Democratic Governance Mid-Term Outcome Evaluation Report

Outcome 1” Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities”

Final Report

Vera Devine

Liuba Cuznetova

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# Abbreviations

AA Association Agreement

CCET Centre for Continuous Elections Training

CEC Central Election Commission

CO Country Office

CPAA Central Public Administration Authorities

CPD Country Programme Document

CPAR Central Public Administration Reform

DAC Development Assistance Committee

DCFTA Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement

ENP European Neighbourhood Policy

EU European Union

EUHLPAM EU High-Level Policy Advice Mission

IOM International Organisation for Migration

LPA Local Public Administration

MD Republic of Moldova

MFAEI Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration

MP Member of Parliament

MUSD Million US Dollar

NBS National Bureau for Statistics

NDS National Development Strategy

NIC National Integrity Commission

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OSI Open Society Foundations

PAR Public Administration Reform

SAISE State Automated Information System “Elections”

ToR Terms of Reference

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNPF United Nations Partnership Framework

USD US Dollar

WiP Joint UNDP - UN Women Programme “Women in Politics”

# Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the mid-term outcome evaluation of UNDP’s—and, where interventions where carried out in partnership, UN Women’s (UNW)—contribution to progress towards the achievement of UNPF/CPD Outcome 1.1, “Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities”, which covers the period from 2013 to 2017.

The main objective of the evaluation was to assess, based on eight projects from the Democratic Governance portfolio specified in the Terms of Reference (ToR), progress towards UNDP’s—and where joint projects were in question, UN Women’s contribution—to the achievement of the UNPF/UNDP CPD Outcome 1.1; to discuss impact achieved; to distil lessons learned and recommendations; and to make suggestions for potential adjustments and corrections based on the assessment, in particular with regards to the quality of the indicators formulated at Outcome and Outputs levels. The Terms of Reference (ToR) put a specific emphasis on assessing the efficiency and effectiveness with respect to UNPF/CPD Outcome 1, and to discuss whether resources deployed to achieve the Outcome were adequate. The evaluation was also expected to yield insights into how gender has been mainstreamed as a cross-cutting theme across the portfolio of eight projects.

The democratic governance portfolio of UNDP focuses on public administration and decentralisation reforms, supporting partners to move from policy development to practical implementation, thereby prioritising reforms related in particular to European Integration. The projects that were included in this evaluation related to assistance delivered to the Presidential Office; the Central Election Commission; the Parliament of Moldova; the National Integrity Commission; the National Bureau for Statistics; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; the State Chancellery on issues relating to the implementation of the decentralisation strategy; and a multi-stakeholder project on women in politics.

The evaluators were contracted by UNDP Moldova. The evaluation took place from August to November 2015, with field work conducted in Moldova from 14 to 25 September 2015. In terms of the evaluation methodology, the evaluation team took the standard approach of desk review of documents; collection of quantitative and qualitative data during the in-country work, mainly through semi-structured interviews with a total of 50 stakeholders and third party experts; and data analysis and triangulation leading to the evaluation report.

The evaluators find that the overall **UNPF/CPD Outcome** and the three **Outputs** as reviewed as part of the UN internal mid-term review in June 2015 are **overall** **relevant** for the Republic of Moldova. However, given their primarily quantitative character, the **indicators** **do not always seem to be suitable** to measure the achievement of the **Outcome** and the **Outputs**, and the evaluators find **that overall, the results achieved are greater than captured by these indicators**. **The evaluators find that UNDP (in cooperation with UN Women on a number of projects) has made a considerable contribution to progress on Outcome 1.1 through substantial results on all three Outputs, and in particular on Outputs 2 and 3.**

At the **Output level**, the indicators do not necessarily provide an adequate framework to fully capture the nature and the results of a number of projects in the portfolio, leading to a situation where individual projects are performing very successfully, but neither the directions of the work of these projects, nor the results achieved, translate into progress on the set indicators (f.e. the Democracy Programme’s work with the Moldovan parliament, which to a great extent works with the publicly less visible technical apparatus of the parliament, and which might therefore not directly translate into increased public trust into the institution). In the case of those Output indicators that are set to measure the progress of women representation in decision-making positions (both under Outputs 1.2 and 1.3), these might have been somewhat overambitious to achieve within the CPD period.

A general problem with the indicators both at **Output and** **Outcome levels is their vulnerability to outside shocks and events that are entirely outside the control of UNDP’s overall and the specific projects’ work**. This is particularly the case for the indicators around confidence in the public administration institutions, which is, at the time of the evaluation, at an historic low (a result of the theft of an estimated USD 1 Billion from the national banking system and which has led to a tangible decrease in living standards of ordinary Moldovans) – despite very successful and important work that has been done in a number of UNDP’s (and UN Women’s) projects within the portfolio. The challenge for a future UNPF/CPD is to establish indicators that do not hinge to such an extent on political developments that UNDP has no influence over, and the results of the ongoing projects would seem to be very well suited to inform the definition of such future indicators, as would current baseline definition exercises (such as through OECD/Sigma).

**External factors**, and outside of the control of UNDP, have had a bearing on overall results. Specifically, the UNPF/CPD Outputs and Outcome had been made contingent on **specific governmental partner contributions**, and reflect the political dynamics of the 2012/2013 period, when the UNPF/CPD was developed and agreed in cooperation with the Moldovan government. At the 2015 juncture, it is clear that these contributions have come forward to a very limited extent, only, in particular with regards to the central public administration reform (CPAR) and the political vigour with which genuine decentralisation and consequently, local public administration reform, is pursued by the government. The needs remain considerable, but despite donors’ and development partners’ readiness to assist through technical assistance and a number of initiatives (including by UNDP on capacity assessment of the State Chancellery) underway, at the time of the evaluation, there is considerable uncertainty on what the future is for the CPAR and administrative-territorial reform.

In terms of the **portfolio of projects and their potential contribution to the Outputs and Outcomes** (irrespective of the indicators that are currently used to achieve them) as a whole, this seems to be **overall** **relevant**, too. For a number of institutional counterparts, UNDP is the *only* international organisation working with these on any sizeable scale (the Parliament; the CEC; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; the National Integrity Commission) – a function of effective donor coordination in Moldova, but also of UNDP having established a successful track record of results and partnership (the Central Election Commission/CEC; the National Bureau of Statistics; and the Parliament). For the second half of the UNPF/CPD, and given that four of the currently six active projects will close at the end of 2015, **this relevance needs to be maintained for the second half of the UNPF/CPD through the development and launch of new projects** (a project has recently started in the area of corruption prevention, which is continuing work that started with the National Integrity Commission; UNDP is also in varying stages of preparation of other projects). One of the two remaining projects in the portfolio that was reviewed in the mid-term evaluation, Women in Politics (WiP, a joint programme between UNDP and UN Women), will continue to be highly relevant in order to achieve greater representation of women in political decision-making processes; however, given that the next regular parliamentary and local elections are expected for 2018 and 2019, respectively, it is unlikely that they will meet the indicators’ targets under this Output.

Stakeholders have discussed the strategic positioning and relevance of UNDP and, in the case of joint projects, of UN Women, in the context of Moldova. **UNDP’s core strengths**, as identified by stakeholders, are political neutrality and resulting access to governmental counterparts where bilateral development partners or commercial suppliers do not have such access; a considerable history of working as a development partner in Moldova; being perceived as the leader, among the international community, particularly on gender and local governance reform; being an established organisation with a considerable network of highly relevant sector experts that can be mobilised on very short notice; and being an organisation with transparent and clear procurement and project management rules and procedures. UNDP has achieved a very recognisable profile in the context of its efforts on local governance reform (in particular through the JILDP which has a considerable recognition value among experts); and as a partner to the CEC. The evaluators felt that in view of the results, more could be done to promote and disseminate the successes of the work done with the Moldovan Parliament. In general, some stakeholders expressed their wish for UNDP to step up its profile from what they perceive as being an implementing organisation, and to become a development partner **across the entire portfolio** vis-à-vis its partner institutions similar to the relationship it has in with the parliament and the CEC. The UN overall, and UN Women in particular, is clearly recognised as having advanced the gender equality agenda in Moldova.

In terms of **effectiveness**, the evaluators identify the following **main results as contributions to UNFP/CPD Outputs and Outcome** (irrespective of whether these are in line with the established indicators):

* A considerable contribution has been made in increasing the financial autonomy of local public administrations (LPA). The JILDP has been key in developing, and piloting, the financial formula of LPA’s budgets, and which will be rolled out in the next years across all public authorities in Moldova. JILDP has increased the capacities of LPA’s to manage these budgets, using participatory models of governance based on a human rights-based approach. Given the overall lack of progress on decentralisation and local self-governance reform, this is a remarkable achievement, and the best that could be done against the background of otherwise stalled reforms.
* The Central Election Commission has consolidated its capacities to plan and conduct elections at local and central levels; with the assistance of the CEC component of the Democracy Programme, persisting problems afflicting the Voters List have been resolved; the voting of Moldovans abroad has been introduced and successfully piloted; and gender-disaggregated data on active voters, candidates and members of the elections management bodies at all levels have been collected and made publicly available. The CEC has, in the early stages supported by USAID, established a Centre for Continuous Elections Training (CCET) which, with the UNDP’s Democracy Programme’s intense capacity building support, successfully prepared and conducted two elections in very short succession (both general elections of 2014 and the local elections of 2015).
* There is evidence that the Parliament has become more transparent as a result of the parliamentary component of the Democracy Programme. Parliament has now a communication strategy, and four constituency offices have been opened in 2014 in an attempt to bring the work of MPs closer to the electorate; a series of public hearings in the Moldovan regions has been organised on the impact of key policies on constituents. The Programme is working on establishing a website in line with international best practices, showing the progress of legislative motions and draft laws. The Programme has successfully leveraged ownership by the Parliament, as a number of these results are being supported through in-kind contributions by the parliament itself (such as the financing of the running costs of constituency offices), and public hearings have been institutionalised through formally approved Standard Operations Procedures.
* The Strengthening National Statistics System Project has made a considerable contribution to the production and publication of gender-disaggregated data on the National Bureau of Statistics’ (NBS) website; to the improvement of the regional statistical data available now for decision-makers at central, regional and local levels; to the harmonisation of the territorial statistical data with EU requirements; and to the capacity building of the NBS’ staff.
* The Democracy Programme and the Women in Politics project in particular have been pivotal in creating a Women’s Caucus in the Moldovan Parliament, and legislation to establish a mandatory quota for women candidates on party lists has passed its first reading. Both projects have laid the ground for a first gender audit to be conducted in Parliament, and there is now a Parliament Gender Action Plan.
* Concerning the cross-cutting priority of gender, UN Women and UNDP are clearly recognised to having been in the lead for it to become more accepted, understood, and established among policymakers in parliament, in local government, in public institutions overall, and among civil society (including NGOs and the media).
* The project in support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration has contributed to the harmonisation of Moldovan legislation with EU requirements and to the improved capacities of Moldovan Government in negotiation of the Association Agreement/DCFTA.

With regards to **efficiency**, there is a general consensus among most project staff across the portfolio of projects that budgets have been realistic and that financial and human resources are by-and-large sufficient to achieve the projects’ work plans. The evaluators find that the introduction of a monitoring and evaluation function in the country office could be a very useful addition to streamlining results-based reporting and to strengthening internal data collection and tracking of progress and results.

The projects in support of the National Integrity Commission (NIC), and in support of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) are demonstrations of the results possible with a very modest budget overall. In particular the latter has also been an example of the successful coordination role of UNDP for the overall UN system vis-à-vis the national counterpart (NBS). The current project is the continuation of almost a decade of cooperation between the UN and the NBS, and deserves to be further examined as a highly efficient and effective cooperation model.

The evaluators find that projects across the portfolio have worked together very well. This is in particular the case for the Democracy Programme’s two components and the JILDP and both projects’ cooperation with the Women in Politics project.

The evaluators have identified a number of areas with clear potential for **sustainability**. In general, these are greater for those projects where there is a high level of ownership on the part of the institutional counterpart. This is the case for the CEC; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; Parliament; as well as the National Bureau of Statistics. The systems that have been put into place in CEC, such as the IT-systems, will survive beyond any project intervention, as will the capacities created within the institution. Though a more difficult case to make, there are prospects that the work with the Parliament can become sustainable. An earlier phase of the project had, in 2012, introduced job descriptions for staffers, strategic planning system, internal regulations etc. and these remain in place at the time of the mid-term outcome evaluation. The communication strategy is clearly being implemented by parliament staff. This is also the case of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, where the improved human resource management system, including new job descriptions and e-recruitment tool, together with an Information Management System have been established and are still being used. The Call Centre established with the project support at the MFAEI’s Consular Department has been institutionalised and continues to provide consular information to Moldovan citizens and foreigners. The training module on Integrity and Conflict of interest for civil servants, developed as part of the NIC project, has become part of the Academy of Public Administration’s core curriculum. Ownership has also been considerable at the NBS, and where the capacities built will be used in the future. For other counterparts, sustainability is less certain, to a great extent this is a systemic problem and a function of the huge staff turnover from which Moldovan institutions suffer. In general, across the portfolio of projects there is a need for projects to better capture and monitor what is happening to the products of the specific interventions; this would, in turn, make an assessment about sustainability more feasible.

Recommendations

* Although at the moment, opportunities to engage in meaningful project identification and planning are somewhat limited as a result of the considerable political uncertainty in Moldova, UNDP should continue to explore in particular with those projects that come to a close at the end of 2015 potential further areas of intervention and taking into account the UN’s specific strengths. Specifically, the EUHLAPM has produced a significant amount of policy analyses for the respective institutions that are involved in the project. These analyses should be explored as starting points to frame technical assistance interventions with institutions that UNDP has specific expertise and relevance to work with in the democratic governance area (for example in the area of anti-corruption reforms, and where a new anti-corruption infrastructure is required in Moldova; or key areas of public administration reform that will need to be tackled as a result of the recent OECD/Sigma public administration baseline performance exercise).
* Local public administration reform/decentralisation remains a key area to be further supported, and the considerable results of the current JILDP should be replicated in other LPAs. At the same time, the State Chancellery has insufficient capacities to ensure technical advice for this reform, and is looking specifically at UNDP as a long-standing partner with in-depth knowledge of Moldova’s institutional landscape to assist them.
* Ex-ante policy analysis and results-based management (RBM) principles (including ex-ante and ex-post evaluation) is a potentially considerable area of intervention and support that UNDP could deliver to the main or even all central public administration authorities (CPAAs). Even if these will become mandatory, CPAAs will not be able to implement RBM without comprehensive capacity building support on this issue.
* Efforts in support of increasing the efficiency, transparency and accountability of the Parliament of Moldova should continue in the medium term (i.e. into the next UNFP/CPD period). Cooperation should also continue with the CEC in order to consolidate results.
* Gender equality remains an area of considerable need and potential and where stakeholders are looking at the UN as leading this agenda. Specifically in this area, there is potential in the exchange of experiences and lessons learned with recently closed or ongoing projects that work on women’s political participation in Moldova, as well as with UN joint programmes implemented in the wider region.
* In terms of the indicators used at both Output and Outcome levels, UNDP should explore how to align these with the actual portfolio of projects and interventions so as to make sure that the programme can be held accountable for progress in those institutions it actually worked with. There is also scope to reflect on an increased use of **qualitative** output indicators, instead of, or in addition to, quantitative indicators, and for diversifying the indicators to measure progress.
* Results-based monitoring and reporting, and internal learning, should be further strengthened across the portfolio of projects, and the possibility of a dedicated monitoring and evaluation function within UNDP explored.
* The results of UNDP’s projects in the portfolio should find wider dissemination among the international community, and should be used more actively in coordination of technical assistance needs involving the government and the international community in Moldova, including donors. Through this dissemination, there would appear to be potential for UNDP to strengthen its role, and reputation, as a key partner to the Moldovan government.

# Background

The Republic of Moldova declared its independence in 1991, and has since then implemented reforms in different sectors; these reforms have been underpinned by the principles of a transition to a market economy and trying to break up the former, Soviet-style, administrative system, as well as of the democracy principles. Successive democratically elected governments have laid the foundation for a stable democratic political system.

