UK Embassy section. The DFID priorities are social protection and rural development and it works in conjunction with the WB and other international organizations. The DFID co-finances the activity of the Social Investment Fund of Moldova

DFID is also developing opportunities for joint programmes with other development partners in Moldova, providing on average £3.9 million annually to the European Commission (EC), United Nation (UN), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). The DFID activities cover"

- support for the implementation of harmonized approach to the EGPRS;
- improving statistical analyses;
- improving public financial management;
- supporting the Peace Building Framework project (PBF) through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool Strategy (GCPP).

DFID is also actively engaged in dialogue between Moldova and EU over the formulation of new aid and development instruments, which could provide substantial assistance to Moldova including assistance in improving of the local governance capacities.

The Swedish Agency for International development (SIDA). SIDA is a government agency under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. SIDA's goal is to contribute to making it possible for poor people to improve their living conditions. As DFID, SIDA also co-finances activity of Social Investment Fund of Moldova.

SIDA also supports the process of social sector reform. An ambition has been to promote cooperation between authorities and ministries for the care of children. SIDA support is directed both towards activities on the local and reforms on a national level.

Swedish development cooperation with Moldova also comprises projects concerning infrastructure and the environment. Concerning the environment, focus lies on the heating problem, but SIDA also supports a project to increase public interest in environmental issues.

International Organization for Migration (IOM). As a leading international organization for migration, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to:

- assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management;

- advance understanding of migration issues;
- encourage social and economic development through migration;
- uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

The IOM Mission in Moldova helps the government and civil society and sets out the following strategic objectives:

- providing technical cooperation and capacity building in migration related areas to the Government;
- assisting in voluntary return for irregular migrants and implementing programs oriented for reintegration of returned labor migrants;
- implementing programs facilitating combating trafficking in human beings return and reintegration of trafficked women and children; development of the rehabilitation centers for victims of trafficking.

In this context IOM can become an important partner for UNDP project “Better opportunities for Youth and Women”. IMO can provide training and consulting services for the specialists of the rehabilitation centers created by the BOYW Project. IMO also can cover some cost of the centers for the rehabilitation of victims of trafficking.

Soros Foundation - Moldova (SFM). SFM is an organization founded in 1992 by George Soros. One of the purposes of the SFM is to promote the development of an open society in Moldova.

In 1997 SFM launched the Local Government Programme (LGP) in order to support and promote the democratization processes within the local public administration system. The Community social and economic development is one of the LGP’s sub-programmes. It has the goal to assist the LPA’s employees, economic agents and community NGOs in promoting the public-private partnership in the local economic development process of rural communities.

Now a 3-year Programme is implemented in 50 rural communities and consists of development and implementation of local development strategies and activity planning. Over 10 micro-projects of economic infrastructure will be financed during the last phase of the Programme, as well as 230 entrepreneurs will receive credits for business development. The sub-programme is implemented by CONTACT Center, a SFM spin-off. CONTACT Center is one of the principal partner of the LA21 project.

2.4. UNDP in Moldova and local governance

Active in Moldova since 1992 UNDP works tirelessly through its projects for the eradication of poverty and for sustainable development.

Based on its own expertise and that of a large network of partners – the Government, donors, the private sector and the civil society – UNDP provides support to the country to help identify the best development solutions both at national as well as local level. In the process, UNDP pays special attention to the reduction of poverty,

improvement of governance, advocating at the same time the protection of human rights and strengthening the role of women.

In September 2000, on the occasion of the Millennium Summit, the Republic of Moldova committed itself to achieve, together with the nations of the world, the Millennium Development Goals, one of which is to reduce poverty by 2015. As requested by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, UNDP ensures within the UN system the coordination of efforts directed at achieving the Goals and creating development partnerships.

Moldova's EGPRS was developed with the contribution of WB, UNDP and other development agencies and represents an eloquent example of such cooperation.

Successful implementation of the EGPRS and achievement of the Millennium Developments Goals will be possible only if all citizens of Moldova will be involved in this process. That is why UNDP pays special attention to building capacities of all local governance stakeholders. UNDP supports the process of democratization of the public administration through the citizens' participation process, creating partnerships between LPA, business community, NGOs and civil society as a whole. Since 2000 UNDP is implementing several projects in order to build and strengthen capacities of local governance in transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management. These projects are integrated under the Local Development Programme.

The main purpose of the UNDP Local Development Programme is to capture results achieved under the projects working at local level, within communities and for communities, extract best practices and disseminate the accumulated knowledge to a wider community of actors and potential partners.

The Local Development Programme treats development of communities as an integrated process, and identifies the following dimensions of this process:

- participatory planning for sustainable development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of best practices;
- economic development;
- social development.

These dimensions of local development are currently covered by development interventions through the "Local Agenda 21", "Sustainable Tourism Development", "Mesmerising Moldova", "Better Opportunities for Youth and Women" and "Informational and Learning Network". These projects are presented in chapter 3.

3. PRESENTATION AND OBSERVATIONS OF PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION

3.1. Introduction and overview

Table 3.1 gives a summary presentation of the five projects which constitute the UNDP Local Development Program and which are the object of this evaluation.

Table 3.1 Overview of projects

Name	Duration	Budget	Objectives, main outputs and areas of activities
Local Agenda 21 (LA 21)	2000 – 2006	1,032,396	Support local communities in preparation of Action Plans, training of NGOs and local authorities, creation of NGOs, support development initiatives
Mesmerizing Moldova (MM)	2000 - 2006	705,921	Support to urban planning and housing policies in Chisinau
Sustainable Tourism Development (STD)	2000 - 2006	977,339	Supported design of national tourism policy and regional and local tourism development
Better Opportunities for Youth and Women (BOYW)	2005 - 2007	2,000,000	Support centers for reintegration of vulnerable groups such as graduates from orphanages and victims of trafficking.
Information and Learning Network (ILN)	2005 -	49,120	Operate website for the dissemination of best practices of relevance to public, private and civic sectors of society

The “Information and Learning Network Project” is a sub regional project, covering Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine, and funded by the UNDP Regional Programme. The other projects have the central government institutions as key national partners for project implementation. The national partner for the “Sustainable Tourism Development Project” is the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, for the remaining projects is the Agency for Regional Development.

In the following sections main characteristics and achievements of the five projects are highlighted. As indicated in chapter 1, this is an evaluation of the UNDP outcome and not of the individual projects. The observations made for each of the projects are therefore not an evaluation of the projects as such but an assessment of how they relate to the UNDP outcome.

3.2. Local Agenda 21 (LA 21)

LA 21 started in 2000 and will finish by the end of 2006. The budget for the total period is USD 1,032,396.

The objective of the Project is to develop capacities and partnerships of local governance in urban and rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation. The Project supports local communities in different ways:

- The main instrument of the project is the preparation of LA 21 Strategic Action Plans for Sustainable Development. Such plans are prepared by three working groups – economic development, social development and resources management, with technical assistance provided by consultants. The working groups are composed of members from Local Government and Civil Society.

- Various capacity building and training events at local and regional levels targeted to a broad scope of LA 21 stakeholders
- Initiatives to establish local NGOs
- Small grants program, for which NGOs may apply
- Information and communication networks

The project has a Project Management Unit in Chisinau and works through local Coordination Units, who is supporting the different activities at local level. Usually they have a staff of three persons, paid by the Project, while the physical facilities, equipment etc are provided by the local authorities. In addition the project provides consulting services for the preparation of the LA 21 Action Plan through special consultants.