From 2005 onwards, integration into the European Union became Moldova’s main priority for the country’s foreign and domestic policy. After signing the Moldova-EU Action Plan on 22 February 2005 in Brussels within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Republic of Moldova accelerated its legislative activity to harmonise the country’s laws and regulations with the EU *acquis communautaire*. However, as noted in the annual Progress Reports of the European Commission, the country needs to concentrate on effective law implementation and enforcement, and on building up accordingly the capacity of its administration, at all levels.[[1]](#footnote-1)

In 2005, the Government of the Republic of Moldova launched the Central Public Administration Reform (CPAR). Considerable resources have been allocated, and significant results were achieved in strengthening the financial, human and institutional capacities of the central public administration bodies. However, these capacities should have been further developed or at least maintained by the State Chancellery, as the main institution responsible for CPAR and policy coordination. Although CPAR officially ended in December 2013, for the past almost 2 years, the Government did not manage to approve a new CPAR strategy that could serve as the strategic and policy framework for continued efforts in this area, and as the basis for financial and technical support from development partners/donor community.

In order to support Moldova in its vision to become a prosperous and modern European country, the United Nations signed, in 2012, the United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework 2013–2017 (UNPF)-‘Towards Unity in Action’.

According to this document, the Partnership Framework “was developed collectively by the UN Country Team and the Government of Moldova and through extensive consultation with other partners. It provides focus and direction to the UN Development System in Moldova in setting its operational priorities. It is designed with a view to supporting Moldova’s efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, as well as its European integration ambitions.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

UNDP’s work specifically is set out in its Country Programme Document (CPD), covering the period from 2013 – 2017, which is aimed at contributing to the establishment of a modernised public administration system properly capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s priorities and European Integration, taking into account all the opportunities and realities of a middle-income country in transition.

The CPD is based on the cross-cutting (horizontal) principles of a human rights-based approach; gender equality; environmental sustainability; results-based management; and capacity development, and its results are organised according to three thematic outcome clusters:

1. the area of democratic governance, justice, equality and human rights
2. the area of human development and social inclusion.
3. the environment, climate change and disaster risk management.

Since the signing of the UNFP 2013-2017, the Republic of Moldova made some progress in achieving its objective of European integration, specifically:

* A Decentralisation Strategy was adopted by the Parliament in 2012, aiming at consolidating the capacities of the local public administration authorities, and at improving the management and the quality of public services provided to the citizens. However, the implementation of the Decentralisation Strategy faced many delays, the territorial-administrative reform was postponed again for another four years, and the official approval of the next phase of the reform is pending.
* Due to successful implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan, as of April 2014, Moldovan citizens travel visa-free in the EU’s Schengen area.
* The Association Agreement with the EU, including the DCFTA, was signed by the Republic of Moldova on 27 June 2014, and was approved by EU Parliament in November 2014.

During the current UNPF, two elections were held. These were assessed by the OSCE/ODIHR, in the case of Parliamentary elections, as “generally well administered, with the exception of the functioning of the new electronic system for the processing of voters on election day”, and “efficiently administered” in the case of local elections, but with some unclarified gaps in the Election Code related to the second round.[[3]](#footnote-3) For both elections, the CEC has been assessed as having “administered the elections in a professional manner enjoying high levels of public confidence.”[[4]](#footnote-4) The next regular parliamentary and local elections are planned to be held in 2018 and 2019, respectively, i.e. in the next UNPF cycle.

At the end of 2014, a big scandal occurred after the disclosure of the “stolen billion” from the “Banca de Economii”, the “Banca Sociala” and the “Unibank”, which hold about a third of all bank assets in the country. This theft had a huge impact on the state budget, political and financial stability as well as consequently on the level of trust in public institutions, given that part of the law enforcement structures of Moldova are alleged to be implicated in the scandal. The repercussions are felt by ordinary Moldovans, and at the time of the evaluation, the country is in a political crisis the outcome of which is highly uncertain.

## The Democratic Governance Programme Portfolio

The following table provides a brief overview over the projects that make up the portfolio under evaluation:

| **Title of the Programme/Project** | **Budget**  **for 2013-2015** | **Donors** | **Main goal** | **Expected results** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Building Institutional Capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration  2012-2015 | 1.7 MUSD | Government of Sweden  Government of Romania  Austrian Development Cooperation  Open Society Foundations  Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs | The project aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI) in the process of achieving its European Integration goals and commitments. | 1. Strengthened capacities of the MFAEI to lead on the European integration process 2. Signed and progressively implemented AA |
| EU High-level Policy Advice Mission to the Republic of Moldova  2012 – 2013 and 2014 – 2015 | 6.2 MUSD | EU  UNDP | To support the Government to implement its EU-integration related reform Agenda and in particular to assist the Government in developing the capacities required for the implementation of the Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, as well as the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan | 1. Selected line ministries and state agencies produce better policies and strategic plans 2. The policy management capacity of selected line ministries and state agencies is strengthened 3. Selected line ministries and state agencies are acknowledged as flagship institutions in the implementation of EU-integration agenda |
| Capacity Development of the National Integrity Commission of the Republic of Moldova’s Office  2014-2015 | 0.1 MUSD | Government of Romania | To contribute to strengthening the capacity of the National Integrity Commission so that the institution becomes able to ensure integrity, transparency and objectivity in the context of the national corruption prevention efforts in the Republic of Moldova. | 1. NIC will evolve into effective corruption prevention institution as a strong part of the national anti-corruption system of the Republic of Moldova contributing to establishment of a modernized public administration system, characterised by increased transparency, accountability and efficiency. |
| Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support  2012-2015 | 5.9 MUSD | Government of Sweden  Government of Norway  Government of Denmark  Government of Netherlands  Government of Moldova | To strengthen the institutional capacity of the Parliament and Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova, improving their main functions and entrenching gender and human rights aspects in formal political processes administration system, characterised by increased transparency, accountability and efficiency. | 1. The quality of Moldova’s formal political processes improved; 2. Quality of both the representative and oversight role of the Parliament fostered; 3. Institutional environment for electoral management bodies that can deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes improved; 4. Public registration process for Moldovans improved through supporting the modernisation of Moldovan electoral processes; 5. The constitutional reform implemented through an inclusive and participatory process. |
| Capacity Development of the Office of the President of the Republic of Moldova  2013-2014 | 0.03 MUSD | Seed Funding from RBEC NY  UNDP Moldova  UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre | To strengthen institutional capacity of the Office of President of the Republic of Moldova to ensure its effective contribution to delivering on national development objectives and to strengthen the public trust in the country’s governance institutions. | 1. Comprehensive functional and capacity assessment 2. Support to implementation of the Change Plan |
| Joint Integrated Local Development Programme  Policy Framework Support for the Implementation of the Decentralisation Strategy  2013-2015 | 0.4 MUSD | Government of Sweden  Government of Denmark  UNDP  UN Women | To support better and equitable service provision and sustainable local development, facilitated by the improved legal and institutional framework resulting from the implementation of the National Decentralisation Strategy | 1. Policy frameworks to support autonomous, sufficient and financially-sustainable LPAs developed and implemented |
| Strengthening the National Statistical System  2012-2015 | 0.5 MUSD | UN Women  UNDP  ILO  UNICEF  UNFPA | To strengthen the national statistical system through improvement of collection, dissemination and use of socio-economic statistical data | 1. Improved capacity of the National Bureau of Statistics and other line ministries involved in production of information through administrative reporting system, surveys and censuses (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour , Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Youth and Sports etc.) to produce data of appropriate quality being disaggregated by sex, age, and geographical territory in timely manner; 2. Improved availability of data through improvement of data dissemination systems, practices and tools (availability of high-quality statistical publications addressing needs of data users); 3. Improved use of available data for participatory policy making through enhancing statistical users’ literacy by increasing the capacity in government, CSOs and other stakeholders as well as stimulating data use for both in-government and outsourced policy analysis. |
| Women in Politics  2014-2016 | 2.9 MUSD | Government of Sweden | To increase the voice and the participation of women in political life in Moldova | 1. Legal frameworks and policies to advance women’s rights to participate in decision-making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and/or implemented: 2. Gender equality advocates influence legal framework and policies to increase women’s leadership and political participation |

The following table provides an overview of the Outcome and Outputs, and the indicators associated with each. The Outputs and their indicators presented in the Country Programme Document have been reviewed in the UNPF and UNPF Action Plan development process as well as during an internal review exercise, and these new indicators are the basis for the mid-term evaluation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Initial CPD Outcome** | **Initial CPD Outcome Indicators** | **Revised UNPF Outcome** | **Revised UNPF Outcome Indicators** |
| **Outcome 1.1 -Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities** | 1. Level of confidence in public institutions; | **Outcome 1.1 -Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities** | 1. Confidence in public administration institutions; Corruption Perception Index   **Baseline**: (May 2011): Government – 23%; Parliament – 19%; LPA – 47%; Corruption Perception Index: 36;  **Target:** Government: 45%; Parliament: 40%; LPA:60%; Corruption Perception Index: Improvement of the Moldova index   1. Hunter coefficient of vertical balance (the degree of fiscal dependency of local governments on resources transferred by central government)   **Baseline:** Varies between 13% and 19% (2011)  **Target:** A Hunter Coefficient that is above 20% and not varying   1. Public availability of data on equality disaggregated by key /target vulnerable groups and cross-cutting dimensions (incl. territorial, inhabitance area, etc.) to track progress towards MDGs and Moldova long-term development goals **Baseline:** Certain data available on gender and regional disparities but data missing on a number of key groups **Target:** Data on target vulnerable groups (persons with disabilities, Roma, persons with stigmatized diseases, third country nationals and stateless persons) made available and used in policy-making |
| **Initial CPD Outputs** | **Initial CPD Outputs indicators** | **Revised UNPF Outputs** | **Revised UNPF Output indicators** |
| **1.1.1. A modernized public administration system able to efficiently develop, implement and monitor policies and EU association agenda** | 1. Confidence in public institutions   **Baseline**: Gov: 23%; Parl: 19%; LPAs: 47%;  **Target:** 45%; 40%; 60%. | **1.1.1 - A modernized public administration system is capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s national priorities and European integration objectives** | 1. Ex-ante policy analysis and results based management principles mandatory for public policy development, ensuring results   **Baseline:** (2011) The methodology for ex-ante policy analysis (including human rights and gender sensitive approach) is not a mandatory step for public policy development  **Target:** Ex-ante policy analysis, including human-rights based, migration and gender responsive methodology, is mandatory for development, implementation and monitoring of all new public policies developed after 2013 |
| 1. Public Expenditure Framework Assessment (PEFA) scoring on multi-year perspective in fiscal planning, expenditure policy and budgeting   **Baseline:** (2011) PEFA scoring B+  **Target:** PEFA scoring A |
| 1. EU-Moldova Association Agreement signed and implemented in line with the Action Plan   **Baseline:** EU-Moldova Association Agreement not signed  **Target:** EU-Moldova Association Agreement signed and is being implemented in line with the Action Plan |
| 1. 2014 Population and Housing Census undertaken   **Baseline:** non-existent (last census in 2004)  **Target:** (2015) census undertaken successfully, providing reliable and credible data for policy formulation |
| **1.1.2. The Parliament is better able to exercise its representation, oversight and law making functions ensuring human rights and gender equality** | 1. A. Women representation in decision-making positions;   **Baseline** (2011): MPs-22%; 1 Minister; Mayors - 18%, Local Councilors – 28.7%;  **Target:** 30%, 3,25%,40%; | **1.1.2 - The Parliament and the Central Electoral Commission are better able to exercise their functions including to ensure human rights and gender equality** | 1. Women representation in decision-making positions   **Baseline:** (2011) MPs: 22%; Members of the Government at Minister-level: 2 (10%)  **Target:** (2015) MPs: 30%; Members of the Government at Minister-level: 30% |
| a.1. Moldovan citizens ~~from~~ abroad participation in voting  **Baseline:** (2010) 64,199 Moldovan citizens from abroad; (2014) 73,311 Moldovan citizens from aboard  **Target:** Increasing in Moldovans citizens from abroad participation in parliamentary elections in 2018 |
| 1. Public confidence in Parliament (sex-disaggregated)   **Baseline**: (spring 2012): – 25% report confidence in Parliament (27% of men, 22% of women)  **Target:** (2017): – 40% report confidence in Parliament (at least 40% of women) |
| 1. Human Rights and gender analysis of the draft laws in the Parliament   **Baseline:** 0  **Target:** 100% |
| 1. OSCE/ODIHR overall assessment of the quality of the general elections   **Baseline:** 2010 parliamentary election ‘met most standards’; 2011 local elections ‘largely met’ standards  **Target**: Steady improvement in meeting electoral standards as assessed by OSCE/ODIHR (general elections 2014 and local elections 2015) |
| **1.1.3. LPAs have larger autonomy, incl. financial, better capacity to exercise its functions applying human rights and gender equality** | 1. Degree of implementation of Decentralization Strategy;   **Baseline:** Approved in 2012;  **Target:** 70% implemented  A | **1.1.3 – Local Public Authorities have increased capacity and resources to exercise their functions including in better planning, delivering and monitoring services in line with decentralization policies** | 1. Increase in the share of local own revenues in the overall local budgets   **Baseline:** (2011) 10.6%  **Target:** 13% |
| 1. Degree of implementation of Decentralization Strategy Action Plan   **Baseline:** Decentralization Strategy approved in 2012  **Target:** Decentralization Strategy Action Plan implemented in a timely manner at a rate of 70% of planned actions for the respective year |
| 1. Women representation in decision-making positions at the local level   **Baseline:** (2011) Mayors -18%; Local councilors - 28,7%  **Target:** Mayors - 25%; Local councilors - 40% |

## The Assignment

## Objectives

This mid-term evaluation is guided by the Terms of Reference (ToR – see Annex 5) published by the UNDP Country Office (CO) Moldova in May 2015, and which form part of the individual contracts with the two consultants, who were recruited by UNDP Moldova following a competitive procedure. The evaluation started on 3 August 2015, and is expected to finish at the end of November 2015.

The purpose of the evaluation, which is in line with the CO’s Evaluation Plan, is on “assessing the progress achieved within the Outcome 1” of the UNPF/CPD for the Republic of Moldova (2013-2017)” and to assess the impact produced so far under the area of intervention, as well as draw conclusions and recommendations for eventual adjustment, and, to […] the extent possible, lessons learnt for further programming and implementation of [the] programme.” The Outcome to be evaluated is defined as “Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities”, and falls under the UNDP Strategic Plan focus area of “Democratic Governance”, and the Republic of Moldova’s national priority goal of “Responsible and Efficient Public Administration”. The evaluators were also asked to assess the relevance and success of the partnerships pursued within the portfolio of projects that make up the programme, and whether the “supported activities have contributed to strengthening transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities in compliance with the country’s EU integration agenda.”

The ToR further request an assessment of “efficiency and to a possible extent effectiveness of the UNPF/CPD”, with a focus on the discussion as to “whether the size of resources, both financial and human, and partnership strategies continue to be cost-effective and may be applied in continuation and/or revised/changed.” The evaluators were being tasked to identify changes in the “development outcomes, the degree and level of these changes, i.e. enabling environment, organisational and/or individual levels” and shall also “assess whether UNDP’s strategic positioning in this area can be improved”.

The ToR foresee a number of evaluation questions around the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as well as around questions dealing with partnership strategies and resource mobilisation. The scope of the evaluation is, per ToR, a total of eight projects, and for ease of understanding the discussion in this report, they are being presented in the “Background” section below.

## Methodology

The evaluators took a standard approach to this assignment, consisting, broadly, of desk review of documents; semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and third-party experts during in-country collection of qualitative and quantitative data; and triangulation of the available information, which resulted in the draft evaluation report. The evaluators received extensive comments from UNDP Moldova, which they have sought to address in the final evaluation report; the evaluators have accounted for the comments received and how they have been taken up in a separate Comments Matrix.

*Document review* covered the following types of documents (a detailed list of all documents consulted for this assignment can be found in Annex 4 of this report): project documents, including project workplans and budgets where available; project progress and final narrative reports; project evaluations where available; overarching policy documents including UNPF, CPD, as well as the draft internal mid-term review of the UNPF; and external documents, including sources of verification listed in the UNPF/CPD indicators (such as baseline data on gender representation, public confidence polls etc.), news clippings, and reports by relevant think-tanks.

*Interviews* were held with stakeholders and third party experts, whereby stakeholders were understood as anybody having a direct stake in the overall portfolio (UNDP senior management and donors) or the respective projects that are part of it (project managers and staff and project counterparts in the beneficiary institutions, and partner organisations); third party experts were considered respondents that were able to offer an informed insight into the sector and institutions that this UNPF/CPD Outcome area is concerned with (including think tanks and other donors active in Moldova). Overall, the evaluators met with 50 individuals (see Annex 2 of this report for a detailed list of people met). The majority of the interviews followed a semi-fixed structure, including a specific discussion, with interlocutors, of the Outputs and Outcome, as well as the indicators to measure them. Interviews were based on the premise of non-attribution, i.e. while all stakeholders are accounted for in Annex 2, specific statements cannot be traced back to them; however, the evaluators have kept track of statements in their internal interview protocol logs. At the beginning and at the end of the in-country work, the evaluators met with UNDP senior management for a briefing/de-briefing. During the debriefing, the preliminary findings were presented.

The evaluators have strived to arrive at their findings through *triangulation*, i.e. not to relay statements made by stakeholders during the in-country work and that could not be corroborated through additional sources.

The report presents the findings in accordance with the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. While the ToR ask for an assessment of impact (another OECD/DAC criterion), this is somewhat at odds with more recent UNDP evaluation practice and where there is an acknowledgement that to capture impact requires a certain remoteness in time to be discussed.

The evaluators, for ease of understanding, have in the beginning of the report, compiled tables with the key data of the portfolio that is the subject of the evaluation, as well as tables that show the CPD and UNPF indicators at Output and Outcome levels. An important part of the evaluation is the table, in Annex 1, and which lists the expected and the achieved results of the eight projects. Based on the UN Guidelines for Outcome evaluations, the report then goes on to discuss the relevance and suitability of the Outputs and Outcomes, as well as the indicators set to achieve these, and the relevance of the project portfolio in pursuance of these Outputs and the Outcome. Effectiveness discusses the results that could be identified from the projects in relation to their contribution to the achievement of the Outputs and Outcome as well as whether there have been results that are notable, but are not captured by the indicators/Outputs/Outcomes. The discussion of efficiency circles around whether the resources invested have produced results that are leading to Outputs and Outcome, but also includes a discussion on how resources have overall been deployed across the portfolio. In the section on sustainability, the evaluators extrapolate which of the portfolio’s results are sustainable against the background of Outputs and Outcome. The report concludes with a number of recommendations to UNDP.

As in any evaluation, there have been a number of **limitations** in the process.

First, a key issue with project staff was to delineate the assignment from an evaluation of the individual projects and rather to arrive at a shared understanding that the evaluation was looking at project results against the background of their contribution to the Outputs and Outcome level. With few exceptions, project staff, whilst aware of the existence of UNPF/CPD, were not immediately aware of the detailed indicators, nor of the fact that their projects should be held accountable for how they achieved towards this level. Among stakeholders from inside the Moldovan institutions, only one interlocutor was aware of the initial UNPF/CPD indicators, but was quick to dismiss these as “of their time”, i.e. reflective of the situation in 2012/2013.

Second, the quality of reporting across the portfolio is somewhat uneven, pointing to the need to adapt results-based monitoring and reporting practices across all projects. Results-based reporting is strong in the Democracy Programme, but less so in other projects, such as the project in support of the National Integrity Commission (NIC), and, to an extent, the Women in Politics (WiP) Programme. The focus on *activities* made it challenging to corroborate some of the project’s greater claims for results in the framework of this outcome evaluation.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Third, there is somewhat of a lack of institutional memory – to a certain extent inside UNDP, but very clearly on the side of the Moldovan government counterparts. This has made itself felt when discussing the indicators at Outputs and Outcome levels, and where it has not really been possible for the evaluators to retrace the thinking/rationale that links the Outputs indicators to the indicators at Outcome level.

Fourth, not all stakeholders that meetings were requested with were available for meetings with the evaluators. This concerns partners that were to be interviewed for the Democracy Programme in the Moldovan parliament, and specifically those parts of the Programme that deals with MPs; it also concerns the project that was implemented in support of the President of Moldova’s office in 2013-2014.

# Findings

## Relevance

This section discusses relevance along the following vectors: relevance of the Outcome and the indicators established to measure its achievement; relevance of the Outputs and the indicators to measure their achievement; the relation between Outputs and Outcome and the indicators; and whether the portfolio of projects has been relevant to achieve the Outputs and Outcome. In the last part of this section, there is a brief discussion about the relevance of UNDP as a partner and implementer in the context of the Republic of Moldova.

Overall, the evaluators find that the **relation between Outcome and Outputs is, overall, relevant**.

The overall UNPF/CPD Outcome, worded as “Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities” remains highly relevant for Moldova, and has been confirmed, including by the EU, as one of the key priorities for Moldova’s overall development. Given the lack of a clear public administration reform strategy at the time of the evaluation, it is, however, uncertain what the progress will be by the end of the current UNPF/CPD period. It stands to argue that this Outcome will and should remain in place for a next strategic period, as it is without alternatives for the country, and because the needs in this area will continue to be great if the current government were to re-new its vigour on implementing a widespread public administration reform.

The evaluators are less certain about part of the indicators that were established to measure progress towards the Outcome.

Indicator (a) sets out progress in terms of an increase in the “confidence in public administration institutions” and the “Corruption Perception Index (CPI)”, an annual meta-poll done by Transparency International (TI). With regards to “confidence in the public administration institutions”, the key problem that the evaluators have is that this is an indicator that is highly susceptible to outside shocks and developments that have nothing to do with the work of UNDP and the organisation’s portfolio of projects. At the time of the evaluation, confidence in the institutions was at a historic low—a function of information emerging in late 2014 of USD 1 Billion having been stolen from the bank system and transferred abroad, with allegedly partial knowledge by the key law enforcement authorities in Moldova.[[6]](#footnote-6) Using a country’s ranking in TI’s CPI is also fraught with problems, as the CPI does not lend itself to be used as a measurement for progress. The reasons for this are numerous, and include the fact that the CPI does not measure the same number of countries from one year to another; a country falling back in the ranking could be the result of another country progressing up the scale, making other countries automatically slide without the situation necessarily having deteriorated; etc. Most importantly for the discussion at hand is the fact that maybe somewhat counter-intuitively, a worsening of the score can be the result of improvements on, for example, the work of the prosecution (who deals with cases more effectively and to wide public acclaim), or because the high level of media freedom in a country means that corruption scandals are covered by the press more extensively than in countries with less freedoms and thus, causing the public to perceive corruption to be everywhere. This is not to dismiss the CPI, which continues to be a very valuable advocacy tool for a variety of reasons. The evaluators would, however, want to caution against using it as a source to measure improvements. Rather, they would argue for the employment of a variety of baselines and surveys simultaneously to measure trends and progress on the quality of governance. This can be a mixture of baseline data produced in Moldova (including, but not limited to, data by Transparency International), and international baselines. The debate around indicators is constantly evolving, and for the Moldovan context, it would be useful to look out for the upcoming (spring 2016) OECD/Sigma baseline survey on the public administration, and where Moldova is the pilot country for a new methodology. In general, the evaluators find that indicators at Outcome (and Output) level should be clearer aligned with the actual portfolio of interventions. UNDP should not be in a position to be held accountable for developments in institutions that it has not cooperated with in the framework of its project portfolio.

Outcome indicator (b) is the “Hunter co-efficient of vertical balance (the degree of fiscal dependency of local governments on resources transferred by central government)” would seem a suitable indicator to measure improvements at the level of local governance if one works on the assumption that making more resources available at that level brings government closer to people, thereby increasing the need and potential to become more accountable to constituents, and to provide services that have been identified at local level at less cost. As will be discussed below in the “effectiveness” section, this indicator shows a considerable improvement and one that can be directly attributed to the results of UNDP’s JILDP project.

Outcome indicator (c) is phrased as “public availability of equality data disaggregated by key/target vulnerable groups and cross-cutting dimensions (incl. territorial, inhabitance area, etc. to track progress towards MDGs and Moldova long-term goals)”. This seems a relevant Outcome indicator in particular for the transparency dimension of the Outcome, and one where in particular UNDP’s Statistics project has made a considerable contribution (see below section on “Effectiveness”). What merits to be kept in mind is that the mere availability of data does not equal demand for it—the evaluators encountered numerous stakeholders who were either not aware of the availability of this data on the NBS website; or they confirmed that they were not actively using it, for example for advocacy purposes. The evaluators assume that the initial rationale for this indicator was that once quality data is made publicly available, it will be use by authorities and civil society to inform policy making and advocacy. This, however, has only happened to a very limited extent. However, this is a legitimate indicator.

**Moving “down” to the Outputs level, the evaluators find that these are, by and large, relevant for the context of Moldova.**

Discussing the Outputs and the associated indicators individually, the following picture emerges. With regard to **Output 1**, “(a) modernised public administration system is capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s national priorities and European integration objectives”, the evaluators commend that the indicators have been considerably fine-tuned in UNPF and UNPF Action Plan, and moved away from measuring the Output in terms of an increase in confidence in public institutions (CPD), towards more tangible benchmarks, including mandatory ex-ante policy analysis including human rights and gender; an increase in PEFA scoring; and the availability of census data that is a precondition for evidence-base policy making; as well as the government commitment to European integration as expressed in the EU-Moldova Association Agreement and Action Plan. The key concern of the evaluators, and as will be discussed below, is how the portfolio of UNDP projects really contributes to the achievement of these outputs, and how relevant therefore the indicators are in this context.

**Output 2**, “The Parliament and the Central Election Commission are better able to exercise their functions including to ensure human rights and gender equality”, the indicators have been sophisticated, but it is not entirely clear to the evaluators how these were arrived at. First, as this Output is concerned with Parliament, it would seem clear that the UNPF indicators have moved away from the target of increasing women’s representation at local levels and would focus instead on women representation in Parliament (increasing women’s representation at local levels has been moved to Output 3, i.e. not been abandoned). What is somewhat less obvious is how the new indicator on the participation of Moldovan citizen’s abroad in parliamentary elections fit into the overall Output, and in particular where the target has been moved to 2018, which is outside the current UNPF/CPD period, which ends in 2017; UNDP pointed out that this indicator has been introduced by IOM and this puts it outside of the scope of this exercise. A further comment on the UNPF indicators, and echoing the discussion on the Outcome indicators above, is the suitability of “public confidence in Parliament” as an indicator for the achievement of the Output. The UNPF indicator on mandatory screening of draft legislation against human rights and gender standards would seem to be much more suitable, in that it aims at the establishment of procedures and methodologies that do not hinge on outside developments that the projects would seem to have no influence over. Output indicator (d) would seem to be a suitable one, given the role of the OSCE/ODIHR in the monitoring of elections.

Output 3, “Local Public Authorities have increased capacity and resources to exercise their functions including in better planning, delivering and monitoring services in line with decentralisation policies” probably best illustrates the problems of largely deploying quantitative indicators to measure progress towards the Output, and would make a case for thinking about how to capture and measure progress in qualitative terms in the future. As will be discussed below, one of the projects in the portfolio has made a considerable contribution to increased financial and fiscal autonomy in the Moldovan regions, yet, this type of progress is not captured by the indicators. Indicator (a) aims at an “increase in the share of local own revenues in the overall local budgets” from an initial (2011) 10.6% to 13%. Indicator (b) deals with the “degree of implementation of the Decentralisation Strategy Action Plan”, which is to be “implemented in a timely manner at a rate of 70% of planned actions for the respective year”; this indicator fails to capture the quality of the reforms or lack thereof, and the overall progress towards decentralisation and local administrative reform which is at the time of the evaluation one of the key grievances of the international donor community to the Moldovan government. “Women representation in decision-making positions at the local level” is in principle an appropriate indicator which should, however, been adjusted given that the time window for reaching it has passed, as the next regular local government elections are scheduled for 2019, i.e. for the next UNPF/CPD period.

At the same time, it is not clear, at indicator level, which of the projects in the current portfolio deal with PEFA issues, i.e. indicator (b).

There is a considerable window of opportunity, as well as an imperative, for UNDP to harvest the knowledge of its existing and outgoing projects to establish more meaningful indicators for a future UNPF/CPD, through brainstorming with current staff, and national and international experts. Also, at the time of the evaluation, OECD/Sigma was starting on a baseline survey of the public administration in Moldova, and which should form part of future UNPF/CPD Outcome indicators. Further, the EU is in the process of reviewing its methodology for its annual progress reports, and which will contain new indicators to measure reform progress on an annual level; given that UNDP works in support of the government’s European integration vision, the indicators used should clearer tally with EU benchmarks.

Taking a look at how the project portfolio corresponds to achieving the Outputs and the Outcome, the evaluators find an uneven picture. For Output 1 (“A modernised public administration system is capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s national priorities and European integration objectives”), the evaluators identify the following projects to work/have worked towards this Output: the European High Level Policy Advice Mission (EUHLPAM); the Statistics project; the capacity building project with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. The latter has made a contribution to helping the Ministry in the successful negotiations of the Association Agreement in 2013. The key concern the evaluators have is the role of the EUHLPAM in this context, and that would (given its size) seem to be the biggest project to contribute to the Output, as the project is covering 15 central public administration authorities. However, UNDP’s role in this project is largely administrative—a limitation imposed by the donor rather than chosen by UNDP. UNDP is currently working on project ideas so that with the end of the projects in the portfolio under evaluation, these Output area remains covered from 2016 onwards.

The Democracy Programme with its components on the Parliament and the Central Election Commission, as well as the Women in Politics project, work towards the achievement of **Output 2**. It is with respect to the Democracy Programme that the evaluators find that the indicators do not necessarily provide an adequate framework to fully capture the nature and the results of the project, leading to a situation where the project is performing very successfully, but neither the direction of the work of the project, nor the results achieved, translate into progress on the set indicators.

**Output 3** is covered by JILDP as well as the Women in Politics project and again, the achievements, and potential future achievements, are not easily captured by the current quantitative data, though in principle, indicator (c) concerning women representation in local decision-making positions is an appropriate reflection of what the Women in Politics programme is trying to achieve and should be measured against.

In terms of the **cross-cutting priority on gender equality**, the **portfolio of projects** **is** relatively **strong**, as in the majority of projects, there is a considerable gender component/objectives. Exceptions are the project in support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; possibly the project in support of the Presidential Office (where the evaluators were unable to meet with relevant stakeholders from the institution); the National Integrity Commission; and the European High-Level Policy Advice Mission. For the latter, project management has made very credible efforts to raise awareness on gender issues with the policy advisors; however, due to the specific nature of the project, it has been challenging to go beyond awareness raising.

The below table shows that of the eight projects making up the subject of the current evaluation, only two—the Democracy Programme and the Women in Politics programme—will remain active. The relevance of the overall portfolio needs to be maintained for the second half of the UNPF/CPD through the development and launch of new projects, and the evaluators understand that UNDP is working on several project ideas at present.A new project (and continuing work commenced in the framework of the NIC project), to last until 2017, in support of the National Anti-corruption Centre has started in August 2015, with support from the government of Norway, which will contribute to Output 1; however, Output 3 might not be covered sufficiently from 2016 onwards.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Title** | | **2006** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Building institutional capacity of the Ministry of  Foreign Affairs and European Integration | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| EU High Level Policy Advise Mission | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strengthening Capacity of the National Integrity Commission of  Republic of Moldova Project | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and electoral support | Electoral Support |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Parliament Support |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Capacity development of the President of the Republic of Moldova Office’s Project | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Joint Integrated Local Development Programme | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| UN Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System  of RM | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Enhancing Women’s Political  representation through improved capacity and enhanced  support in Moldova | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Given the current political situation in Moldova, and the potential for early parliamentary elections in spring 2016, fundraising in particular for projects involving central institutions is conditioned by the current political uncertainty. While donors appear to have funds earmarked for Moldova, understandably, they are less willing to offer resources for the work with central public administration authorities at this point in time, and because reforms are not progressing as expected. This includes decentralisation and local administrative reform, as well as overall public administration reform, and where the government has not delivered on its pledges to vigorously pursue reforms.

In this context, the relevance, and value-added, of UNDP as development and implementing partner in Moldova is important, as it might determine future resource mobilisation and partnerships with donors. The evaluators have found that UNDP works with some national counterparts that no other organisation or donor will work with, and where it is because of the perceived neutrality of the organisation that it is able to have access to governmental counterparts – this concerns in particular the Democracy Programme work with the Moldovan parliament, but also the work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration and, though a pilot project with probably somewhat mixed results, the Presidential Administration.

UNDP is the main partner for the Central Election Commission - a function of effective donor coordination in the country, and of UNDP’s establishing a strong reputation as a partner to the CEC. Given that there is a continued need to support the CEC (in part in order to retain its reputation as one of the most trusted Moldovan institutions and to safeguard it from political influence), UNDP would seem to be very well placed to continue its partnership with CEC; in the medium-term, CEC will be in need of support with regards to its new obligations in the area of lobbying and political party financing, in finalising the development of the State Automatized Information System Elections (SAISE), in particular with regard to achieving interoperability with other important stakeholders for elections registers (Civil Status Service; Cadastre; Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Justice et al.), and in further capacity development with view to planned reforms in elections legislation. UNDP has carved out a very strong reputation as a highly competent organisation on local self-governance through the JILDP (see also section on “Effectiveness”) - this project had a considerable recognition value in particular among third-party stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation. Finally, the UN in Moldova overall has been identified and credited with advancing the topic of gender equality across institutions and political agendas, and future interventions should capitalise on this.