Main project outputs are:

- 19 LA 21 partner localities established (5 towns and 14 villages), which have or are preparing Strategic Action Plans for Sustainable Development, which are then approved by the councils.
- 10 Resource and Information Centers have been established
- In some localities Associations of NGOs for sustainable development have been established, where primarias also have become partners
- A large number of training events have taken place in areas such as Sustainable Integrated Planning, Building of Partnerships, Resource Mobilization, Good Governance, Local Economic Development, Small Business Development, Fundraising and Organizational Management, Micro-financing, NGOs role in Sustainable Development, and Summer schools for youth . The scope of training is widening and in response to local requests and ideas.
- A large range of local initiatives have been supported, such as:
 - establishment and support to NGOs, particularly in social sphere, human rights and environment
 - support to economic development, such as saving and credit associations, small business initiatives, preparation of projects submitted to other donors
- Some improvements on service delivery, such as
 - one window-one stop for different types of permits from local authorities
 - social services through NGOs
- Primarias have become much more open to the public and attitudes to NGOs have improved
- New small businesses have been established
- Information sharing and networks have been established
- In several cases LA 21 has been able to attract new extra donor funding to the community. This has brought about better services through NGOs, for instance to vulnerable groups.

Initially LA 21 gave priority to civil society and support to creation of NGOs etc. Eventually local authorities also became involved, particularly as members of working groups for the preparation of Action Plans for Sustainable Development, most of which have now been approved by the local councils. In most cases LA 21

works with the mayor's office (Primaria), but in some cases also with the District (Rayon) council. It seems to be quite clear that LA 21 support to civil society, the partnerships created with the local authorities and LA 21 are all factors which have contributed to local authorities becoming more open, transparent and even more accountable. In several cases council meetings have been made open to the public and agendas and decisions are now published on public boards or in newspapers or even on websites. Primarias have discovered that they may attract more money to the community by working through and with NGOs. This includes LA 21 small grants programs or funding from other donors.

LA 21 is now expanding its activities to smaller localities, supported by the nearby Coordinating Unit in the city. Primarias often support this expansion. There are now requests from 80 primarias who want to work with LA 21.

LA 21 is well appreciated by the Government. LA 21 provided its platform for local consultations in connection with the preparation of the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (EGPRSP). LA 21 also contributed to the National Programme "Moldovan Village". The Steering committee constitutes a channel for dissemination of LA 21 experiences and results to stakeholders and decision makers in different institutions and at different levels.

The term **partnership** is an essential concept for UNDP and through LA 21 a large range of partnerships in support of local governance has been developed.

The Evaluation Team visited and discussed LA 21 activities and achievements in Cahul, Ungheni, Orhei and Tribujeni. Based on these visits and the documents consulted, the Evaluation Team will make the following observations:

- LA 21 constitutes a very important basis for support to local governance stakeholders and their activities.
- Primars report that the Action Plans and the processes to prepare these have constituted important frameworks for local authorities
- In some cases there is some frustration on overly ambitious Actions Plans, which are not likely to be implemented because of lack of financial resources.
- In one locality there was frustration that LA 21 had not followed up as promised after the preparation of the Action Plan
- There is a scope for further strengthening LA 21 relations to local authorities, such as for instance linking Action Plans to local budgets
- There is a scope for more targeted training of local authorities – both counselors and staff of different administrative units
- There is a scope for establishing more partnerships between public enterprises (water, electricity, waste collection etc) and the public to improve service delivery
- There is scope to further strengthen support to the local business communities with a view to
 - how LA 21 may support business initiatives and development
 - how the business community may become more active in civic partnerships
- There is a scope to develop community foundations

- There is a scope to further strengthen development of local governance at central and national level. Areas to be explored include:
 - strengthened interaction with policy actors both in government and parliament
 - strengthened interaction with different associations of municipalities, cities etc
- The issue of sustainability of LA 21 activities, achievements and organization was not adequately addressed in any of the localities visited.
- There is a scope to further strengthen the development of local governance at central and national level. Areas to be explored include:
 - strengthened interaction of policy actors both in government and parliament
 - strengthened interaction with different associations of municipalities, cities etc

In summary, the Evaluation Team will make the following summary comments on how LA 21 contributes to the UNDP outcome **“Capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”**.

LA 21 works both in urban and rural areas. The project contributes to all the elements of the UNDP outcome, and most of all to transparent policy formulation, through the preparation of Action Plans for Sustainable Development. Although this also implies elements of accountability, mechanisms to ensure this are less present. The project is fully based on different ways to build partnerships with relevant stakeholders. The emphasis has been on NGOs, in the social sphere, but the scope for partnerships is widening with more emphasis on local authorities and business community. The project has to a lesser degree contributed to strengthening capacities of service delivery. This has almost exclusively been to NGOs in the social sphere and very little capacity building of local authorities and their different branches. Capacity building and partnerships for resource management are supported through the Action Plans for Sustainable Development where resource management is one of the areas for a specific working group and through the small grants projects, where environmental projects have received support.

3.3. Mesmerizing Moldova (MM)

The MM project started in 2000 and will finish by the end of 2006. The budget for the total period is USD 705,921. It is jointly financed by UNDP and the City of Chisinau, whose share has lately been increased to support the elaboration of the General Urban Plan of Chisinau..

The project has supported the City of Chisinau in the preparation of various city planning documents and instruments:

- General Urban Plan Concept is now presented at a public hearing. A company has been contracted to finalize the General Urban Plan to be approved by December 2006. This final plan will take into account the results from the public hearing, which includes a special survey. It will also incorporate other planning documents such as the socio-economic development strategy prepared outside the project.
- Methodological Guidelines for General Urban Plans together with a Trainers Manual for General Urban Plans were prepared as part of the General Urban Plan Concept. This has been widely disseminated.
- A Housing Strategy for Chisinau has been prepared and approved by the City Council. In the 2005 budget an allocation for construction of social houses for vulnerable groups is included. As part of this a Practical Guide on Housing for Chisinau Municipality was prepared, addressing construction technologies, rehabilitation, maintenance and creation of home owners associations.
- A handbook with the title “Urban Management and Governance” has been published and distributed to all cities and all other relevant institutions.
- Several workshops and training activities for professionals at the city hall and urban planning institutions have been undertaken. A magazine on urban planning is published and a website has been established. The book “Urban Partnerships in Chisinau: 100 success stories” is under preparation.
- Through the Small Grants Programme – Pilot Partnership Projects, 12 small urban projects have been supported, some which have also contributed to the creation of new jobs.
- The project is now involved in the creation of urban planning institutions such as a Self-sustainable Habitat Centre, National Coalition for Prosperous Cities for which a First National Urban Forum was conducted and the Association of Moldovan Cities.

The Evaluation Team carried out interviews with various stakeholders of the project and also visited the exhibition of the General Urban Plan Concept. Based on this the Team will make the following observations:

- The project is jointly financed by UNDP and the City, with an increasing share being paid by the latter.
- The project has contributed directly to general planning and development of housing policies for the city of Chisinau.
- Through the preparation of handbooks, magazines etc the project is contributing to improved urban planning skills in Moldova.
- The 12 Pilot Partnership Projects cover a relevant area of pilot efforts in support of urban development.
- The achievements of the project are sustainable in the sense that the inputs to policy documents for Chisinau feed into the policy formulation for different city plans. The methodological material prepared by the project has been widely disseminated and will most likely be used by professional working in different cities and institutions. Finally, if the institution building efforts undertaken by the project are successful, they will constitute a framework for sustaining and further developing project achievements.