However, there have also been mixed views on the role of UNDP. Namely, some stakeholders stated that they felt that UNDP was often primarily guided by disbursement pressures for projects. With regards to the results of a number of the projects in the portfolio, the evaluators find that it would be important that UNDP brings its voice to bear on what has been achieved and learned—too few interlocutors were aware of the work that has been done in particular in relation to the parliamentary component of the Democracy Programme. In sum, there would seem to be scope for discussion on how UNDP can strengthen its profile to better reflect its role as a critical, constructive partner to government.

**Effectiveness**

The following section is discussing the effectiveness of UNDP’s intervention at the level of Outputs and the Outcome. As the previous discussion on relevance—and in particular the relevance of the indicators—has shown, these are in many ways imperfect. The evaluators therefore find that a look at each project against the background of its contribution towards Outputs and Outcome even if these do not match any of the indicators, is pertinent in order to better appreciate the results achieved by the interventions.

With regards to Output 1, “(a) modernised public administration system is capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s national priorities and European integration objectives”. This is in some ways the most difficult of the Outputs under discussion.

The Statistics project has helped in developing the capacities to carry out the 2014 Population and Housing Census, the first such census since 2004. The data generated through the Census can help the development of evidence-based policies across sectors, but there is widespread consensus that this has not, yet, become a reality for Moldovan policy-making. However, the project has had a significant focus on working with potential users/policy-makers on the use of data, and thus, has made a contribution towards this objective.

The project in support of Capacity-Building of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and European Integration was an important contribution to the needs, in 2013 and 2014, created by the EU – Moldova Association Agreement (AA) and the DCFTA. This project was important for the Ministry to meet its obligations as the coordinating institution for the AA and the DCFTA and for the development of the AA Action Plan for implementation. However, it has to be pointed out that political developments (in particular in Ukraine) in the wider Eastern Partnership region had an important impact on the pace of the AA and DCFTA negotiations. In sum, it can be said that this project offered the right type of assistance at the right time, but that there were also significant outside factors that contributed to the signature of the AA and DCFTA.

The project in support of the Presidential Office was a worthwhile attempt at trying to strengthen this institution so that it can fulfil its role in the overall structure of checks and balances in a democracy.

The key stumbling stone for the evaluators under this Output is the EUHLPAM. EUHLPAM is working, across institutions, to modernise the public administration by providing strategic advice on the directions and content of the sector reforms that would advance Moldova’s European integration process. UNDP is a highly respected “back office”, ensuring the impeccable running of this EU-funded project. The evaluators do, however, understand that UNDP, had it had the choice, would have taken a more substantive role in the project had it not been for limitations imposed by the donor (the EU). UNDP reports that EUHLPAM and the access to its policy advisors has informed the organisation’s decisions on priority areas of work, for example in the area of anti-corruption.

In sum, **UNDP has made some contribution to parts of the Output – the preconditions for evidence-based policy making have been created, as well as a contribution was made to advance the negotiations of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement and DCFTA**. The origin of Output indicators (a) and (b) are unclear – none of the projects is fully involved in work on mandatory ex-ante policy analysis and results, nor PEFA (for which a new scoring will be presented by the end of 2015, i.e. this data was not available at the time of the evaluation).

With regards to **Output 2**, “The Parliament and the Central Electoral Commission are able to exercise their functions including to ensure human rights and gender equality”. Looking at the quantitative indicators under (a), the following picture emerges:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Women representation in decision-making positions** | | |
| *Baseline in 2011* | *UNFP/CPD Output Target* | *Actual Figure after Nov 14 Parliamentary Elections* |
| Women MPs 22% | Women MPs 30% | Women MPs 22% |
| Women Ministers 10% | Women Ministers 13% | Women Ministers 30% |

It is not possible to attribute any of the figures in the table to a project in the portfolio. WiP effectively started only three months prior to the Parliamentary elections of November 2014, and can therefore not be connected beyond doubt in the framework of this evaluation to developments in regards to these numbers (and neither to the numbers at local level – see below).

In terms of the increased participation in the number of Moldovans residing abroad (indicator a. 1), this is an indicator that has been introduced ex-post. Due to the contribution of the Democracy Programme’s CEC component, the number of out-of-country voters has increased, and CEC seems to be on track to increase this number further.

With regards to indicator (b) and the level of confidence in the Parliament, the 2012 baseline was “25% of the public expressed their confidence in [the] Parliament”. The UNPF/CPD aims, for 2017, to increase this to 40%. At the time of the evaluation, the trust in Parliament is 11.3%, and in the current political stalemate, it is difficult to make any reasonable prediction as to what the future holds.

As pointed out above, the evaluators find that the indicators do not sufficiently capture the results made by the projects in the portfolio towards the Outputs. This is particular found to be the case for the Democracy Programme’s parliamentary component, and where there have been **considerable results**. The parliamentary component of the Democracy Programme has developed a methodology for the mandatory screening of all legislation from a human rights and gender perspective. However, this methodology was, at the time of the evaluation, not yet used, and the Programme plans to continue working with the parliament secretariat on the introduction of this methodology into the routine practice of the Parliament. The indicators focus much on public confidence in the institution of Parliament, yet, the type of activities pursued by the project are unlikely to be immediately visible to the public. The evaluators have found that the assistance offered by the project has contributed to the working processes in particular among staffers inside parliament to become more professional, and thus more transparent. Gains from an earlier phase of the project (preceding the current UNPF/CPD period) were retained, in particular that staff works in accordance with job descriptions, and that the work of the secretariat is organised according to a clear organigramme. The project has helped the parliament to develop and implement a communications strategy, and has successfully lobbied for the establishment of territorial offices in four regions of Moldova, in an attempt to bring the parliament closer to citizens. The Parliament is providing its own resources to run these offices, and will evaluate, at the end of 2016, whether to continue running them. The project has successfully piloted MPs public hearings and visits in a number of locations in Moldova; the public hearings were of cross-party nature and organised in order to harvest the impact of a number of recently introduced key policies (such as on agriculture and policing). The project is working on making the legislative process more transparent by setting up a website that would clearly show the drafts and stages of the legislative process, and would thus make another considerable contribution towards the Output overall.

With regards to indicator (d), the March 2015 OSCE/ODIHR report finalising the findings from its observation mission of the November 2014 parliamentary elections found these to have been largely in line with international standards and thus, this indicator has been met for the general elections.[[7]](#footnote-7) However, OSCE/ODIHR’s report on the two rounds of the local government elections in June 2015 points to the potentially short-lived character of gains made. In its final report of August 2015, the OSCE/ODIHR highlights the fact that the local elections were held in an atmosphere of “decreased voter confidence in the process following cases of abuse of temporary voter registration provisions in the first round.” For both general and local elections, the OSCE/ODIHR report points out the public trust in the CEC was generally high.[[8]](#footnote-8) Important results from the UNDP projects that are not adequately captured by the indicators are: the tidying up of the voter’s list and thus, the removal of earlier problems with “ghost” voters; the improvement of the possibilities for Moldovans abroad to make use of their right to vote in the general elections; the introduction of a compulsory gender training module for temporary election staff; the capacity building for the newly established (with USAID support) of the a Centre for Continuous Elections Training, and the mainstreaming of gender into the curriculum of the Centre.

**In sum, the evaluators find that UNDP has made a significant contribution towards achieving this Output.**

With regards to **Output 3**, “Local Public Authorities have increased capacity and resources to exercise their functions including in better planning, delivering and monitoring services in line with decentralisation policies”, the following picture emerges. Indicator (a) concerned with “the share of local own revenues in the overall local budgets” shows that at the time of the evaluation, the percentage has been at 8.8. No prediction is possible as to whether this is going to increase in the future. With regards to indicator (b), the figures on the actual implementation rate at the end of the implementation period of the Decentralisation Strategy Action Plan is around 52%. Given that the most likely scenario is that decentralisation will be subsumed in a more general public administration reform, this indicator is not going to be reached.

Women representation in decision-making, i.e. indicator c), stands as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Women representation in decision-making positions at the local level** | | |
| *Baseline in 2011* | *UNFP/CPD Output Target* | *Actual Figure after June 2015 Local Elections* |
| Women Mayors 18% | Women Mayors 25% | Women Mayors 20% |
| Women Councilors 28.7% | Women Councilors 40% | Women Councilors – not yet known (CEC in process of analysis at time of evaluation) |

**As with previous Outputs, the evaluators find that the results are greater than captured by the indicators.** The JILDP has been pivotal in the progress that has been made on fiscal decentralisation, and it is regrettable that its role is not clearer acknowledged in the EU 2014 Progress Report.[[9]](#footnote-9) The JILPD has also made a considerable contribution, in those regions (strategically chosen for size and replication value, as well as trying to anticipate the potential future territorial division of Moldova if current plans come to the implementation stage) that it worked in, to introduce local governments to participatory models of policy making, with a very distinguishable human rights-based approach including minority groups.

**In sum, UNDP has made a considerable contribution to Output 3**, however, overall progress has been hampered by the government’s general lack of vigour and resolve in implementing the decentralisation strategy.

Across the three Output areas, a number of projects, namely the Democracy Programme (both components); the JILDP; the Statistics Project; MFAEI and the Women in Politics, have a number of results to show for. As a continuation of earlier efforts (i.e. preceding the current UNPF/CPD time frame), UNDP (an UN Women) were able to consolidate the place of gender equality as a policy issue at central and local government levels and in the Parliament. All stakeholders interviewed were unanimous in their attribution of a generally higher acceptance of gender equality as an issue to be tackled to the UN in Moldova. The Democracy Programme, together with the Women in Politics project has played a pivotal role on the formation of a Women’s Caucus in the Parliament of Moldova. As a result of the Women in Politics project and its intense engagement with civil society groups (including women forums and others), and building on previous work done by UNDP and UN Women, a law on a women’s quota on political party lists passed the first reading in the Parliament. As a result of the Democracy Programme, the parliament, at the final stages of the evaluation, was also conducting its first gender audit, and had adopted a Gender Action Plan.

At **Outcome** level, the evaluators have the following findings. With regards to Outcome indicators (a), confidence in public administration institutions and score and rank in the TI CPI, these stand, at the time of the evaluation, as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Confidence in public administration institutions** | | |
| *Baseline in 2011* | *UNFP/CPD Outcome Target* | *Actual Figure at time of evaluation* |
| Government 23% | 45% | 12.8% |
| Parliament 19% | 40% | 11% |
| Local Public Administration 47% | 60% | 42.5% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score in Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index** | | |
| *Baseline in 2012* | *UNFP/CPD Output Target* | *Latest available score (2014)* |
| 36 | Improvement | 35 |

As has been discussed in the section on “Relevance” above, the problem with these indicators is that they are highly susceptible to outside developments over which UNDP has limited or no influence. This applies in both directions. After the ratification, in June 2014 in the Moldovan Parliament, of the Association Agreement and the DCFTA, and in the aftermath of the introduction of the visa liberalisation regime, trust in institutions was on the rise. While international assistance made a contribution to the introduction of these policies and to the conclusion of the AA and DCFTA, it would be problematic to attribute the surge in confidence solely to these interventions. Conversely, the dramatic drop in public confidence is a result of events on which UNDP has had no influence, i.e. the large scale theft of a significant portion from the banking system, the repercussions of which can be felt by ordinary citizens. Given that TI’s Corruption Perception Index is issued in December every year, the score for Moldova in 2015 could be significantly lower (although it might still be higher than one would expect given that it is an aggregate index that combines data from three previous years).

With regards to Outcome indicator (b), the Hunter coefficient has improved from its 2011 baseline of a variance between 13% and 19% to a variance between 25% and 27% at the time of the evaluation. This improve happened due to the results achieved under JILDP, as the level of LPA’s fiscal dependency on transferred resources from central government changed after piloting the fiscal decentralisation reform, which gave more fiscal autonomy to local public administrations.

Outcome indicator (c) is phrased as “public availability of data on equality disaggregated by key/target vulnerable groups and cross-cutting dimensions (incl. territorial, inhabitance area etc.) to track progress towards MDGs and Moldova’s long-term development goals”. The target here has been “(data on target vulnerable groups (persons with disabilities, Roma, persons with stigmatised diseases, third country nationals and stateless persons) made available and used in policy making.” It has to be mentioned that data is increasingly collated and made available publicly, although there is maybe less tangible progress overall on it being used to inform policy-making and to monitor the impact of policies.

**Overall, the evaluators find that the projects in the portfolio have made a significant contribution to the Outcome overall, although the indicators applied are only of limited use to adequately capture this progress.**

The evaluators would like to point out here that at present, there is no staff, inside UNDP, in charge of monitoring and evaluation, and who could ensure that there are even reporting standards; or who would ensure that staff more generally, thinks about results and lessons learned and how those could feed back into the overall portfolio of interventions. The evaluators find that having such a function in UNDP could help structure learning and, in turn, further strengthen the organisation’s gravitas vis-à-vis donors and other players in the international community if UNDP were to become more pro-active on sharing the results of their projects with peers.

**Efficiency**

Assessing efficiency of the portfolio overall is fraught with a number of methodological difficulties (such as the absence of a baseline that could be used for comparison), as well as the challenge of comparing very different projects, with a great variety of delivery models; a varying degree of complexity of the institutional counterparts (see for example the work with a highly consolidated institution that is the CEC on the one hand, and the Parliament, which by its very definition is a more complex structure with an infinitely greater number of challenges); and vastly varying financial ceilings per project.

In general, the evaluators find that projects achieve their work plans, and this includes those projects the outputs of which might appear less sustainable at this point in time (Presidential Office or NIC due to plans to reform or even abolish the latter). In other words, at the project level, all projects delivered the outputs they had set out to deliver (see Annex 1 of this report).

The evaluators would like to offer the following general observations with regards to efficiency.

First, there is a general consensus among most project staff across the portfolio of projects that budgets have been realistic and that financial and human resources are by-and-large sufficient to achieve the projects’ work plans. Initial problems with insufficient number of staff in the Democracy Programme have been resolved, partly in response to a specific evaluation carried out for this project. The exception to this appears to be, at present, the Women in Politics project, which has taken a while to get off the ground, and where the *modus operandi* has yet to be fully consolidated. Overall, however, there is evidence that the UNDP Country Office Moldova has the capacity to realistically plan resources and deliver activities in accordance with specific work plans.

Second, the project in support of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) is a demonstration of the results possible with a very modest budget overall and where it was even possible to deliver outputs beyond the initial workplan. It is one of the smaller projects in the portfolio, and can only be considered as very good value for money, as well as a strong argument in favour of establishing long-term partnerships with institutional counterparts.

This project has also been an example of the successful coordination role of UNDP for the overall UN system vis-à-vis the national counterpart (NBS). NBS was explicit in appreciating the fact that the UNDP project manager had served as the effective one-stop interface between NBS and all the different UN agencies, thereby safeguarding NBS resources that would otherwise have been set aside to deal with the individual agencies. The UNDP project manager has also been highly effective in guiding other technical assistance (from the EU as well as Statistics Sweden), knowing in detail what the capacity needs of NBS are. The current project is the continuation of almost a decade of cooperation between UNDP/UN and the NBS, and deserves to be further examined as a highly efficient and effective cooperation model.

In case of the “Building institutional capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration” project with a relatively small amount of money, 9 areas, including European Integration benefited from considerable support combining specific technical expertise and concrete deliverables, as well as capacity building activities for permanent staff. At the same time, the ICT system developed and put in place through the project saved over 15% of the telephone costs of the MFAEI budget.

Taking into account the considerable number of beneficiaries, as well as the complexity and level of politics involved in decision-taking process for the Parliament component, and having in mind the level of ownership reached, both the efficiency of the Democracy Programme is considered remarkably high. Having in place two international specialists, the parliament and the CEC received continuous and efficient support. Using a mix of approaches such as trainings, workshops, technical assistance delivered by consultants supplemented by study tours can be considered highly efficient use of resources, as it ensures the commitment and engagement of the beneficiary. The activity of the Territorial Information and Communication Offices of the Parliament demonstrate the efficiency and sustainability of the funds used, having in place a system of expenses-sharing with the Parliament itself. High ownership and strong institutional capacity of the CEC, raised during previous assitance, contributed to the efficiency and effectiveness of the implemented activities.