In summary, the Evaluation Team will make the following summary comments on how the BOYW project contributes to the UNDP outcome “**Capacities and**

partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”.

This project is first and foremost a capacity building project for urban planning and policy formulation in the areas of master planning and housing. Resource management is inherent in this. With outreach strategies the project has contributed to this type of capacity building in professional and academic environments and other cities in the country. The partnerships established are first and foremost to these groups and less to civil societies at large. The project has to a limited extent been involved in capacity building for service delivery.

3.4. Sustainable Tourism Development (STD)

The STD project started in 2000 and will finish by the end of 2006. The budget for the total period is USD 977,399.

The STD project has gone through two distinct phases. During the first phase (2000 – 2004) the project supported the design of an “Integrated and Comprehensive Policy for Sustainable Tourism Development” and institutional and human capacity building for operating, managing and teaching in the area of tourism. In the second phase of (2004 – 2006) the project is supporting development of tourism at the regional and local level. Local authorities of Calarasi, Orhei, Rezina and Glodeni districts (rayon) receive support in three main directions:

Diagnosis (Situational Analysis) and planning

- Baseline analysis and district (rayon) tourism development plans developed for Orhei, Glodeni, Rezina and Calarasi rayons;
- Training courses for the revival of local handicrafts traditions.

Development of tourism products

- Informational signboards and tourist indicators
- Summer Pavilion for handicrafts
- Handicrafts Centre
- Study tours.
- Two creation camps for the artisans in wood and textile artisans from Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Moldova.
- Small grant program for rural pensions development and territory arrangement.

Awareness and Knowledge Sharing

- Seminars on "Tourism development - opportunities for local development"
- Summer school organized through the Centre of Archaeological Research from Butuceni.
- Eco-rural expedition

The Evaluation Team visited Orhei District center and discussed the Rayon Strategic Tourism Plan. In Trebujeni village local pensions were visited and local tourism activities discussed with the primar and other stakeholders. Based on these visits and the documents consulted, the Evaluation Team will make the following observations:

- The preparation of the Orhei Rayon Strategic Tourism Plan was jointly financed by the Rayon council and the project, with considerable participation of the population and various stakeholder groups through workshops and hearings
- The participation focused on people living nearby the tourist sites and addressed economic possibilities in connection with tourism
- Village councils are now becoming more and more involved
- In the village of Trebujeni, five families have now developed their houses into local tourist pensions, serving regional meals, offering overnight facilities and making and selling local handicraft products.
- In Tribujeni it was noticed that there is a scope for a stronger involvement of the primaria in support of development of tourism related activities
- Of the UNDP projects this is the one which most directly supports job creation and increased incomes.

In summary, the Evaluation Team will make the following summary comments on how the ILN project contributes to the UNDP outcome **“Capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”**.

This project contributes directly to policy formulation at central and local levels through analyses made and the planning documents prepared. The process through which the regional and local plans are made is transparent with broad partnerships to relevant stakeholders. With the expectations made through these documents and the processes, it is likely that they have also strengthened accountability. Capacities and partnerships for service delivery to tourists and different stakeholders have also been developed. Tourism plans and activities will inherently contribute to resource management as this tourism development is based on the attraction of natural and cultural sites.

3.5. Better Opportunities for Youth and Women (BOYW)

The BOYW project started in 2004 and will last for three years. The budget for the total period is USD 2,000,000 and is fully financed by USAID.

The overall purpose of the project is to ensure social-economic reintegration of vulnerable groups, including graduates from boarding schools and orphanages, vulnerable women and their children, and victims of trafficking, through providing training for income generating economic activities, offering job opportunities as well as psychological care through approximately 10 self-sustainable Social Integration Centers established in Local Agenda 21 network of localities.

The centers will be separate for the two main groups of beneficiaries.

The project has two main objectives, for which it has undertaken activities as shown below:

Objective A Establishment of a network of approximately ten self-sustaining Social Integration Centers till 2007, which will render qualitative services to project beneficiaries.

Activities:

1. Creation of Social Reintegration Centers (SRC)
 - Identification and selection of NGOs holding relevant capacity and experienced
 - Selection of buildings for future SRCs
 - Issuance of final decision by local councils on selected buildings for SRC
 - Rehabilitation of building
 - Selection of NGOs through tenders
2. Strengthening of SRCs capacities
 - Assessment of capacities of NGOs involved in SRC operation
 - Training of NGOs and SRC staff
 - Selection of SRC staff
 - Technical assistance

Objective B Social-economic integration of a minimum of 200 beneficiaries till the end of the project through establishment of Social Integration Centers

Activities:

1. Identification of beneficiaries to be accommodated in the centers
2. Establishment of cooperation links with the social partners and agencies

Intensive public awareness activities will be undertaken to promote the importance of social reintegration of vulnerable people and to combat human trafficking.

The centers will be operated by local NGOs. The first center will be opened in Ungheni on November 30th.

The project will work with several key players, such as:

- Primarias, who provide premises and some equipment and the social services unit of the primaria with responsibilities for the target groups addressed by the centers
- The district (rayon) administration with responsibilities for the target groups addressed by the centers
- Boarding schools and orphanages, from which young people will come to the centers for young people
- NGOs working in the social spheres of the target groups for the different centers
- The NGO selected for the management of each center
- Ministry of Education, running the boarding schools and orphanages
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection, in charge of policies and actions targeted to victims of trafficking and elaboration of social standards for special institutions
- National Committee for Prevention of Trafficking of Human Beings
- International Organization for Migration, working on counter trafficking and reintegration

In additions there will be a large number of other partners such as UNICEF, AIHA, ILO, OSCE, all working with issues related to trafficking.

BOYW is especially designed for social service delivery to the two groups of beneficiaries. Capacity building of the contracted NGOs has started this year and will be done for all new contracted NGOs.

At this time there is no practical experience from any of the centers to be established. The Evaluation Team can therefore only base its comments on project documents and reports as well as conversations with stakeholders prior to any practical experience of any of the centers:

- It is a challenge for the project to work with two very different types of beneficiaries. Graduates from orphanages, who shall receive job training, and victims of trafficking with traumatic experiences and facing threats of stigmatization, require very different project strategies.
- Local authorities recognize the need to address the project's two target groups. It is positive that the project has been able to get commitments from local authorities.
- Local authorities have been involved in the discussions leading up to the decision of the center to be established in the locality.
- Solid partnerships are still not quite in place. There is a special need to ensure good cooperation and genuine partnership between the NGOs involved in the project and public authorities with government responsibilities at central, district and local levels.
- There is a special need to involve district (rayon) authorities because of their responsibilities and because in some cases the local town may be too small a basis for the centers.
- There is a need to draw up agreements between the project and the local authorities on various aspects of the centers beyond those related to the provision of physical premises.
- Both in Cahul and Ungheni local authorities have given written guarantees that they will cover operating expenses once the project is finished.

In summary, the Evaluation Team will make the following summary comments on how the BOYW project contributes to the UNDP outcome **“Capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”**.

As the project only started this year and none of the centres are yet operational, it is difficult to assess how this project will contribute to the UNDP outcome. It is the view of the Team that this project is facing several challenges if it is to make such a contribution, particularly on policy formulation at both central and local levels and service delivery beyond the centres the project will establish. In this regard the project is also facing challenges to establish partnerships beyond the stakeholders who are directly involved with the project. A special challenge will be to establish solid partnerships with local and district authorities. Furthermore, it seems that the combination of the two types of project beneficiaries may represent a particular challenge.

3.6. Information and Learning Network (ILN)

ILN started in February 2005 as a Sub-Regional Node of Western CIS states as part of a larger ILN-Network. It is financed by the UNDP Regional Office in Bratislava.

The main objective of the ILN-project is to facilitate the collection, codification and dissemination of best practices; generation of knowledge, dissemination of experiences that can generate or contribute to the development of practical approaches for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It has established a website, where it publishes best practices, which:

- Have a demonstrable and tangible impact on improving people's quality of life
- Are the results of effective partnerships between the public, private and civic sectors of society
- Are socially, culturally, economically and environmentally sustainable

Criteria for being accepted as a "best practice" and placed on the ILN website include i) innovation and creativity, ii) replication, iii) sustainability, iv) partnerships, v) relevance, vi) efficiency / impact and vii) efficiency and implementation. ILN is undertaking various regional "Knowledge Forum – Best Practices". The purpose of these is to bring together knowledge generating organizations, disseminate material and promote generation of best practices for the ILN website. The project promotes itself, its activities and its website through regional knowledge forums. Such a forum was conducted in October 2005, with the participation of some LA 21 stakeholders and Coordinating units.

All the LA 21 Coordinating Units visited by the Evaluation Team informed that they visited the ILN website regularly and benefited from the best practices published. They had also submitted best practice candidates.

As a sub-regional project, whose main activities are internet based this project is quite different from the other projects. It should also be noted that the project has not even been in operational for a full year.

In summary, the Evaluation Team will make the following summary comments on how the ILN project contributes to the UNDP outcome **“Capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”**.

As this project only started this year it is not possible to assess whether and if so how it has contributed to the UNDP outcome. In the future this will of course depend on the extent to which the project is able to capture and publish best practices of relevance to the outcome. Under any circumstances it is the view of the Team that the contribution will be limited.

4. ANALYSIS OF OUTCOME

4.1. Introduction

Section III in the Terms of Reference presents a list of questions to be addressed by the evaluation. This chapter responds to these questions and is structured in accordance with this part of the TOR. It is important to keep in mind that in this chapter we consider the projects analysed in chapter 3 to be components of the Local Development Program. What we analyse in this chapter is how and to what extent this program with its five projects contributes to the outcome:

“Capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management”.

For the methodology applied and the content of key concepts applied, please see chapter 1.

4.2. Outcome status

4.2.1. *The extent to which outcome has been achieved*

- a) Capacities of local governance actors developed for transparent and accountable policy formulation.

Three of the projects have contributed to capacities for policy formulation – LA 21 to formulation of Action Plans for sustainable development, Mesmerizing Moldova to general urban plans and housing policies and Sustainable Tourism to strategic tourism plans. It is first and foremost LA 21 that has undertaken genuine capacity building activities targeted to strengthening transparency and accountability and that stakeholders report that local authorities have become more transparent and accountable in their policy formulation. The other projects may only refer to elements in their work which imply transparency and accountability, but without being able to show explicit achievements in that regard. There is therefore scope for all projects to focus more explicitly on this element of the outcome.

- b) Capacities of local governance actors developed for service delivery developed.

None of the projects have really undertaken capacity building for service delivery and very little improvements of capacities in that regard have been achieved. However, BOYW was especially designed for social service delivery and contracted NGOs are being trained for this. Some capacities for service delivery have been improved in the social sphere through social welfare NGOs and involvement of municipal utility companies, and in the tourism sector, where information to tourists and restaurants and overnight services have been developed.

- c) Capacities of local governance actors developed for resource management.

Capacities of local governance actors for resource management have developed in three projects as resource management is part and parcel of the policy documents.

These projects have supported also training activities. In the Action Plan for Sustainable Development, LA 21 has undertaken capacity building of the working groups in charge of this component. The handbooks and training material for urban planning in Mesmerizing Moldova address resource management. This has also been part of the Sustainable Tourism project.

- d) Partnerships of local governance actors developed for transparent and accountable policy formulation

In all the projects a wide range of partnerships have been established. Some of these are formal and some more informal.

Regarding transparent and accountable policy formulation, partnerships do not explicitly state this as a target. However, it is evident that the partnerships established for Action Plans for Sustainable Development are to ensure that the work is done in a transparent and accountable manner.

It is important in this regard to reiterate that all the partnerships established for policy formulation include all local governance actors and in particular local authorities.

- e) Partnerships of local governance actors developed for service delivery

The scope of partnerships for service delivery is narrow. It is first and foremost in the social sphere and mostly between the projects and NGOs and less between NGOs and local authorities. When local authorities have gotten involved, it mostly because their obligations to provide certain facilities and much on delivery of different services. However, the newly started BOYW is especially designed to include partnerships between NGOs, LPAs and other government agencies. This also includes shared monitoring of the services and work provided by the contracted NGOs

- f) Partnerships of local governance actors developed for resource management

Partnerships for resource management have been developed through the corresponding working groups for the Action Plans for Sustainable Development, which has involved both environmental NGOs and local authorities with their different environmentally related services. Such partnerships have also been created through the different financing mechanism for small projects.

As a final note on the issue of partnerships, it may be expressed that in none of the interviews anyone expressed that any stakeholders had been neglected – all had been approached. However, it was a general statement that it is difficult to include stakeholders from the business community

4.2.2. Innovative approaches and capacities developed through UNDP assistance

In general all the projects include innovative approaches. However, while some of these approaches were innovative at the inception of the projects, they may no longer be so now.

Table 4.1 lists the innovative approaches of the different projects and the capacities developed. The table does not include approaches or capacities, which are relevant, but not innovative.

Table 4.1 Innovative approaches and capacity development

	Innovative approaches tried	Capacities developed – check reports
1 LA 21	Youth participation in local decision making process Different ways of disseminating information on municipal decisions Mixing of representatives of LPA and civil society in working groups	Strategic planning Capacities to establish partnerships LPAs capacities to inform society Civil society capacities to establish NGOs
2 ILN	Interactive website	Capacity of actors to formulate and present best practices
3 STD	Development of National Strategy for Tourism Development (which was new in Moldova) New ways of presenting and informing about tourist sites Involvement and development of small local businesses for tourism development (pensions) Involvement and development of monasteries for tourism development	Professional capacities of personnel of Tourism Agency Skills of local authorities in tourism promotion Skills of artisans (wood and textile) Skills of owners of sites and hotels in business development etc
4 MM	In the Moldovan context both the technical and participatory approaches to city planning are innovative	Modern urban planning skills Capacity of the sub-contracted NGO to organize participatory processes
5 BOYW	If the project manages to address the situation of actual victims of trafficking, innovative approaches may be developed. But this remains to be seen.	So far capacity building has been focused on the NGOs which will be running the centres.

4.2.3. Relevance of UNDP outputs to the outcome

Chapter 3 presents outputs for each of the five projects. Based on this the Team makes the following assessment of the outputs' relevance to the different elements of the UNDP outcome.

- a) Capacities of local governance actors developed for transparent and accountable policy formulation.

Both LA 21 and STD are highly relevant to policy formulation as strategic planning at local levels are key elements of both projects. STD has also contributed to many elements of policy formulation at central level. LPA capacity to make public decisions has been strengthened. Through both projects capacities of both LPAs and civil society have been improved. Whether this includes related specifically to

transparency and accountability is not clear, but at least civil society has been strengthened in their rights to demand information, and LPAs are reported to have become much more open in that regard. ILN intended outputs of best practices are relevant because they focus on democratic governance. For MM all the achieved major outputs were oriented to policy formulation to be prepared in a transparent and accountable manner. However, until now this was restricted to policy makers and professional staff. It is only at the current stage of the project that efforts to involve the public at large are being undertaken. The outputs of BOYW are first and foremost social care directed to the two target groups. It is difficult to see these outputs as being directed to neither policy formulation nor that capacity building activities to being of direct relevance to this.