The same conclusion can be made about Joint Integrated Local Development Programme. With a very modest amount of funds compared with other projects, the JILDP used different levels of intervention (LPAs, CPAs, State Chancellery, and Parliamentary Committees) and approaches, the project obtained a remarkable level of results.

Third, the evaluators find that projects across the portfolio have managed to work together exceptionally well. This is in particular the case for the Democracy Programme’s two components and its cooperation with the Women in Politics Programme, and where the former has been crucial to facilitate contact with the Parliament to advance the latter. Very efficient cooperation has also taken place between JILDP and Women in Politics, and where the programmes were able to exploit synergies and local knowledge, as well as between the MFAEI project and EUHLPAM, where the High Level Advisors of the line ministries helped the consultants from MFAEI project to understand the priorities of the specific sectors in the legal approximation to the EU norms and standards.

Fourth, efficiency is more mixed with regards to other projects. The range of outputs produced in the project cooperating with the National Integrity Commission (NIC) has been considerable given the relatively modest overall financial ceiling. UNDP helped to establish the institutional framework and to develop capacities of the corruption prevention institution, as well as to prepare necessary amendments to the legislation in order to make it more efficient in a participatory manner; the concern is the sustainability of this assistance, given the fragile nature of the NIC which had not been resolved at the time of the evaluation, and questions surrounding the overall direction of the anti-corruption agenda in Moldova. Although the future of the institution is not clear at the moment, the outputs produced by the project can be used by a successor if the decision is taken to transfer the civil servants’ integrity monitoring function to another entity. Similar to the NIC project, the project in support of the Presidential Office delivered, on a very tight budget, a range of useful outputs, such as a functional review and Change Management Plan. While the project has not seen a continuation, these products can be used by the beneficiary.

A similar, though in scale more substantial, question has to be asked about the EUHLPAM. Stakeholders were unanimous in their assessment that UNDP had facilitated the various stages of the EUHLPAM very efficiently, and the existence of clear rules and procedures to run this project has been recognised and commended. However, given the administrative nature of the arrangement with the EU, it is not clear-cut as to what the scale of the “loss” of this project really is for UNDP - the EU Delegation to Moldova has now tendered this project to commercial suppliers, and UNDP is no longer going to be eligible to run it. It is clear that UNDP still has the opportunity to harvest the experience of the project in order to explore potential avenues for future UNDP assistance, and the evaluators understand that this is indeed being done.

Fifth, in response to the ToR’s task to assess UNDP’s resource mobilisation and partnership strategies and which would fall under the current discussion of efficiency, the evaluators understand that while these strategies are not formalised, they implicitly entail a focus on working with institutions that are not targeted by other donors and where UNDP can bring its weight and reputation to bear as a neutral partner, and where there is a focus on consolidating and deepening co-operation with long-standing partners, which, in turn, contributes to the sustainability of results. Given the unpredictable political situation in Moldova at the time of the evaluation, donor appetite and readiness to fund interventions is considerably muted, which has an impact on funding opportunities for UNDP.

**Sustainability**

In the current political context of Moldova, it is difficult to make conclusive assessments about the potential for sustainability, in particular against the background of numerous failed or half-heartedly implemented key reforms, such as the public administration reform, and the decentralisation strategy.[[10]](#footnote-10)

One of the main challenges for sustainability of reforms in Moldova remains the high turnover of staff in the public administration, caused by its highly politicised nature, and the non-competitive, low salaries paid to public servants. In this context, the evaluators found that UNDP is cooperating with a number of counterpart institutions that are less affected by this problem than other public institutions, which increases the prospect of sustainability of results and therefore represent apt choices. Specifically, the Democracy Programme is working on both components with relatively stable structures (in the case of the parliament component, a considerable focus of the activities is with the technical apparatus of the parliament and where staff turnover is comparatively low); other counterparts to whom this applies are the NBS, as well as administrations at local level.

The evaluators have identified a number of areas with clear potential for **sustainability**.

In general, these are greater for those projects where there is a high level of ownership on the part of the institutional counterpart. This is the case for the CEC, and where the systems that have been put into place, such as the IT-systems, will survive beyond any project intervention, as will the capacities created within the institution. Though a more difficult case to make, there are prospects that the work with the parliament can become sustainable. An earlier phase of the project had, in 2012, introduced job descriptions for staffers, a strategic planning system, internal regulations etc. and these remain in place at the time of the mid-term outcome evaluation. The communication strategy is clearly being implemented by parliament staff. Ownership has also been considerable at the NBS, and where the capacities built will be used in the future.

The same conclusion can be made about the MFAEI project, as the institutional framework, including job descriptions and HRM policies developed during the project implementation are still used by the ministry, as well as the Informational Management System and the Call Centre.

The project in support of the National Integrity Commission has produced a training module on conflict of interest which is used in the Academy of Public Administration; there is also some prospect that the Strategic Development Plan developed in the framework of the project and now approved might be implemented.

In general, across the portfolio of projects there is a need for projects to better capture and monitor what is happening to the products of the specific interventions; this would, in turn, make an assessment about sustainability more feasible. The EUHLPAM has produced a very significant amount of strategic documents; policy papers; methodologies etc., of which a considerable has been officially approved by the Government. Examples include the Justice Sector Reform Strategy; the National Anti-corruption Strategy; Strategy for Police Reform; the establishment of the Food Safety Agency as one of the key requirements for signing the DCFTA; the Education Code; the acceptance of Moldova to the EU Energy Community Treaty; the implementation of the EU standards on migration and asylum that allowed the visa free regime for Moldovans, etc. A dedicated evaluation and monitoring function could help track the extent to which these strategic documents are being implemented in practice.

**Conclusions and Lessons Learned**

The evaluators have found that through the portfolio of the eight projects that were within the scope of this mid-term Outcome evaluation, UNDP (and, where relevant, UN Women) **has made a significant contribution**, towards the achievements of the three Outputs, as well as the overall Outcome, all of which remain highly relevant for the context of Moldova. The contribution was particularly high in respect of Outputs 2 and 3. Overall, the evaluators find the overall Outcome 1.1 as defined in the UNPF/CPD remains highly relevant for Moldova, but that the indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the Outcome are not always capturing the results achieved through the portfolio of projects. A key concern is that the indicators are highly susceptible to outside shocks and can reflect developments in areas that are entirely outside the control of UNDP. In general, the relation between Outcome and Outputs is, overall, relevant, too, and the indicators to measure the achievement of Outputs are by and large appropriate; however, they lean towards quantitative indicators and also are not necessarily capturing the full spectrum of results achieved in the interventions.

The setting of indicators is a challenge across development cooperation globally, and the discussion on suitable indicators is continuously evolving. The indicators in the current portfolio have recently been adjusted, and most of this fine-tuning is a step forward. In general, there is scope for extending the variety of baseline indicators to include more than one our two sources, as well as to include more qualitative indicators.

The discussion on the strategic positioning of UNDP (and, where relevant, of UN Women) has yielded a mixed conclusion. On the one hand, stakeholders were able to come up with the organisations’ key strengths in the Moldovan context, these are: political neutrality and resulting from this, access to government counterparts in a way that is not possible for bi-lateral donors or commercial contractors; a distinct profile in the areas of local self-governance reform (and “working on the ground” in local communities) and gender equality; access to a network of international experts on a considerable variety of subjects and who can be mobilised at short notice; an institutional structure with clear procurement rules and regulations. On the other hand, stakeholders felt that UNDP overemphasised disbursement pressures.

The evaluation has shown that there are considerable results across the portfolio of projects that UNDP can be proud of. The evaluators find that there is considerable untapped potential for these results to be disseminated among national and international partners. At the same time, there is also potential for reaching out to learn from projects with similar objectives, either ongoing or closed. This would appear to be particularly the case for the Women in Politics project.

Cooperation between projects is strong, and there is a real sense of a corporate enthusiasm between some of the ongoing efforts. This has translated into greater results than the projects could have achieved individually. In particular, this concerns the cooperation between the Democracy Programme (both components) and the Women in Politics project, and the JILDP and the Women in Politics project.

**Recommendations**

* Although at the moment, opportunities to engage in meaningful project identification and planning are somewhat limited as a result of the considerable political uncertainty in Moldova, UNDP should continue to explore in particular with those projects that come to a close at the end of 2015 potential further areas of intervention and taking into account the UN’s specific strengths. Specifically, the EUHLAPM has produced a significant amount of policy analyses for the respective institutions that are involved in the project. These analyses should be explored as starting points to frame technical assistance interventions with institutions that UNDP has specific expertise and relevance to work with in the democratic governance area (for example in the area of anti-corruption reforms, and where a new anti-corruption infrastructure is required in Moldova; or key areas of public administration reform that will need to be tackled as a result of the recent OECD/Sigma public administration baseline performance exercise).
* Local public administration reform/decentralisation remains a key area to be further supported, and the considerable results of the current JILDP should be replicated in other LPAs. At the same time, the State Chancellery has insufficient capacities to ensure technical advice for this reform, and is looking specifically at UNDP as a long-standing partner with in-depth knowledge of Moldova’s institutional landscape to assist them.
* Ex-ante policy analysis and results-based management (RBM) principles (including ex-ante and ex-post evaluation) is a potentially considerable area of intervention and support that UNDP could deliver to the main or even all central public administration authorities (CPAAs). Even if these will become mandatory, CPAAs will not be able to implement RBM without comprehensive capacity building support on this issue.
* Efforts in support of increasing the efficiency, transparency and accountability of the Parliament of Moldova should continue in the medium term (i.e. into the next UNFP/CPD period). Cooperation should also continue with the CEC in order to consolidate results.
* Gender equality remains an area of considerable need and potential and where stakeholders are looking at the UN as leading this agenda. Specifically in this area, there is potential in the exchange of experiences and lessons learned with recently closed or ongoing projects that work on women’s political participation in Moldova, as well as with UN joint programmes implemented in the wider region.
* In terms of the indicators used at both Output and Outcome levels, UNDP should explore how to align these with the actual portfolio of projects and interventions so as to make sure that the programme can be held accountable for progress in those institutions it actually worked with. There is also scope to reflect on an increased use of **qualitative** output indicators, instead of, or in addition to, quantitative indicators, and for diversifying the indicators to measure progress.
* Results-based monitoring and reporting, and internal learning, should be further strengthened across the portfolio of projects, and the possibility of a dedicated monitoring and evaluation function within UNDP explored.
* The results of UNDP’s projects in the portfolio should find wider dissemination among the international community, and should be used more actively in coordination of technical assistance needs involving the government and the international community in Moldova, including donors. Through this dissemination, there would appear to be potential for UNDP to strengthen its role, and reputation, as a key partner to the Moldovan government.

**Annex 1. Comparison table of expected and achieved results**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Title** | **Planned Budget for 2013-2015** | **Expected results** | **Direct beneficiaries** | **Achieved results** |
| Building institutional capacity of the Ministry of  Foreign Affairs and European Integration | * 1. M USD | 1.Strengthened capacities of the MFAEI to lead on the European integration process  2. Signed and progressively implemented AA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration – 157 permanent staff  8 Ministries and agencies which benefitted of technical expertise on legal approximation in specific areas | - Increased capacities of MFAEI and other line ministries high officials to negotiate and coordinate the implementation of AA/DCFTA  - ICT system applied for communication with missions abroad  - Over 150 participants have received induction into the PlanPro software that will be used as an electronic platform for reporting and monitoring of the implementation of National Action Plan on AA   * Increased institutional capacities of MFAEI in HRM, Strategic Planning, Project Cycle Management * Awareness raising and information campaign on freedom of movement in EU of Moldovan citizens, as well as on the costs and benefits of the European integration process * As a result of 54 international short-term expertize, over 70 EU Directives and Regulations have been transposed in draft Moldovan legislation in the areas of Agriculture, Food Safety, Transport, Environment, Finance, Internal Affairs, Social Protection and Legal Approximation * Objective, competitive and transparent recruitment system established |
| EU High Level Policy Advise Mission | * 1. M USD | 1. Selected line ministries and state agencies produce better policies and strategic plans  2. The policy management capacity of selected line ministries and state agencies is strengthened  3. Selected line ministries and state agencies are acknowledged as flagship institutions in the implementation of EU-integration agenda | 15 Ministries/ Agencies benefitting from EU high level advisors | * 99 policy notes on policy implications and EU best practices developed * inputs into 79 draft policies and legal acts * ministries and agencies submitted on time their contributions to the Government Action Plan * 46 strategies, policies, action plans and laws are informed by EUHLPAM advice * conducted and supported 54 policy consultation events. * 59 policy notes on strengthening institutional capacity for policy making were produced |
| Strengthening Capacity of the National Integrity Commission of  Republic of Moldova  Project | * 1. M USD | 1. Development of the NIC institutional capacity 2. Create an enabling environment for NIC | NIC staff – 27 permanent staff, including 5 NIC members | * Strategic Development Plan developed and approved * NIC staff have the necessary methodological documents to be used in preventing and dealing with integrity issues * Training materials for conflict of interest developed to be held by NIC staff * Training modules on Integrity and Conflict of Interest developed for the Academy of Public Administration and the national Institute of Justice * Improvement of the draft legal framework and strengthened capacity of NIC staff in drafting legislation * Increased transparency of NIC’s activity |
| Improving the quality of Moldovan democracy through parliamentary and  electoral support | * 1. M USD | 1. The quality of Moldova’s formal political processes improved;  2. Quality of both the representative and oversight role of the Parliament fostered;  3. Institutional environment for electoral management bodies that can deliver inclusive and modern electoral processes improved;  4. Public registration process for Moldovans improved through supporting the modernisation of Moldovan electoral processes;  5. The constitutional reform implemented through an inclusive and participatory process. | Parliament Secretariat – 490 permanents staff, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, 101 MPs,  9 Parliament Committees and 5 Political Fractions  CEC – 40 permanent staff | * Women Caucus in Parliament established * Gender audit of Parliament and CEC carried out * Parliamentary Committees started to collect information on legal framework implementation through fact-finding field visits and public hearings organized in other regions than Chisinau. * 4 Territorial Information and Communication Offices of the Parliament opened after a feasibility study developed. Their activity is totally owned, coordinated and financially ensured by the Parliament. * Open doors days for citizens organized by Parliament, according to the Parliament Communication and Outreach Strategy * E-petition system * Legal and communication technical advice for the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament ensured. * Capacity building of Parliament and CEC, in such areas as strategic planning, management, gender mainstreaming, communication, IT etc. * Voter registration road map completed and implemented * Analysis of all polling stations in regards to their accessibility for persons with physical disabilities * Automatized exchange of information took place between the state enterprise “Registru” and the CEC during 2014 elections * Out of country voting electoral information and communication campaign (11% increase of voters) * Web based learning platform developed with 13 e-learning modules |
| Capacity development of the President of the Republic of Moldova Office’s Project | 0.03M USD | 1. Comprehensive functional and capacity assessment  2. Support to implementation of the Change Plan | President Office – 25 permanent staff | * Functional review of the President Office undertaken and a Capacity Development and Change Management Action Plan developed * Recommendations on improving the efficiency of the communication of President Office * Exchange of experience with colleagues from other countries has been organized |
| Joint Integrated Local Development Programme | 0.4 M USD[[11]](#footnote-11) | Policy frameworks to support autonomous, sufficient and financially-sustainable LPAs developed and implemented | Decentralization Division of the State Chancellery – 4 permanent staff  Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family, sectorial working groups, Parity Parliamentary Commission  20 LPAs | * Improved capacities of the State Chancellery to organize and present draft normative acts during debates in Parliament * Assessment of the national statistical data relevant for decentralization, Monitoring and evaluation methodology for the Decentralization strategy developed * Policy recommendations for fiscal decentralization, social service decentralization, education decentralization, public property decentralization as well as human rights and gender mainstreaming recommendations for the proposed legislative package developed. * Training curricula developed for the Academy of Public Administration and trainings on decentralization and HR and GE responsive local policy provided * Support with the Communication strategy implementation |
| UN Joint Project on Strengthening the National Statistical System  of RM | 0.5 M USD | 1. Improved capacity of the National Bureau of Statistics and other line ministries involved in production of information through administrative reporting system, surveys and censuses (Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Education and Youth etc.) to produce data of appropriate quality being disaggregated by sex, age, and geographical territory in timely manner; 2. Improved availability of data through improvement of data dissemination systems, practices and tools (availability of high-quality statistical publications addressing needs of data users); 3. Improved use of available data for participatory policy making through enhancing statistical users’ literacy by increasing the capacity in government, CSOs and other stakeholders as well as stimulating data use for both in-government and outsourced policy analysis. | National Bureau of Statistics – 196 permanent staff  Line ministries involved in production of information | * Three EU regulations are used to produce national statistics * 5 statistical methodologies   and 3 statistical toolkits  were developed or revised to ensure territorial perspective and comply with EU/international  standards and responding to internal data users' needs.   * Population and Housing Census 2014 (PHC) conducted and Post-Enumeration Survey (PES) carried out to measure the quality of Census. * 3 software produced, tested and put in practice for statistical data inputting and processing in territorial perspective * Government’s DATABANK of statistical data has been added a new compartment on TERRITORIAL STATISTICS * containing over 100 hundred indicators at territorial level and disaggregated by other dimensions and made available for the public. * NATIONAL SET of (42) GENDER INDICATORS compliant with the sets recommended by UNStatCom made available for the public use through dissemination via NBS databank, in the chapter „Gender statistics”. * Qualitative and methodological review of Small Areas Deprivation Index (SADI) is undertaken to better observe disparities at the level of rural communities |
| Enhancing Women’s Political  representation through improved capacity and enhanced  support in Moldova | 2.9 M USD[[12]](#footnote-12) | 1. Legal frameworks and policies to advance women’s rights to participate in decision-making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and/or implemented 2. Gender equality advocates influence legal framework and policies to increase women’s leadership and political participation | No direct assigned beneficiary, as everyone who has any relation to gender equality is to be involved in project implementation. | * Amendments that include promotion of gender quota in political parties and the Government at 40%, passed the first hearing in the Parliament. * National Forum of Women Mayors have been held and a resolution on women’s promotion and better representation on the electoral list. * Based on the needs’ identification, the capacities of 100 women candidates, representatives of political parties registered for the parliamentary elections, have been enhanced by both participating UN agencies and partner NGOs * “Women in Politics” Programme provided assistance to Parliamentary Constituency and Information Offices (PCIOs) in developing of a Guide, describing modalities of citizens ’ engagement, especially women from vulnerable groups, in the work of the Parliamentary Constituency Offices. * NGOs capacities on gender equality have been raised through a training and an advocacy workshop |