- b) Capacities of local governance actors developed for service delivery developed.

The relevance of the outputs to this outcome element is limited. Actually it is first and foremost only BOYW which includes capacity building for service delivery. STD includes some aspects of service delivery to tourism operators and their delivery of services to tourists. But actual capacity building targeted to service delivery is limited. LA 21 outputs are not highly relevant as their support to service delivery is only through creation and support to NGOs and not for actual capacities for service delivery. As for MM the outputs do not include capacities of local governance actors for service delivery beyond what may have been achieved through the small grants for projects involving NGOs. ILN outputs, which are best practices on their websites, do not include service delivery.

- c) Capacities of local governance actors developed for resource management.

LA 21 outputs are relevant because capacity building takes place through the working group for the Action plan. However, this is only on the strategic planning level and does not include capacity building of a more operational nature. ILN intended outputs of best practices are relevant because they focus on environment. STD outputs are relevant for resource management as the strategic plans address nature and environment as resources for tourism development. MM is relevant for resource management as this is part and parcel of urban planning capacities being strengthened through the project and also in some of the small scale projects. BOYW does not have outputs of relevance to resource management.

- d) Partnerships of local governance actors developed for transparent and accountable policy formulation

Three of the projects have outputs of high relevance to partnerships for policy formulation. LA 21 has achieved high involvement of LPA and civil society in working groups for the strategic plan, and other efforts to establish partnerships. One of the criteria to be recognized as a best practice by ILN is that this involves partnerships. For STD, the preparation of tourism plans and their implementation the LPAs base themselves on partnerships with all relevant stakeholders. The outputs of MM are relevant for partnerships, but so far they have been produced with little partnerships to relevant stakeholders, beyond professional and academic institutions in Chisinau, working with the project. The partnership between City architect

administration and other stakeholders is not clear. In BOYW the outputs are not so relevant for this type of partnerships, as the policy formulation was addressed through LA 21.

e) Partnerships of local governance actors developed for service delivery

The relevance of outputs with regard to partnerships of local governance actors developed for service delivery varies. LA 21 outputs are relevant as they include partnerships with NGOs for service delivery to vulnerable groups and some business associations for information services and communal waste management service for clearing up of parks. However, partnerships of this type with LPAs are less common. Regarding STD, the LPAs base themselves on partnerships with all relevant stakeholders for service delivery. The outputs do not include partnerships for service delivery, with the exception of the very few small grants projects. The outputs of the BOYW are all relevant for partnerships for service delivery

f) Partnerships of local governance actors developed for resource management

Action plans supported by LA 21 are all relevant for the creation of partnerships for resource management. The same may be said about ILN, which promotes environmental best practices, where partnerships are criteria. None of the other projects have outputs of relevance to partnerships for resource management.

4.2.4. Progress of outputs and factors that have affected the accomplishment of these

Chapter 3 presents the main outputs for each of the projects. It has been outside the scope of this evaluation to assess the timeliness of these outputs in relation to the implementation plans of the different projects. But generally speaking the projects have been implemented in a timely manner. Several stakeholders have given praise to UNDP for its capacity to facilitate and support implementation and to act as a neutral mediator. Nevertheless, for each of the projects there are both factors which have contributed positively to the accomplishment of the outputs and as well as factors which have contributed negatively, as highlighted below.

For the LA 21 a positive factor was the fact that the ground for these participatory approaches had been prepared through the previous democratic reforms in the country and the large amount of projects targeting NGO development. Local authorities had also become quite motivated to participate in this type of projects. The process of selection of participating communities based on competition made it possible to select motivated communities. But the project has also encountered negative factors such as changes of key personnel in project management units and LPAs and in some localities conflicts between primars and the councils.

For the implementation of the ILN project the situation is less complex and demanding than for the other projects, as ILN is implemented exclusively by a specialized NGO.

The implementation of the STD project has been smooth, positive factors being permanence of National Executing Agency and Coordinator and other project staff, and good collaboration and support from all stakeholders and mass media.

The MM project was introduced to Moldova when the country really needed such a technical capacity building effort related to urban planning and the project was the only one of its nature in the country. This explains the high level of interest for the project in professional and academic circles. At the project management level very good working relations were established with both the National Coordinator and the city primaria and members of the city council. Nevertheless, the fact that the Chisinau General Urban Plan Concept was not discussed by the City Council when the concept was finished in 2003 was due to political conflicts between Central government and the City.

There are two positive factors which have contributed favorably to BOYW. The project was started in localities where the ground work had been done by LA 21. Furthermore, generous funding was secured through a USAID grant. However, the project has encountered some lack of understanding and motivation from some LPAs and not all national stakeholders are equally favorable to the project.

4.2.5. Underlying factors

- a) Underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influenced the outcome.

The main factor that has contributed to the implementation of the projects beyond UNDP control is the changes at central and local levels as consequences of election. This brought about a change of national executing agencies and national coordinator for three of the projects. Although this took some time, it was nevertheless to the benefit of the projects.

- b) Design issues, management capacities and timeliness of outputs,

The Team has not identified major shortcomings in the design of any of the projects. However, it has been pointed out that having two different target groups with separate centres in the BOYW constitutes a challenge, as these two groups require different strategies and capacities. Another design question relates to the ILN project, which has practically no linkages to LPAs beyond the internet.

Although the evaluation has not examined the timeliness of the outputs, there is one case where there has been considerable delay. As already pointed out, the Chisinau General Urban Plan Concept was not discussed by the City Council when this was finished in 2003, and only so in 2005.

- c) The degree of stakeholders and partners' involvement in the completion of outputs, and how processes were managed/carried out.

In general stakeholders and partners have been highly involved in the completion of outputs. However, this participation has mostly been initiated and driven by the projects from central or local levels. This seems to be particularly so for the MM

project, while the district administrations working on tourism development seem to have been more proactive in establishing partnerships themselves.

4.2.6. *UNDP contribution*

- a) The relevance of the outcome and the constituent components specifically for UNDP assistance.

Section 4.2.3 discusses the relevance of the UNDP outputs for each of the elements of the outcome.

In section 2.2 national policy documents are presented. All outcome elements are addressed in these documents, as highlighted in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 How outcome elements are addressed in national policy documents

	Capacities of local governance actors developed for:			Partnerships of local governance actors developed for:		
	Transparent and accountable policy formulation	Service delivery	Resource management	Transparent and accountable policy formulation	Service delivery	Resource management
EGPRS	p.222 ¹ “At the level of LPA bodies, continuing of decentralization process will involve the establishment of efficient self-government institutions and mechanisms, which will be responsive, <i>transparent and accessible for the public.</i> ”	p.219(iii) “modify a role of public bodies, in order to increase the efficiency of administration, <i>service delivery</i> , regulation and equitable distribution of economic growth benefits”.	p.220(iv) “rational use of scarce budget resources and <i>management of resources</i> by concentrating on priority areas”.	p.224 “The interaction between public administration and society will be improved. Civil society, NGOs, associations, independent media and the population at large will be able to have increased access to public administration activity.” p.225 “Permanent consultation groups will be established to include representatives of public administration, local authorities, public and non-commercial organizations with the aim of summarizing and disseminating experience in social partnership.”		
Moldovan Village	P.20(xi) “ <i>assurance transparency</i> of the process of distribution and	P40(iv) “assurance of the human development and social protection (improvement of	p.40(viii) “environment protection and preservation of rural landscape”	p.34(iv) “development of the dialog and the social partnership between the main groups, like trade-union, professional associations, NGOs on the village level”.		

¹ P refers to paragraph – not page in the document

- b) UNDP funded outputs and other interventions and links to the achievement of the outcome.

In section 4.2 the achievement of the different elements of the outcome was assessed. It is clear that to the extent these elements were achieved, the achievements can be linked to the UNDP funded outputs (projects). However, it is not possible to measure the extent of these linkages, as there have been several developmental change processes going on and many stakeholders have simultaneously benefited from other sources of support.

- c) Likelihood of the achievement of the outcome within the set timeframe and inputs.

The five projects have different timeframes. Three will finish by the end of 2006 and one by the end of 2007. The ILN project has no set timeframe. The Team has not come across factors that imply that the projects will not be able to produce the anticipated outputs within the timeframe and inputs allocated. In previous sections, particularly section 4.2.1 the varying achievements of the outputs has been discussed. These observations remain valid for the remaining timeframe of the outcome.

4.3. Outputs status

- a) The continued relevance of UNDP outputs to the outcome

Section 4.2.3 discusses the relevance of the outputs to the outcome and section 1.2.6 a) how these outputs and outcome relate to RMs recent policy documents. It should be noted that all capacity building is a process, which was started with the projects, but still remains relevant. Furthermore, this capacity building is mostly taking place in the localities and institutions where the projects are directly involved. This means that the relevance of the outputs for a larger area through different ways of dissemination remains valid. The areas for capacity building are still relevant. However, as service delivery, the capacity building is too narrowly focused on social services.

In all the projects the project as such has been seen as an active partner. In order to make partnerships more relevant to the outcome, the project should become more of a facilitator and less an active partner.

- b) Project progress in relation to UNDP outputs

Sections 1.2.5 b) and 1.2.6 b) pointed out that in general the projects have been implemented in a timely manner. On the more substantive side, in most localities where projects have been active, LPAs are reported by other donors to have become more open and transparent as well as more receptive to civil society.

- c) Factors (positive and negative) that have affected the accomplishment of the outputs

Sections 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 a) listed factors that have affected the accomplishment of the outputs. The Team has not come across serious conditions which may put into jeopardy the completion of the projects. However, BOYW may face some problems if it is not able to ensure relevant participation of some of its stakeholders, including representation in the Steering Committee

- d) How local development plans are considered in the national development planning.

Although local plans are not quoted or directly referred to, many of these have contributed to national development plans. For instance the EGPRS has chapters (rural development and regional development), which directly reflect principles of local sustainable development plans. The same applies for the Moldovan Village, with its chapter on the role of LPAs. In the case of Sustainable Tourism Development the local Tourism Plans are directly included as part of the National Strategy of Tourism Development

- e) UNDP's ability to advocate best practices, and influence integration of local development into national policies and plans.

In conversations with different policy makers at national level, UNDP has been given credit for its capacity to disseminate experiences from the various projects and promote strengthening of local governance actors as partners for national development. The same can be said about other donors who use and benefit from UNDP generated best practices.

4.4. Output-outcome link

In section 4.2.6 b) the question whether UNDP's outputs or other interventions can be credibly linked to the achievement of the outcome (including the key outputs, projects, and soft assistance) was addressed. Other questions relating to the output – outcome link are addressed below.

- a) Key contributions that UNDP has made/is making to the outcome

In chapter 3 the outputs of each of the projects are addressed. Table 4.3 highlights the most important contributions each of the projects are making to the outcome.

Table 4.? Project contributions to outcome

LA 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Strategic Action Plans based on principles of participatory planning (transparent and accountable policy formulation) • Creation of partnerships for the implementation of such plans • Network for dissemination of experiences
ILN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a database for dissemination and exchange of best practices on local governance
S T D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of partnerships for provision and delivery of tourism related goods and services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of tourism potential for different regions • Preparation of local tourism development plans • Capacities for delivery of tourism services
M M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacities for transparent and accountable policy formulation (Strategic plans etc) • Partnerships (informal coalition for Beautiful cities), Association of cities
BOYW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacities and partnerships for transparent and accountable policy formulation and service delivery • Transparent and accountable policy formulation (participation in the ministerial group for preparation of social standards for special institutions

b) Possible need for additional resources to achieve the outcome

LA 21 is the only project where additional resources might be adequate in order to better achieve different elements of the outcome. Such resources could either be applied to new LA 21 localities or expanding capacity building beyond social services.

In order to link ILN more directly to the outcome efforts could be made to focus more of its efforts to capture involvement from LPAs.

g) Changing circumstances and requirements to capacity development

During the period that the UNDP projects have been implemented there have been no changing circumstances which would have brought about changes in the types and approaches for capacity building. Nor has any of the stakeholders interviewed have been able to identify changes in the types of capacity building promoted by UNDP through the different projects or the needs for such changes.

4.5. Partnership strategy

The Terms of Reference states several questions related to UNDP's partner strategy

a) Effectiveness and appropriateness of UNDP's partnership strategy

In the UNDP Moldova Concept Paper the UNDP Partnership Strategy is explained as follows:

The UNDP CO will continue maintaining excellent relations with the authorities at the central and local levels as well as with the NGO community (IPP, ADEPT, IDIS, BCI, Habitat Moldova Centre etc). With extensive experience in promoting socio-economic development, UNDP will make a substantive contribution to local development by diversifying development opportunities for community inhabitants under on-going projects. Local consultancy companies will be contracted for capacity building services related to business development opportunities. UNDP will cooperate closely with

donor community - WB, USAID, SIDA, DFID, Soros Foundation –Moldova - active in community-based development for effective coordination of activities and impact amplification on development.

At the local level this partnership has been effective. The UNDP projects have been effective in supporting partnerships within civil society and their cooperation with LPAs. However, in this the projects, particularly LA 21, have been active partners themselves. It is clear that in the future the projects will have to be more of a facilitator and less an active partner if such partnerships shall remain sustainable.

Regarding other donors, the partnership strategy is definitely appropriate, but less effective. Cases of overlapping have been observed and lack of willingness of donors to cooperate and downright competition, have been reported.

- b) How UNDP has been able to bring together various partners across sectoral lines to address local development in a holistic manner

It is in the LA 21 that local development is being addressed in a holistic manner, and particularly through the sectoral working groups of the Action Plans. In all cases efforts have been made to bring together relevant partners. But a general problem has been lack of willingness from the business community to participate and to ensure active involvement of municipal utility companies.

At the national level UNDP has brought in different partners through the Steering Committees and otherwise according to the needs of the different projects.

- c) UNDP's ability to ensure exposure to best practices in other countries

Regarding partners' exposure to best practices in other countries, UNDP has very actively undertaken different actions to ensure access to experiences and knowledge from other countries. This has included visits to and from neighbouring countries, visits and technical support from foreign experts and most lately sub-regional exchanges of best practices on internet

- d) How partnerships contribute to the achievement of the outcome and level of stakeholders' participation?

All the projects are based on thorough partnerships with relevant stakeholders. Without such partnerships the projects would not have been able to produce their outputs. In general the projects have been able to involve relevant stakeholders as they have intended to. For LA 21, STD and BOYW partnerships were directly targeted to the different elements of the UNDP outcome. In the case of MM the partnerships were mostly targeted to building professional capacities and less to partnerships with stakeholders in civil society.

With few exceptions the projects have been successful in achieving an adequate level of stakeholders' participation.