# Annex 2. List of People

List of people

met during the DG outcome evaluation mission

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
| 1. | Narine Sahakyan | - | Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP |
| 2. | Alla Skvortova | - | Effective Governance Cluster Lead, UNDP |
| 3. | Alexandru Stratulat | - | Project Manager, EUHLPAM, UNDP |
| 4. | Victoria Ignat | - | UNDP Component Manager, WiP programme |
| 5. | Svetlana Andrei | - | WiP Program Manager |
| 6. | Elena Rățoi | - | WiP UN Women Component Manager |
| 7. | Victoria Puiu | - | WiP Communication specialist |
| 8. | Sergiu Galitchi | - | Democracy Programme Manager |
| 9. | Oskars Kastens | - | Parliamentary Specialist, Democracy Programme |
| 10. | Elmars Svekis | - | Electoral Specialist, Democracy Programme |
| 11. | Eva Bounegru | - | Senior Project Officer, Democracy Programme |
| 12. | Victoria Muntean | - | Senior Project Officer, Democracy Programme |
| 13. | Aurelia Spataru | - | Project Manager, Statistical System Project, UNDP |
| 14. | Mihai Roscovan | - | Project Coordinator, JILDP, UNDP |
| 15. | Olesea Cazacu | - | Senior Project Officer, JILDP, UNDP |
| 16. | Zinaida Adam | - | Capacity Building Specialist, JILDP, UNDP |
| 17. | Elena Spînu | - | Program Analyst, JILDP, UNDP |
| 18. | Serghei Palihovici | - | General Secretary of the Government |
| 19. | Pavel Burghelea | - | Advisor of the General Secretary on technical assistance |
| 20. | Ion Gumene | - | Advisor to the Prime-Minister on public administration |
| 21. | Ala Negruta | - | Head of Social Services and Living Conditions Statistics Division, National Bureau of Statistics |
| 22. | Iurie Mocanu | - | Head of Statistical Infrastructure Division, National Bureau of Statistics |
| 23. | Svetlana Bukgac | - | Head of Industry, Energy and Construction Statistics Division, National Bureau of Statistics |
| 24. | Dragos Mihael Ciuparu | - | EUHLPA, Education |
| 25. | Marian Titulescu | - | EU HLPA, Internal Affairs |
| 26. | Daniels Pavluts | - | EU HLPA, Economy |
| 27. | Rimantas Veckys | - | EU HLPA, Public Finance Management |
| 28. | Srichander Ramaswamy | - | EUHLPA, Banking, Prime-minister Office |
| 29. | Alexandru Musteață | - | Program Manager, Soros Foundation |
| 30. | Victoria Cujbă | - | Head of Decentralization Division, State Chancellery |
| 31. | Traian Turcanu | - | Former Project Manager, |
| 32. | Natalia Camburian | - | Soros Foundation |
| 33. | Igor Boțan | - | Executive Director, ADEPT |
| 34. | Polina Panaite | - | Program Coordinator, ADEPT |
| 35. | Veaceslav Paladi | - | Former Manager of the Presidency Office Project |
| 36. | Andrei Brighidin | - | EEF Director, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation |
| 37. | Ala Popescu | - | Head of Parliamentary Secretariat |
| 38. | Gheorghe Ursoi | - | Head of Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Secretariat of the Parliament |
| 39. | Stefan Vlas |  | Mayor, Sarata Galbena |
| 40. | Nina Orlova | - | Senior Program Officer |
| 41. | Jordi Rodrigues Ruiz | - | Attache/Project Manager, EU Delegation |
| 42. | Iurie Ciocan | - | CEC President |
| 43. | Adrian Lupusor | - | Executive Director, Expert Group |
| 44. | Andrei Russanovschi | - | Deputy head of mission, National Democratic institute |
| 45. | Andrew D Young | - | Chief of Party, National Democratic Institute |
| 46. | Anatolie Donciu | - | NIC President |
| 47. | Tatiana Molcean |  | Deputy Director for European Integration, MFAEI |
| 48. | Corneliu Eftodi | - | National Program Officer, UN Women |
| 49. | Lucretia Ciurea | - | M&E Specialist, UN Women |
| 50. | Ina Pislaru | - | Democracy and Governance specialist, USAID |

**Annex 3. Mission Schedule**

**September 14-18**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Monday, 14 | Tuesday, 15 | Wednesday, 16 | Thursday, 17 | Friday, 18 |
| 8.00 – 9.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9.00 – 10.00 | Meeting with Effective Governance Cluster Lead, Mrs. Alla Skvortova |  |  |  |  |
| 10.00 – 11.00 | Meeting with UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Mrs.Narine Sahakyan and Mrs. Alla Skvortova | Meeting with Women in Politics Programme | Meeting with Secretary General of the Government Mr. Serghei Palihovici |  | Meeting with former project manager of the Support to Presidency Office project |
| 11.00 - 12.00 | Meeting with former head of coordination policy Department |
| 12.00 – 13.00 |  |  | Meeting with Statistics project |  | Meeting with East European Foundation |
| 13.00 – 14.00 | Meeting with EUHLPAM Project |  |  |
| 14.00 – 15.00 | Meeting with Democracy Programme representatives | Meeting with National Bureau of Statistics | Meeting with SOROS Foundation representative on Good Governance | Meeting with Democracy Programme Manager |
| 15.00 – 16.00 |  |  |
| 16.00 – 17.00 |  | Meeting with JILD Programme | Meeting with EU High Level Policy Advisors | Meeting with Decentralization Policy Division representatives, State Chancellery | Meeting with Soros representatives on gender issues |
| 17.00 – 18.00 |  |

**September 21-25**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Monday, 21 | Tuesday, 22 | Wednesday, 23 | Thursday, 24 | Friday, 25 |
| 8.00 – 9.00 |  |  |  | Meeting with NIC President |  |
| 9.00 – 10.00 |  |  | Meeting with CEC President |  |
| 10.00 – 11.00 | Meeting with ADEPT representatives |  | Meeting with Swedish Embassy representatives | Presentation of the evaluation mission results |
| 11.00 - 12.00 | Meeting with Head of Parliament Secretariat | Visit of the Parliament building |
| 12.00 – 13.00 |  |  | Meeting with National Development Institute representatives | Meeting with UN Women representatives |
| 13.00 – 14.00 | Meeting with former project manager of the MFAEI project |  |  |
| 14.00 – 15.00 |  | Meeting with EU delegation representatives |  | Meeting with USAID representatives |
| 15.00 – 16.00 |  |  |  |  |
| 16.00 – 17.00 | Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration |  | Meeting with Expert Group representatives |  |  |
| 17.00 – 18.00 |  |  |  |  |

# Annex 4. List of Consulted Documents

1. UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results

2. UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluators

3. Ethical Code of Conduct for Evaluation in UNDP

4. UNDP Results-based management: Technical Note

5. Government of the Republic of Moldova Activity Programme (2015–2018)

6. National Development Strategy Moldova 2020

7. Development Partners’ Briefing Book for the Government of Moldova

8. Project documents and progress reports, project evaluation reports

9. UNDP Assessment of Development Results, 2012

10. United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) “Towards Unity in Action” (2013–2017)

11. UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2013-2017

12. OSCE-ODIHR Limited International Election Observation Mission Report, June 2015, Local elections

13. OSCE-ODIHR Limited International Election Observation Mission Report, November 2015, Parliamentary elections

14. Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in the Republic of Moldova Report, European Commission

15. National Decentralization Strategy

16. Council of Europe, Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, Peer Review Exercise on Decentralization Reform in Moldova

17. Barometer of Public Opinion, Institute for Public Policy

18. Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Assessment update for Moldova (2008-2010)

19. Moldova national integrity system assessment 2014, Transparency International.

# Annex 5. ToRs



**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Job title:** | **International consultant Democratic Governance Outcome Evaluation** |
| **Duty station:** | Chisinau, Moldova |
| **Reference to the project:** | n/a |
| **Contract type:** | Individual Contract (IC) |
| **Expected duration of the**  **assignment:** | 30 days within a 3 months assignment (10 in country, 20 home based) |
| **Starting date:** | End July, 2015 |

**A. Brief National and Programme Context**

Moldova declared its independence in 1991 with the European integration becoming a strategic priority 8 years after. Since its independence the country engaged into a multitude of reforms across all sectors, in parallel developing policies and legal and institutional frameworks aiming at achieving the Democratic Governance standards. The most important reform thought to contribute to the major transformation is the Central Public Administration Reform launched in 2005. It intended to improve transparency and accountability of the public administration, establish a modern civil service system and strengthen the public finance management. In 2012, the Decentralization Strategy aiming at consolidating the capacities of the local public administration authorities and at improving the management and the quality of public services provided to the citizens had been approved. The provisions of the Strategy have been correlated with the relevant policies documents, the Reform of the Central Public Administration, and other reforms representing an operational continuity of the actions of the National Development Strategy. In order to move towards a participative and inclusive process of policy development, the National Participation Council (NPC) representing the Civil Society organizations had been established. Representatives of the NPC participate in the Government meetings and are consulted on the policies developed. These developments had been noted at the global level, as the Republic of Moldova was among five winners of the 2013 UN Public Service Awards for the set of initiatives on increasing decisional transparency and fostering participation of civil society in this process.

The State Chancellery is the leading central public authority responsible for the implementation of the above reforms and for coordinating the policies developed by the Line Ministries. Within the Central Public Administration Reform process (CPAR) it provided methodological guidance in the elaboration of the Institutional Development plans by the Line Ministries and other central administration institutions which identified the needs and set the actions for strengthening the financial, human and institutional capacities of the central public administration bodies. However, the linkage between strategic planning and finance planning is still weak, while the ex-ante policy impact assessment piloted through the CPAR has not been legally enacted. The overall capacity of the public administration to develop, implement and monitor policies in a transparent and participative manner is not sufficient for achieving a steady progress in the reform process. The implementation of the Decentralization Strategy faced many delays, the territorial- administrative reform is postponed again for another four years, and the official approval of the next phase of PAR is pending.

Against this background United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) “Towards Unity in Action” and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Programme Document (CPD) 2013 – 2017 response is aimed at contributing to the establishment of a modernized public administration system properly capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s priorities and European integration objectives. Results achieved with the UNDP and UN Women’s assistance will contribute to the achievement of UNPF/CPD Outcome 1 which refers to *increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities*. The assistance is provided through UNDP programmes and projects, as well as through the joint projects implemented in cooperation with the UN Women with co-funding by Donor partners, such as EU and the Governments of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Romania, and in collaboration with the national partners, such as the Parliament, the Central Elections Commission, the National Integrity Commission, State Chancellery, 15 other central Government institutions and the local authorities.

**B. Purpose of the Evaluation**

This mid-term evaluation exercise is commissioned according to the in the Republic of Moldova Evaluation Plan. The evaluation covers Outcome 1 of the UNPF/CPD 2013 – 2017. The evaluation will put the major focus on assessing the progress achieved within the Outcome 1 “Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities” and the impact produced so far under the area of intervention, as well as draw conclusions and recommendations for eventual adjustments, and, to extend possible, lessons learnt for further programming and implementation of programme. The evaluator shall also give importance to assessing efficiency and to a possible extent effectiveness of the UNPF/CPD Outcome 1, whether the size if resources, both financial and human, and partnership strategies continue to be cost-effective and may be applied in continuation and/or revised/changed.

The following Outputs falling under this Outcome, as stated in UNDP CPD 2013 – 2017, are to be part of this evaluation:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| CPD/UNPF Outcome | CPD/UNPF Outputs | UNDP and joint UNDP/UNW  Programmes/Projects |
| Building Institutional Capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (2012 – 2015)  EU High Level Policy Advice Mission to the Republic of Moldova (2013 – 2015)  Capacity Development of the National Integrity Commission of the Republic of Moldova’s Office (2014 – 2015)  Support to Parliamentary Development and Electoral Support in Moldova (2012 –  2015)  Capacity Development of the Office of the  President of the Republic of Moldova (2013  – 2014)  Joint Integrated Local Development Programme/ Policy Framework Support for the Implementation of the Decentralization Strategy (2013-2015)  Strengthening the National Statistical  System (2012 – 2015) |
| Increased transparency,  accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities  *Indicators:*  a. Confidence in public administration institutions *Baseline:* (May 2011): Government – 23%; Parliament – 19%; LPA –  47%;  *Target:* Government: 45%; Parliament: 40%; LPA:60%; Corruption Perception Index: Improvement of the Moldova index  b. Hunter coefficient of vertical balance (the degree of fiscal dependency of local governments on resources transferred by central government)  *Baseline:* Varies between 13%  and 19% (2011)  *Target:* A Hunter Coefficient that is above 20% and not varying  c. Public availability of equality data (disaggregated data on vulnerable groups) | 1.1 - A modernized public administration system is  capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s national priorities and European integration objectives  *Indicators:*  a. Ex- ante policy analysis and results based management principles mandatory for public policy development, ensuring results oriented, rights based and gender response implementation and monitoring with clear linkages to program based budgeting  *Baseline:* (2011) The methodology for ex-ante policy analysis (including human rights and gender sensitive approach) is not a mandatory step for public policy development  *Target:* Ex-ante policy analysis, including human-rights based and gender responsive methodology, is mandatory for development, implementation and monitoring of all new public policies developed after  2013  b. Public Expenditure Framework Assessment (PEFA) scoring on multi-year perspective in fiscal planning, expenditure policy and budgeting  *Baseline:* (2011) PEFA scoring B+  *Target:* PEFA scoring A  c. EU-Moldova Association Agreement signed and implemented in line with the Action Plan  EU-Moldova Association Agreement not signed |
| to track progress towards  MDGs and Moldova long- term development goals  *Baseline:* Certain data available on gender and regional disparities but data missing on a number of key groups  *Target:* Improved data in key areas in particular on persons with disabilities, Roma, persons with stigmatized diseases, third country nationals and stateless persons | *Target:* EU-Moldova Association Agreement signed and is being implemented in line with the Action Plan  d. population census undertaken successfully, providing reliable and credible data for policy formulation  *Baseline:* non-existent (last census in 2004)  *Target:* 2014 Population and Housing Census undertaken |  |
| 1.2 – The Parliament and the Central Electoral  Commission are better able to exercise their functions including ensuring human rights and gender equality  *Indicators:*  a. Women representation in decision-making positions  *Baseline:* (2011) MPs: 22%; Members of the Government at Minister-level: 2 (10%)  *Target:* (2015) MPs: 30%; Members of the Government at  Minister-level: 30%  b. Public confidence in Parliament (sex-disaggregated)  *Baseline:* (spring 2012): – 25% confidence in Parliament  (27% of men, 22% of women)  *Target:* (2017): 40% report confidence in Parliament (at least 40% of women)  c. Human Rights and gender analysis of the draft laws in the Parliament  *Baseline:* 0  *Target:* 100%  d. ODIHR/OSCE overall assessment of the quality of the general elections  *Baseline:* 2010 parliamentary election ‘met most standards’; 2011 local elections ‘largely met’ standards *Target:* Steady improvement in meeting electoral standards as assessed by ODIHR’ (general elections 2014 and local elections 2015) |
| 1.3 – Local Public Authorities have increased capacity  and resources to exercise their functions including in better planning, delivering and monitoring services in line with decentralization policies.  *Indicators:*  a. Increase in the share of local own revenues in the overall local budgets  *Baseline:* (2011) 10.6%  *Target:* 13%  b. Degree of implementation of Decentralization  Strategy Action Plan |

*Baseline:* Decentralization Strategy approved in 2012

*Target:* Decentralization Strategy Action Plan implemented in a timely manner at a rate of 70% of planned actions for the respective year

c. Women representation in decision-making positions at the local level

*Baseline:* (2011) Mayors -18%; Local councilors - 28,7%

*Target:* Mayors - 25%; Local councilors - 40%

**C. Objectives and scope of the Evaluation**

This is a progress evaluation aiming to assess the extent to which programme and project activities implemented with partners during 2013 – 2014 have contributed to the progress under UNPF/CPD Outcome 1, as well as to achievement of the set of targets, whether existing partnership with partners proved to be successful and relevant and overall whether UNDP and relevant UN Women (further referred to as UNW) supported activities have contributed to strengthening transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities in compliance with the country’s EU integration agenda. The eva luation shall identify changes that happened during these two years as they relate to the development outcomes, the degree and level of these changes, i.e. enabling environment, organizational and/or individual levels. It shall also assess whether UN/DP’s strategic positioning in this area can be improved.

The evaluator shall take into account and rank the following items:

 Status and degree of change in the Outcome, and factors influencing the Outcome

 Level of incurred changes: Enabling environment, Organizational and/or individual levels

 UN/DP’s strategic positioning on achieving the Outcome

 Relevance of the Outcome and outputs

 Partnership strategy

 Sustainability: whether there is ownership and capacity to maintain and manage development in the

Outcome

The International Consultant will work in a team with a national consultant that will provide necessary support, as per the TOR for the national consultant.

Main partners to be involved in the evaluation are: Parliament, CEC, State Chancellery, Line Ministries, NBS, Project Management Teams, NGOs and LPAs.

**Worksheet on Outcome Evaluation: Categories of Analysis/Scope**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Notes** |
| Progress to outcome  realization | Review indicators to determine extent/degree of contribution in the  outcome realization by assessing progresses made to-date vis-à-vis baseline. Focus on the how and why outputs and strategies contributed to achieving outcome. Focus on questions of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. |
| Factors affecting outcome | These are political, economic and social factors. As such, the evaluation  scope shall be as broad as possible so s to take all factors into account |
| UN’s contribution to  outcome | Conduct quantitative and qualitative assessments of contributions from  UNDP’s own and joint interventions vis-a-vis outcome indicator baseline. Assessment should focus on determine the continued validity of the strategies applied to-date by UN/DP and so as to decide whether they should be revised and/or changed for the next programming cycle |
| Partnership strategy | Determine whether the best possible synergies have been established  among partners and the steering role played by UN/DP within this context. Assess whether other stakeholders and/or sponsors should be |

included and/or excluded from the programme in continuation as well as referring to the next phase of CPD

Specifically, the Outcome evaluation should address, but not limited to, the following **questions and issues**:

1. Outcome analysis

 Are the Outcome and associated projects/programmes relevant, appropriate and strategic to national goals and UN/DP’s mandate?

 Where the actions to achieve the outputs and outcome effective and efficient?

 Where there multi-level interventions conducted (environment, organization, individual)?

How many?

 Are the outputs and outcome leading to benefits beyond the life of the existing projects?

 Which findings may have relevance for eventual adjustments and/or future programming?

 Are the stated outcome, indicators and targets appropriate for the development situation in

Moldova and UN/DP’s programme of assistance in this field?

 What is the current status and prospects for achieving the outcome with the indicated inputs and within the indicated timeframe?

 What are the main factors (positive and negative) within and beyond UN/DP’s interventions that affected or are affecting the achievement of the outcome? How have these factors limited or facilitated progress towards outcome?

 Were UN/DP’s proposed contributions to the achievement of the outcome appropriate,

sufficient, effective and sustainable?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2. | Outpu | t analysis |
|  |  | What are the key outputs that have been produced by UN/DP to contribute to the Outcome? |
|  |  | Are the UN/DP outputs relevant to outcome? |
|  |  | Are the monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate to link these outputs to the |
|  |  | Outcome, or is there a need to improve these indicators? |
|  |  | Is sufficient progress been made with regard to UN/DP outputs? |

3. Resources, partnerships, and management analysis

 Was UN/DP’s resource mobilization strategy in the field appropriate and effective in

achieving the Outcome?

 Was UN/DP’s partnership strategy in the field appropriate and effective in achieving the

outcome?

 Are UN/DP’s management structures and working methods appropriate and effective in

achieving the Outcome/

 Overall, assess the scope, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of UN/DP’s resource

mobilization, partnership and management arrangements in achieving the Outcome.

4. Recommendations

 Based on the above analysis, recommendations should be provided as to how UN/DP should adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, working methods and/or management structures for an efficient and effective implementation of the current UNPF/CPD.

To the extent possible, answers to the above questions shall address the implications for women and men, their participation in design and implementation of the outcome and particular programmes and projects in the outcome area, whether the latter had addressed the issues of gender inclusion, equality and empowerment and contributed to strengthening the application of these principles to various development efforts in the country, and how gender issues had been mainstreamed across the outcome area by UN/DP. Evaluation shall also address the extent to which UN/DP had advocated for the principle of equality and inclusive development, and has contributed to empowering and addressing the needs of the disadvantaged and vulnerable population.

Evaluation methodology is provided in the UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results and the UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluators. Based on these guiding documents, and in consultation with the participating UN Agencies in Moldova, the evaluator should develop a suitable methodology for this Outcome evaluation.

During the Outcome evaluation, the evaluator is expected to apply the following approaches for data collection and analysis:

 Desk review of relevant documents (project documents with amendments made, review reports – mid-term/final, donor specific, etc.);

 Discussions with the Senior management and programme staff of the participating UN Agencies;

 Briefing and debriefing sessions with the UN/DP and the Government, as well as with other donors and partners;

 Interviews with partners and stakeholders (including gathering the information on what the

partners have achieved with regard to the outcome and what strategies they have used);

other donors, including European Commission, SIDA, SDC, ADA, WB, etc.

 Field visits to selected project sites and discussions with project teams and project beneficiaries;

 Consultation meetings.

**E. Deliverables**

The key product expected is a comprehensive evaluation report that includes, but is not limited to the following components: (see UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluators for detailed information):

 Executive summary

 Introduction

 Description of the interventions

 Evaluation scope and objectives

 Evaluation approach and method

 Development context

 Data analysis and key findings and conclusions

 Recommendations and lessons learnt for the future (including viable project ideas and other recommendations)

 Annexes: TORs, filed visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.

The evaluator should provide a proposed report structure to participating UN Agencies prior to the start of fieldwork. The report should be prepared in English. It should take into account the opinion/voices of people from Moldova, government representatives, donors and NGOs. The evaluator will prepare a presentation of the preliminary findings to be discussed at a roundtable in Chisinau with participating UN Agencies and their partners. Consultation process, entirely or its parts, might be undertaken separately by participating UN Agencies.

An outline for the future UN/DP interventions in the respective area (if still deemed relevant) based on the recommendations of the mission is to be produced. The format of the outline will be agreed between participating UN Agencies and the evaluator prior to the start of the evaluation. The evaluator is required to discuss the full draft of the evaluation report prior to departure from Moldova. Both products shall be submitted in electronic form.

***Evaluation ethics***

The evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The Evaluation team will take every measure to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of key information providers in the collection of data.

***Dissemination mechanisms***

The results shall be presented at a roundtable to all key stakeholders (representatives of Government, relevant Parliamentary Committees, projects and specialized NGOs) and shared through specialized local and regional networks. The final evaluation report will be placed on the UN/DP website and distributed through regular Government channels to interested parties.

**F. Requirements for experience and qualification**

1. Academic Qualifications

 Advanced University degree in Public Administration, International development or related fields

 Trainings in project management and monitoring and evaluation is an advantage

2. Years of experience

 At least 7 years of work experience in the field of democratic governance, public administration, international development, including participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation

 At least 3 years of experience in conducting complex evaluations, especially in Democratic Governance field

 Working experience in Eastern Europe region and with international organizations

3. Competencies

 Good understanding of Democratic Governance issues, including gender and human rights aspects

 Sound knowledge about results-based management (especially results-oriented monitoring and evaluation)

 Proven knowledge of monitoring and evaluation policies and procedures of international financing agencies

 Familiarity with the political, economic and social situation in the Republic of Moldova

 Extensive research and analytical skills and report writing abilities

 Availability to work during the indicated /approved period

 Excellent communication skills

 Fluency in English. Knowledge of Romanian and/or Russian will be an asset

***Timeframe***

The detailed schedule of the evaluation and the length of the assignment will be discussed with the evaluator prior to the assignment. The estimated duration of the assignment is up to 30 working days within a three month period through June- September.

**G. Implementation Arrangements**

The International consultant will work in a team with a local consultant that will help with the analysis and research of the available relevant documentation, with setting up the meetings with the external actors and with the needed ad-hoc translations/ interpretation. To facilitate the Outcome evaluation process an Evaluation Focal Team (EFT) comprising of representatives of UNDP and UN Women will be set up. The EFT will assist in connecting the evaluation team with the senior management and key stakeholders. In addition, the EFT will assist in developing a detailed evaluation plan and conduct ing filed visits. During the evaluation, EFT will help identify key partners for interviews. Otherwise, the evaluation will be fully independent and the evaluation team will retain enough flexibility to determine the best approach in collecting and analyzing data for the Outcome evaluation.

***Indicative Mission Schedule***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **No of days** | **Place** | **Responsible party** |
| Evaluation design,  methodology and detailed work plan | 2 | On-line | EFT, Evaluation Team |
| Desk review | 4 | On-line | Evaluation Team |
| Interviews, consultation,  1st Draft Outline and  presentation to the UN | 14 days | 10 days in Chisinau  4 days on-line | EFT, Evaluation Team |
| Preparation and submission of 1st draft of the evaluation report | 3 days | On-line | Evaluation Team |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Feedback on draft report  from partners and UN | 5 days | On-line | EFT |
| Finalization of evaluation report.  Presentation to stakeholders | 2 days | On-line | Evaluation Team |

**I. Financial arrangements:**

Each candidate will be required to submit an aggregated financial offer (“aggregated financial offer” is the total sum of all financial claims of the candidate for accomplishment of the task) , which includes proposed consultancy fee, travel costs, visa costs (if required), per diem (for accommodation, meals and local transport

/ communication). In general, UNDP shall not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. The consultant will be provided with the necessary administrative and logistical support to enable them deliver on the expected outputs.

Payment will be disbursed in two installments upon submission and approval of deliverables and certification by the UNDP Programme Manager that the services have been satisfactorily performed.

Documents to be included when submitting the proposals:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their

qualifications:

1. Proposal: explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including past experience in similar evaluations (brief information on each of the required qualifications, item by item);

2. Financial proposal (in USD, specifying a total requested amount per day, including all related costs, e.g. fees, per diems, travel costs, phone calls etc. );

3. Duly completed and signed P11 Form, and at least 3 contacts for references.

**H. Documents for study by the evaluator:**

1. UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results

2. UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluators

3. Ethical Code of Conduct for Evaluation in UNDP

4. UNDP Results-based management: Technical Note

5. Government of the Republic of Moldova Activity Programme (2015 – 2018)

6. National Development Strategy Moldova 2010

7. Development Partners’ Briefing Book for the Government of Moldova

8. Project documents and progress reports, project evaluation reports

9. UNDP Assessment of Development Results, 2012

10. United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) “Towards Unity in Action”(2013 – 2017)

11. UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2013 - 2017



**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Job title:** | **National consultant Democratic Governance Outcome Evaluation** |
| **Duty station:** | Chisinau, Moldova |
| **Reference to the project:** | n/a |
| **Contract type:** | Individual Contract (IC) |
| **Expected duration of the**  **assignment:** | 30 days within a 3 months assignment |
| **Starting date:** | End July, 2015 |

**A. Brief National and Programme Context**

Moldova declared its independence in 1991 with the European integration becoming a strategic priority 8 years after. Since its independence the country engaged into a multitude of reforms across all sectors, in parallel developing policies and legal and institutional frameworks aiming at achieving the Democratic Governance standards. The most important reform thought to contribute to the major transformation is the Central Public Administration Reform launched in 2005. It intended to improve transparency and accountability of the public administration, establish a modern civil service system and strengthen the public finance management. In 2012, the Decentralization Strategy aiming at consolidating the capacities of the local public administration authorities and at improving the management and the quality of public services provided to the citizens had been approved. The provisions of the Strategy have been correlated with the relevant policies documents, the Reform of the Central Public Administration, and other reforms representing an operational continuity of the actions of the National Development Strategy. In order to move towards a participative and inclusive process of policy development, the National Participation Council (NPC) representing the Civil Society organizations had been established. Representatives of the NPC participate in the Government meetings and are consulted on the policies developed. These developments had been noted at the global level, as the Republic of Moldova was among five winners of the 2013 UN Public Service Awards for the set of initiatives on increasing decisional transparency and fostering participation of civil society in this process.

The State Chancellery is the leading central public authority responsible for the implementation of the above reforms and for coordinating the policies developed by the Line Ministries. Within the Central Public Administration Reform process (CPAR) it provided methodological guidance in the elaboration of the Institutional Development plans by the Line Ministries and other central administration institutions which identified the needs and set the actions for strengthening the financial, human and institutional capacities of the central public administration bodies. However, the linkage between strategic planning and finance planning is still weak, while the ex-ante policy impact assessment piloted through the CPAR has not been legally enacted. The overall capacity of the public administration to develop, implement and monitor policies in a transparent and participative manner is not sufficient for achieving a steady progress in the reform process. The implementation of the Decentralization Strategy faced many delays, the territorial- administrative reform is postponed again for another four years, and the official approval of the next phase of PAR is pending.

Against this background United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) “Towards Unity in Action” and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Programme Document (CPD) 2013 – 2017 response is aimed at contributing to the establishment of a modernized public

administration system properly capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s priorities and European integration objectives. Results achieved with the UNDP and UN Women’s assistance will contribute to the achievement of UNPF/CPD Outcome 1 which refers to *increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities*. The assistance is provided through UNDP programmes and projects, as well as through the joint projects implemented in cooperation with the UN Women with co-funding by Donor partners, such as EU and the Governments of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Romania, and in collaboration with the national partners, such as the Parliament, the Central Elections Commission, the National Integrity Commission, State Chancellery, 15 other central Government institutions and the local authorities.

**B. Purpose of the Evaluation**

This mid-term evaluation exercise is commissioned according to the in the Republic of Moldova Evaluation Plan. The evaluation covers Outcome 1 of the UNPF/CPD 2013 – 2017. The evaluation will put the major focus on assessing the progress achieved within the Outcome 1 “Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities” and the impact produced so far under the area of intervention, as well as draw conclusions and recommendations for eventual adjustments, and, to extend possible, lessons learnt for further programming and implementation of programme. The evaluator shall also give importance to assessing efficiency and to a possible extent effectiveness of the UNPF/CPD Outcome 1, whether the size if resources, both financial and human, and partnership strategies continue to be cost-effective and may be applied in continuation and/or revised/changed.