- f) Partnership among UN Agencies and other donor organizations in the relevant field.

Between the five projects there has been very good partnerships and exchange of information, experiences etc. LA 21 has been like a nucleus for all five projects.

Genuine partnerships between UNDP and other donors, however, have only been established to a limited extent. There have of course been contacts, exchange of information and experiences, but none of this has acquired the nature of real partnerships. There is also the case of UNDP – USAID cooperation for the BOYW project, where USAID is providing the funding. For this project a partnership is now being established even at the local level. There is also an emerging partnership between UNDP and the MSIF (WB funded), where communities may benefit from both donors, and a specific project will now be implemented jointly. Regarding BOYW this project is now establishing services in centres created by UNCEF with LPA support.

4.6. Sustainability of UNDP interventions related to the outcome

The TOR raises several questions related to sustainability, which are jointly addressed below.

It is the view of the Team that all the projects have attained a level of sustainability for most of their outputs and achievements. Most LPAs have adopted or even formally approved the strategic plans prepared with the support of the projects and made commitments and agreements, which have to be honoured. These achievements have been made with the participation of NGOs, who will maintain their pressure for the fulfilment of commitments made. The various capacities and partnerships created through these processes will sustain to a varying degree, but it will not all wither away. And anyway, the civil society, which has been strengthened, will maintain its pressure for transparent and accountable governance.

The technical capacities for urban planning, which have been built up for different professional groups, will be used both in the city of Chisinau as well as in other urban centres.

In the cases where private investments have been made, they have shown to be profitable. This means that this strategy will be sustained, although some individual endeavours may be closed.

When the projects have included public investments, as for instance in the BOYW, LPAs have usually made some commitments on carrying future operating costs. The sustainability of such investments will of course depend on LPAs possibilities to honour such commitments. In this case it is also the intention to support the NGOs in such a way that they will become sustainable.

4.7. Conclusions and key findings

4.7.1. Relevance of the UNDP projects.

This evaluation has shown that the purpose of the five UNDP projects is still relevant and may be even more pertinent to national development than before. The outputs of the projects and the UNDP outcome are in line with and support national development plans and policies. Most recently this has become even clearer with the Government's announcement that the strategic goal of the external country policy is accession to the EU. There is a consensus in the Moldovan political and civil circles about this intention. Government also has approved several National programs like EGPRS, "Moldovan Village" and Action Plan "RM-EU" in order to facilitate the process of accession. One of the important preconditions for accession to the EU is public administration reform at all levels in order to facilitate transparent and accountable policy formulation, good service delivery and resource management.

UNDP focuses on issues of significant importance for local development, such as capacity building of local governance actors, participatory strategic planning, tourism development as a source of income and improved access to development sources.

The main outcome of the UNDP is the following: capacities and partnerships of local governance actors developed in urban/rural areas for transparent and accountable policy formulation, service delivery and resource management. This outcome can be achieved through the different projects activity.

General evaluation of the different projects' activity showed that every project outputs were directed to the achieving UNDP outcome, but none of one of the project could equally cover all components of UNDP outcome, as they were not all designed to do so.. The LA21 was much more efficient in the building capacities of the local governance actors in transparent and accountable policy formulation and creating partnerships. The STD and BOYW were more successful in the service delivery. All the projects' outputs were less involved in the resource management.

At the same time, taking into account that all these projects are the components of the UNDP Local Development Umbrella Programme, Evaluation Team consider, that this programme and outcome is relevant for Government policy and UNDP projects are relevant for UNDP outcome.

4.7.2. Efficiency of projects with the view to outputs and outcome.

All the projects have been implemented with relatively modest resources compared to their outputs. At the central level all the projects have one manager, one financial assistant and one or two more staffs (administrative assistant or technical support). Two of the projects have had additional technical assistance personnel and consultants.

At the local level LA 21 has set Coordinating units with one full time coordinator and one or two additional part time staff. The financial resources used by the projects were very modest compared with similar projects implemented by other donors. Small grants programs implemented through UNDP projects (STD, MM) have also showed that good project design and management can give good results with the small resources. From an efficiency point of view the Evaluation Team considers that process of transforming inputs into outputs and outcomes was good and cost effective.

Regarding cost effectiveness of external technical assistance experts to MM and STD it has not been possible to assess the cost effectiveness of these inputs. Nevertheless, for both projects the management has expressed that the inputs of these experts were important in order to achieve the outputs.

4.7.3. Effectiveness of projects with the view of outcome.

The outcome of the UNDP is directed to the very ambitious target: changing mentality of the LPA and creating the active civil society actors ready to discuss with the government officials and in some cases even to enter in direct conflict with them. It is needed a lot of efforts and resources to reach such target. The analysis of the outputs has shown that the projects and results achieved are all effectively contributing to this objective.

Effective use of the projects' results is very important taking into account small resources and restricted areas of the projects' implementation. It is too early to speak about effectiveness of the ILN and BOYW projects because they just started their activity. As to the other projects, the Evaluation Team considers that they extensively have contributed through an effective use of their results. First of all, LA21 activity directed to the creation of different NGOs gave them possibility to disseminate information about participation principles among different actors of local governance and population at large. The positive results of the pensions' activity created due the involvement of STD project stimulated tourism business activity and handicrafts' business activity at the local level. Concept of the Chisinau General Urban Plan Development served a base for starting process of the strategic urban planning in other cities of Moldova.

4.7.4. Capacity development.

All projects were directed to the local governance actors' capacity building. The capacity of the local stakeholders in the transparency and accountable policy formulation was developed due the LA21 and STD projects. Now the LPA and projects' partners in the localities where projects have activated are ready to elaborate and implement the Local Sustainable Development Action Plans on principles of the citizens' participation.

According to the statements made by the stakeholders and other donors the LPA became more open for dialog with the population. Populations of the localities where UNDP projects have been active have better possibility to be informed about decisions of the LPA. MM project was very active in the professional building

capacity of the specialists in the urban planning. Many of them now are ready to elaborate modern urban plans. MM also initiated the citizens' participation in the urban development process.

At the same time Evaluation Team discovered that the projects had not really undertaken capacity building for service delivery and resource management with some exceptions connecting with the BOYW and STD projects in the restricted areas, and taking into account that BOYW will be focusing on this.

4.7.5. Past results and future perspectives.

The main results of the projects with a view to future UNDP interventions, are the following:

- capacities of the local governance actors for transparency and accountable policy formulation have been developed;
- local governance actors have understood the need of the good service delivery and resource management but capacities for these are still at the low level;
- projects have created partnerships with different local stakeholders; at the same time these stakeholders are not very active in creating partnerships among themselves;
- professional capacities of the LPA staff and some academic circles were developed;
- results of some projects' activity were used for policy formulation at the national level.

It is the view of the Evaluation Team that all the projects have attained a level of sustainability for most of their outputs and achievements. The main purpose of the future UNDP activity is to capture results achieved under implemented projects, extract best practices and disseminate the accumulated knowledge to a wider group - communities, local governance actors and potential partners in order to increase the impact of the projects' results on the communities' development towards the goals of the EGPRS and MDG.

5. PERSPECTIVES FOR FUTURE UNDP COOPERATION IN SUPPORT TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE

5.1. Framework for support to local governance

During the last years major donor supported activities for improved local governance have taken place. The government of RM has formulated important plans, which include policies and actions targeted to strengthening of local institutions and governance. The Government has made clear commitments to honor and support democratization, citizen participation as well as transparent and accountable governance. A special institution, the Agency for Regional Development, has been established.