The following Outputs falling under this Outcome, as stated in UNDP CPD 2013 – 2017, are to be part of this evaluation:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| CPD/UNPF Outcome | CPD/UNPF Outputs | UNDP and joint UNDP/UNW  Programmes/Projects |
| Building Institutional Capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (2012 – 2015)  EU High Level Policy Advice Mission to the Republic of Moldova (2013 – 2015)  Capacity Development of the National Integrity Commission of the Republic of Moldova’s Office (2014 – 2015)  Support to Parliamentary Development and Electoral Support in Moldova (2012 –  2015)  Capacity Development of the Office of the  President of the Republic of Moldova (2013  – 2014)  Joint Integrated Local Development Programme/ Policy Framework Support for the Implementation of the Decentralization Strategy (2013-2015)  Strengthening the National Statistical  System (2012 – 2015)  Women in Politics Programme (2014 -2016) |
| Increased transparency,  accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities  *Indicators:*  a. Confidence in public administration institutions *Baseline:* (May 2011): Government – 23%; Parliament – 19%; LPA –  47%;  *Target:* Government: 45%; Parliament: 40%; LPA:60%; Corruption Perception Index: Improvement of the Moldova index  b. Hunter coefficient of vertical balance (the degree of fiscal dependency of local governments on resources transferred by central government)  *Baseline:* Varies between 13%  and 19% (2011)  *Target:* A Hunter Coefficient that is above 20% and not varying  c. Public availability of | 1.1 - A modernized public administration system is  capacitated to effectively and efficiently develop, budget, implement and monitor evidence-based policies in support of the country’s national priorities and European integration objectives  *Indicators:*  a. Ex- ante policy analysis and results based management principles mandatory for public policy development, ensuring results oriented, rights based and gender response implementation and monitoring with clear linkages to program based budgeting  *Baseline:* (2011) The methodology for ex-ante policy analysis (including human rights and gender sensitive approach) is not a mandatory step for public policy development  *Target:* Ex-ante policy analysis, including human-rights based and gender responsive methodology, is mandatory for development, implementation and monitoring of all new public policies developed after  2013  b. Public Expenditure Framework Assessment (PEFA) scoring on multi-year perspective in fiscal planning, expenditure policy and budgeting  *Baseline:* (2011) PEFA scoring B+  *Target:* PEFA scoring A  c. EU-Moldova Association Agreement signed and implemented in line with the Action Plan |
| equality data (disaggregated  data on vulnerable groups) to track progress towards MDGs and Moldova long- term development goals  *Baseline:* Certain data available on gender and regional disparities but data missing on a number of key groups  *Target:* Improved data in key areas in particular on persons with disabilities, Roma, persons with stigmatized diseases, third country nationals and stateless persons | EU-Moldova Association Agreement not signed  *Target:* EU-Moldova Association Agreement signed and is being implemented in line with the Action Plan  d. population census undertaken successfully, providing reliable and credible data for policy formulation  *Baseline:* non-existent (last census in 2004)  *Target:* 2014 Population and Housing Census undertaken |  |
| 1.2 – The Parliament and the Central Electoral  Commission are better able to exercise their functions including ensuring human rights and gender equality  *Indicators:*  a. Women representation in decision-making positions  *Baseline:* (2011) MPs: 22%; Members of the Government at Minister-level: 2 (10%)  *Target:* (2015) MPs: 30%; Members of the Government at  Minister-level: 30%  b. Public confidence in Parliament (sex-disaggregated)  *Baseline:* (spring 2012): – 25% confidence in Parliament  (27% of men, 22% of women)  *Target:* (2017): 40% report confidence in Parliament (at least 40% of women)  c. Human Rights and gender analysis of the draft laws in the Parliament  *Baseline:* 0  *Target:* 100%  d. ODIHR/OSCE overall assessment of the quality of the general elections  *Baseline:* 2010 parliamentary election ‘met most standards’; 2011 local elections ‘largely met’ standards *Target:* Steady improvement in meeting electoral standards as assessed by ODIHR’ (general elections 2014 and local elections 2015) |
| 1.3 – Local Public Authorities have increased capacity  and resources to exercise their functions including in better planning, delivering and monitoring services in line with decentralization policies.  *Indicators:*  a. Increase in the share of local own revenues in the overall local budgets  *Baseline:* (2011) 10.6%  *Target:* 13%  b. Degree of implementation of Decentralization |

Strategy Action Plan

*Baseline:* Decentralization Strategy approved in 2012

*Target:* Decentralization Strategy Action Plan implemented in a timely manner at a rate of 70% of planned actions for the respective year

c. Women representation in decision-making positions at the local level

*Baseline:* (2011) Mayors -18%; Local councilors - 28,7%

*Target:* Mayors - 25%; Local councilors - 40%

**C. Objectives and scope of the Evaluation**

This is a progress evaluation aiming to assess the extent to which programme and project activities implemented with partners during 2013 – 2014 have contributed to the progress under UNPF/CPD Outcome 1, as well as to achievement of the set of targets, whether existing partnership with partners proved to be successful and relevant and overall whether UNDP and relevant UN Women (further referred to as UNW) supported activities have contributed to strengthening transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities in compliance with the country’s EU integration agenda. The evaluation shall identify changes that happened during these two years as they relate to the development outcomes, the degree and level of these changes, i.e. enabling environment, organizational and/or individual levels. It shall also assess whether UN/DP’s strategic positioning in this area can be improved.

The expected output for the national consultant’s assignment is to work in a team with and to provide support to the international consultant to conduct a holistic, impartial and trustworthy review of the progress in achieving Outcome targets.

The main partners to be involved in the evaluation are: Parliament, CEC, State Chancellery, Line Ministries, NBS, Project Management Teams, NGOs and LPAs.

In order to implement the assignment, the national consultant will have the following responsibilities:

 Support international consultant to conduct a comprehensive desk review of the relevant documentation;

 Support international consultant to carry out interviews with relevant stakeholders, develop and apply questionnaires or field visits (as per evaluation methodology) to assess the progress made by Outcome;

 Participate in the design of the evaluation methodology;

 Collect data, organize the meetings and provide *ad-hoc* translation or interpretation as necessary;

 Support international consultant to evaluate the progress to outcome realization; factors affecting outcome; UN/DP’s contribution to outcome; and partnership strategy, as per the scope of the evaluation;

 Support international consultant to identify and analyze the challenges and constraints which confronted the Outcome during its implementation and draw lessons learnt;

 Support international consultant in drafting parts of the evaluation report, including conclusions, recommendations and lessons learnt;

 Support international consultant to prepare and present the final report through incorporating suggestions received on draft.

**Worksheet on Outcome Evaluation: Categories of Analysis/Scope**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Notes** |
| Progress to outcome | Review indicators to determine extent/degree of contribution in the |
| realization | outcome realization by assessing progresses made to-date vis-à-vis baseline. Focus on the how and why outputs and strategies contributed  to achieving outcome. Focus on questions of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. |
| Factors affecting outcome | These are political, economic and social factors. As such, the evaluation  scope shall be as broad as possible so s to take all factors into account |
| UN’s contribution to  outcome | Conduct quantitative and qualitative assessments of contributions from  UNDP’s own and joint interventions vis-a-vis outcome indicator baseline. Assessment should focus on determine the continued validity of the strategies applied to-date by UN/DP and so as to decide whether they should be revised and/or changed for the next programming cycle |
| Partnership strategy | Determine whether the best possible synergies have been established  among partners and the steering role played by UN/DP within this context. Assess whether other stakeholders and/or sponsors should be included and/or excluded from the programme in continuation as well as referring to the next phase of CPD |

Specifically, the Outcome evaluation should address, but not limited to, the following **questions and issues**:

1. Outcome analysis

 Are the Outcome and associated projects/programmes relevant, appropriate and strategic to national goals and UN/DP’s mandate?

 Where the actions to achieve the outputs and outcome effective and efficient?

 Where there multi-level interventions conducted (environment, organization, individual)?

How many?

 Are the outputs and outcome leading to benefits beyond the life of the existing projects?

 Which findings may have relevance for eventual adjustments and/or future programming?

 Are the stated outcome, indicators and targets appropriate for the development situation in

Moldova and UN/DP’s programme of assistance in this field?

 What is the current status and prospects for achieving the outcome with the indicated inputs and within the indicated timeframe?

 What are the main factors (positive and negative) within and beyond UN/DP’s interventions that affected or are affecting the achievement of the outcome? How have these factors limited or facilitated progress towards outcome?

 Were UN/DP’s proposed contributions to the achievement of the outcome appropriate, sufficient, effective and sustainable?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2. | Outpu | t analysis |
|  |  | What are the key outputs that have been produced by UN/DP to contribute to the Outcome? |
|  |  | Are the UN/DP outputs relevant to outcome? |
|  |  | Are the monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate to link these outputs to the |
|  |  | Outcome, or is there a need to improve these indicators? |
|  |  | Is sufficient progress been made with regard to UN/DP outputs? |

3. Resources, partnerships, and management analysis

 Was UN/DP’s resource mobilization strategy in the field appropriate and effective in achieving the Outcome?

 Was UN/DP’s partnership strategy in the field appropriate and effective in achieving the

outcome?

 Are UN/DP’s management structures and working methods appropriate and effective in

achieving the Outcome/

 Overall, assess the scope, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of UN/DP’s resource

mobilization, partnership and management arrangements in achieving the Outcome.

4. Recommendations

 Based on the above analysis, recommendations should be provided as to how UN/DP

should adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, working methods and/or management structures for an efficient and effective implementation of the current UNPF/CPD.

To the extent possible, answers to the above questions shall address the implications for women and men, their participation in design and implementation of the outcome and particular programmes and projects in the outcome area, whether the latter had addressed the issues of gender inclusion, equality and empowerment and contributed to strengthening the application of these principles to various development efforts in the country, and how gender issues had been mainstreamed across the outcome area by UN/DP. Evaluation shall also address the extent to which UN/DP had advocated for the principle of equality and inclusive development, and has contributed to empowering and addressing the needs of the disadvantaged and vulnerable population.

Evaluation methodology is provided in the UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results and the UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluators. Based on these guiding documents, and in consultation with the participating UN Agencies in Moldova, the evaluator should develop a suitable methodology for this Outcome evaluation.

During the Outcome evaluation, the evaluator is expected to apply the following approaches for data collection and analysis:

 Desk review of relevant documents (project documents with amendments made, review reports – mid-term/final, donor specific, etc.);

 Discussions with the Senior management and programme staff of the participating UN

Agencies;

 Briefing and debriefing sessions with the UN/DP and the Government, as well as with other donors and partners;

 Interviews with partners and stakeholders (including gathering the information on what the partners have achieved with regard to the outcome and what strategies they have used); other donors, including European Commission, SIDA, SDC, ADA, WB, etc.

 Field visits to selected project sites and discussions with project teams and project beneficiaries;

 Consultation meetings.

**E. Deliverables**

The key product expected is a comprehensive evaluation report that includes, but is not limited to the following components: (see UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluators for detailed information):

 Executive summary

 Introduction

 Description of the interventions

 Evaluation scope and objectives

 Evaluation approach and method

 Development context

 Data analysis and key findings and conclusions

 Recommendations and lessons learnt for the future (including viable project ideas and other recommendations)

 Annexes: TORs, filed visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.

The evaluator should provide a proposed report structure to participating UN Agencies prior to the start of fieldwork. The report should be prepared in English. It should take into account the opinion/voices of people from Moldova, government representatives, donors and NGOs. The evaluator will prepare a presentation of the preliminary findings to be discussed at a roundtable in Chisinau with participating UN Agencies and their partners. Consultation process, entirely or its parts, might be undertaken separately by participating UN Agencies.

An outline for the future UN/DP interventions in the respective area (if still deemed relevant) based on the recommendations of the mission is to be produced. The format of the outline will be agreed between participating UN Agencies and the evaluator prior to the start of the evaluation. The evaluator is required to discuss the full draft of the evaluation report prior to departure from Moldova. Both products shall be submitted in electronic form.

***Evaluation ethics***

The evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The Evaluation team will take every measure to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of key information providers in the collection of data.

***Dissemination mechanisms***

The results shall be presented at a roundtable to all key stakeholders (representatives of Government, relevant Parliamentary Committees, projects and specialized NGOs) and shared through specialized local and regional networks. The final evaluation report will be placed on the UN/DP website and distributed through regular Government channels to interested parties.

**F. Requirements for experience and qualification**

1 ***Required qualification and skills for the National Consultant:***

1. Academic Qualifications

 Advanced university degrees in the area of in public administration, economics, international development or related field;

2. Years of experience

 At least 5 years of work experience in the field of, public administration, international development, including participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation

 Sound knowledge and understanding of the specifics and developments in democratic governance area / public administration in Moldova.

 Experience in conducting complex evaluations, especially in democratic governance/public administration field and with international organizations

3. Competencies

 Good understanding of Democratic Governance issues, including gender and human rights aspects

 Sound knowledge about results-based management (especially results-oriented monitoring and evaluation)

 Proven knowledge of monitoring and evaluation policies and procedures of international financing agencies

 Familiarity with the political, economic and social situation in the Republic of Moldova

 Extensive research and analytical skills and report writing abilities

 Availability to work during the indicated /approved period

 Excellent communication skills

 Fluency in English, Romanian and Russian languages

***Timeframe***

The detailed schedule of the evaluation and the length of the assignment will be discussed with the evaluator prior to the assignment. The estimated duration of the assignment is up to 30 working days within tthree- months period through June - September 2015, including the international consultant’s 10-day mission to Moldova.

**G. Implementation Arrangements**

The national consultant will work in a team and under the leadership of the international consultant. To facilitate the Outcome evaluation process an Evaluation Focal Team (EFT) comprising of representatives of UNDP and UN Women will be set up. The EFT will assist in connecting the evaluation team with the senior management and key stakeholders. In addition, the EFT will assist in developing a detailed evaluation plan and conducting filed visits. During the evaluation, EFT will help identify key partners for interviews. Otherwise, the evaluation will be fully independent and the evaluation team will retain enough flexibility to determine the best approach in collecting and analyzing data for the Outcome evaluation.

***Indicative Mission Schedule***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **No of days** | **Place** | **Responsible party** |
| Evaluation design, methodology and detailed work plan | 2 | On-line | EFT, Evaluation Team |
| Desk review | 4 | On-line | Evaluation Team |
| Interviews, consultation,  1st Draft Outline and presentation to the UN | 14 days | 10 days in Chisinau  4 days on-line | EFT, Evaluation Team |
| Preparation and submission of 1st draft of  the evaluation report | 3 days | On-line | Evaluation Team |
| Feedback on draft report from partners and UN | 5 days | On-line | EFT |
| Finalization of  evaluation report. Presentation to stakeholders | 2 days | In person | Evaluation Team |

**I. Financial arrangements:**

Each candidate will be required to submit an aggregated financial offer (“aggregated financial offer” is the total sum of all financial claims of the candidate for accomplishment of the task) , which includes proposed consultancy fee including local transport /communication.

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Documents to be included when submitting the proposals:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Proposal: explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including past experience in similar evaluations (brief information on each of the required qualifications, item by item);

2. Financial proposal (in USD, specifying a total requested amount per day, including all related costs,

e.g. fees, phone calls etc. );

3. Duly completed and signed P11 Form, and at least 3 contacts for references.

**H. Documents for study by the evaluator:**

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3. Ethical Code of Conduct for Evaluation in UNDP

4. UNDP Results-based management: Technical Note

5. Government of the Republic of Moldova Activity Programme (2015 – 2018)

6. National Development Strategy Moldova 2020

7. Development Partners’ Briefing Book for the Government of Moldova

8. Project documents and progress reports, project evaluation reports

9. UNDP Assessment of Development Results, 2012

10. United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) “Towards Unity in Action”(2013 – 2017)

11. UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2013 - 2017

1. Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in the Republic of Moldova Report, European Commission

   http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2015/repulic-of-moldova-enp-report-2015\_en.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. United Nations – Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework 2013–2017 (UNPF)-“Towards Unity in Action” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. OSCE-ODIHR Limited International Election Observation Mission Report, June 2015, Local elections,

   http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/178226?download=true [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 4 OSCE-ODIHR Limited International Election Observation Mission Report, November 2015, Parliamentary elections

   http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/128476?download=true [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Women in Politics project will be subject of a mid-term evaluation in early 2016. The authors of this report decided not to scrutinise the WiP in further detail in light of this upcoming specific evaluation. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See, for example, <http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-missing-1-billion-dollars-candu/26996556.html>. There has been numerous other coverage of this case and it continues to dominate the political agenda in Moldova, with a considerable amount of uncertainty as to how the crisis caused by this theft will be resolved (early elections in spring 2016 are a possibility). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See OSCE/ODIHR report on the general elections held in November 2014, at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/144196?download=true>; [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See OSCE/ODIHR report on the two rounds of local elections held in June 2015, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/178226?download=true>. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2015/repulic-of-moldova-enp-report-2015_en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See, for example, the 2014 EU Progress Report on Moldova at <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2015/repulic-of-moldova-enp-report-2015_en.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Amount for the UNDP component [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. UNDP's contribution counts 0.9 M USD and UN Women contribution is 2.0 M USD [↑](#footnote-ref-12)