Together all these elements as well as practical achievements and experiences made, constitute a very favorable framework for continued support to local governance.

5.2. Recommendations for UNDP cooperation to strengthen local governance in Moldova

5.2.1. Lessons for future interventions in the sector;

The UNDP Local Development Programme treats development of communities as an integrated process, and identifies the following key dimensions of this process:

- d) Participatory planning for sustainable development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of best practices
- e) Economic development
- f) Social development

This report has shown that the five ongoing projects and their outputs address the three key dimensions of the UNDP Local Development Programme to a varying degree.

Regarding **participatory planning** for sustainable development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of best practices, this is the area where UNDP now has acquired wide and profound experiences through the five projects. Important lessons include:

- Local stakeholders, both LPAs and the civil society, are very receptive and motivated to participate in local governance development. But a minimum of proactive support is required to set in motion important processes.
- LPAs show increasing willingness to commit themselves for active cooperation with civil society.
- LPAs have become increasingly open, transparent and accountable
- The planning has mostly been focused on municipalities and villages. There has been less involvement of the rayon level.
- The participation of the LPAs has been much focused on the primars and selected administrative units. Councils have only been involved to a limited degree and conflicts between the two have not been uncommon – and in some cases hampered project implementation.
- Within civil society it has not been easy to involve representatives of the business community
- None of the projects have established adequate instruments for monitoring implementation of action plans nor indicators to evaluate outcomes or impacts
- All projects undertake activities to inform about their activities, but less to systematically establish best practices.

Regarding **economic development**, the lessons learned are various:

- Through the working groups on economic development for the local Action plans current economic situation and potential for future economic development have been analysed and actions suggested, but these have to a very little degree been implemented.

- NGOs have been able to formulate social or environmental projects and to attract external funding for these, which have also implied creation of some new workplaces.
- Three of the projects have small grants allocation for projects. Although several of these have been to social services to vulnerable groups, a significant amount has also been support to small business development, some of which have shown good results
- Project support to the business community has been mixed. In some cases the focus has been on involving the business community for fundraising for communal initiatives. In other cases the focus has been on how the project can support business initiative through provision of relevant information, legal advice and other types of consultancy services.

Regarding **social development**, the most important lessons learned are:

- Through the local action plans the stakeholders have addressed social development in its wider context. However, beyond that, the focus has been on vulnerable groups and how their needs can be addressed by NGOs. Less focus has been on the roles and responsibilities of LPAs in this regard and how to improve their service delivery. But BOYW will address this next year.
- Small grants support to NGOs to provide social services have shown good results.
- Some successful efforts have been undertaken to involve municipal services and utility companies and there is a wide scope for involvement of these in partnership with NGOs and citizens.

5.2.2. Outline main areas of focus for next stage UNDP projects in support of local governance

UNDP is now finalizing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is the business plan for the UN system in Moldova for the period 2007 – 2011. It describes three collective priorities for the UN System, which are:

- Regional and local development
- Governance, and
- Increasing access to quality services

The UNDAF consists of three Outcomes. All five projects, which have been analyzed in this evaluation, are relevant to these three outcomes, and represent highly valuable experiences for the design of projects and activities which will contribute to these objectives.

UNDAF Outcome 1: Governance

By 2011, public institutions, with the support of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are better able to ensure good governance, the rule of law, and equal access to justice and the promotion of Human Rights

UNDAF Outcome 2: Access to Quality Services

By 2011, vulnerable groups enjoy increased equitable and guaranteed access to basic services provided by the state with the support of civil society.

UNDAF Outcome 3: Regional and Local Development

By 2011, vulnerable groups in poor rural and urban areas take advantage of sustainable socio-economic development opportunities through adequate regional and public policies implemented by Local Public Authorities (LPAs) and partners.

This evaluation has shown that it is particularly with a view to Outcome 3, that the five projects constitute a most valuable knowledge basis, and particularly with a view to the Country Programme Outcomes under this UNDAF Outcome:

- 3.1. *LPAs operate in a more effective and transparent manner*
- 3.2. *New businesses and jobs are created in targeted, poor rural and urban areas*
- 3.3. *Empowered communities and CSOs participate in local development planning, implementation and monitoring*

Based on the findings of this evaluation and taking into account how the achievements and experiences of the five projects may contribute to the achievement of the UNDAF outcome and the outcomes of the UNDP Country Programme, the

Evaluation Team makes the following recommendations for the outline of main areas of focus for next stage UNDP projects in support of local governance:

- Of the ongoing projects addressed in this evaluation, LA 21 represents a platform for continued support to local governance.
- The focus of UNDP should be on institutional development of local authorities.
- There is a scope for more targeted capacity building for LPAs, particularly in localities where LPA has already been working. Such capacity building could be targeted to financial management, budgeting and service delivery through municipal utility companies as well as creating a favourable environment for public-private partnerships and involvement of all local governance actors.
- UNDP should focus on how the developed approaches to local governance can be made more solid and disseminated to a larger range of partners, with a potential for wider dissemination. In this regard the Association of Primaries (about 900 primaries in the country) may be an important channel. The same applies to the rayon administration in the 32 rayons of the country. These experiences may also be of relevance for regional development, where participatory strategic planning techniques and approaches to capacity building and partnerships may be valuable contributions.
- UNDP should concentrate on the creation of a favourable framework for economic development and service delivery at local level.
- UNDP should assist local governance actors to attract additional resources from other donors, using the positive results from demonstrative pilot projects.
- Although it may always be legitimate to support the creation of new NGOs with valid objectives, the focus for assistance should now be to strengthen existing NGOs.
- In order to make local government accountable it is important that LPAs have good methods and instruments with valid indicators for monitoring of implementation as well as for evaluation of impacts of programs, plans and actions. Based on experiences from LA 21, UNDP should assist in the preparation of such instruments and methods and offer capacity building to LPAs.
- The projects have been successful in promoting partnerships involving LPAs and different segments of civil society, but less in the involvement of the business community in civic partnerships. Based on the positive experiences UNDP could develop methods and support localities in establishing partnerships with the business community as well.
- The projects also have to focus their activities on creation of direct partnerships among local governance actors themselves, without UNDP

projects being an active partner itself. In this regard projects should also be encouraged to pay more attention to creating real partnerships with other donors in order to coordinate their activities at the local level..

5.2.3. Propose improvement of the coordination between donor-supported interventions in meeting national requirements;

Section 5.1 above and other previous sections of this report have presented the wide scope of plans, policies and planned reform work for local governance, which the Government of RM is implementing or will do so in the near future. The Government has assigned the Agency for Regional Development to be the focal institution for this reform work. There are also various donors operating in this field through projects on local governance, in cooperation with different government institutions and NGOs. The most important donors in this field are UNDP, The World Bank, TACIS and USAID.

All experiences from Moldova and other countries show that it is difficult to achieve the necessary coordination between donor supported projects. Donors have different priorities which may limit the willingness to operate under a coordination framework which may limit some of their autonomy. Project managers and staff are also often reluctant about being coordinated and may be defensive about their own approaches and methods. The observations will also apply to national government institutions and NGOs.

The only way that adequate coordination between donors, government agencies and NGOs is by having a powerful Government institution with a clear mandate securing such indispensable coordination within the realm of local governance. In the case of Moldova the Regional Development Agency is such an institution. It will be for UNDP to provide all the necessary support so that the Agency may fulfil this role. If need be this may include creation of a special coordinating attached to the agency and/or creating a shared steering committee for all relevant projects working on local governance. This would of course strengthen cross fertilization of experiences and methods and harmonization of approaches.