**MDTF Steering Committee Meeting:** 22 June 2017, 10:00-11:30, UN House Conference Room, Chisinau

**Participants**

1. Lilia Palii, Secretary General of the Government of Moldova;
2. Dafina Gercheva, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative;
3. Ina Cretu, Consultant on coordination of external assistance, State Chancellery;
4. Domnita Hanganu, Superior Consultant, State Chancellery;
5. Adam Amberg, Head of Reform Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden;
6. Matthias Leicht, Senior Program Manager, Swiss Cooperation Office;
7. Valeria Ieseanu, Programme Specialist, UNDP;
8. Ina Tcaci, National HIV/AIDS Officer, UNODC;
9. Ulzii Jamsran, Representative, UN Women;
10. Asya Varbanova, Chief Technical Adviser, UN Women;
11. Nune Mangasaryan, Representative, UNICEF;
12. Svetlana Plamadeala, Country Manager, UNAIDS;
13. Veaceslav Balan, National Human Rights Coordinator, OHCHR;
14. Silviu Ciobanu, Public Health Officer, WHO;
15. Haris Hajrulahovic, Representative, WHO;
16. Irina Apostol, UN Coordination Analyst;
17. Johan Dittrich Hallberg, UN Coordination Specialist.
Summary of Discussion

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<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Key Points Discussed</th>
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<td>1. Opening remarks</td>
<td>The co-chairs opened the meeting and welcomed all participants. Ms. Gercheva of the UN gave an update on the partnership between the UN and the State Chancellery with a focus on the revision of the national development strategy Moldova 2020 and the development of the new strategy Moldova 2030, which is supported by the Swiss Cooperation Office. Ms. Palii of the State Chancellery briefed the meeting on key developments in the ongoing and planned reforms of the public administration, e.g. the establishment of the Centre for Reforms Implementation, approval by the Government of a new draft Law on Government, adoption of legislative amendments regarding the state control bodies, establishment of the Agency for Public Services, R&amp;D reform etc. She expressed gratitude for the UNDP support to the mid-term assessment of the National Development Strategy “Moldova 2020”, and further highlighted the need for screening the policy documents in the country.</td>
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| 2. Highlights of progress of ongoing joint programmes under the MDTF | a. Joint Action to Strengthen Human Rights in the Transnistrian Region of the Republic of Moldova (OHCHR/UNAIDS/UNDP/UNODC) Ms. Ieseanu of UNDP held a presentation outlining key facts about the programme and results achieved thus far.  
- Overall objective: Strengthening the effective exercise of human rights by people residing in the Transnistrian region through fostering improvement of institutional frameworks in the area of disability, gender-based violence and people with HIV, people who inject drugs, and people in prisons.  
- Progress to date:  
  1. People with disabilities (OHCHR):  
     o In 2016-2017 over 230 women and men (incl. 107 PwDs and 10 duty bearers) had an increased awareness on human rights standards and sustainable development after trainings organized;  
     o Preparations ongoing for the creation of the cross-river Platform for Sustainable Community Development initiated + consultations with representatives of 17 NGOs from both banks;  
     o Assessment of the existing social services for the PwDs in the Transnistrian region conducted;  
     o Proposals for the creation of community-based services for PwDs developed.  
  2. Domestic violence (UNDP):  
     o Functional temporary shelter for DV victims. Since July 2016, UNDP, through its local partner NGO Resonance, continued to provide support services, both outpatient and in residential regime (it can concomitantly host at least five victims with their children). |
Two regional hubs in Slobozia and Grigoriopol are functional. The services, named Women’s Safety & Prevention Services, managed by local NGOs, operate since December 2016. Besides providing direct assistance to victims, they reach remote areas, inform the population and authorities about existing services, identify victims and offer consultations.

Cumulative results for both the shelter and the hubs include: 252 persons (203 women, 44 children and 3 perpetrators) have received one or more services: psychological counselling - 130 beneficiaries (793 individual consultations); legal support - 96 beneficiaries (125 individual consultations); humanitarian assistance (food packages, hygiene packages, clothing, footwear, medicines, as well as medical examination) - 58 women and 56 children.

3. HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS/UNODC):
   - An assessment of the existent HIV and TB prevention, treatment and care services was conducted in Glinoe and Tiraspol prisons with the support of a Swiss expert, containing 13 recommendations, launched on May 26th 2017 in Tiraspol;
   - A visit of the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe and Central Asia Prof Dr. Michel Kazatchkine (24-28th of April) allowed to further promote the message for the need of HIV/TB transmission prevention efforts; his estimations show that the region has the worst epidemiological profile in Europe in terms of TB, multi-drug resistant TB, as well as HIV.
   - Awareness events organized in December 2016 to reduce HIV related stigma and discrimination reached important public and got strong social media coverage. It reached more than 19000 persons from the both banks of the river Nistru (5000 in TN), covered 22 localities, involved >20 personalities, and 14 NGOs on both banks, and was covered by >25 media outlets.
   - A mapping of all HIV normative framework documents in the region (about 50 policy documents) through the lenses of human rights was performed in collaboration with the regional AIDS center and civil society representatives.
   - Innovative medical waste equipment procured in May 2017 allowing NGOs active in harm reduction for people who inject drugs from 10 Northern rayons to destroy syringes and needles.
   - The Stigma Index study was launched on 9 June on the right bank (sample 450 people living with HIV), and will be launched in the near future on the left bank (sample – 250 people), based on an approved and widely consulted protocol, carried out by 222 trained people living with HIV.

Ms. Mangasaryan of UNICEF underlined the importance of the programme for bridging the gap between the two banks of the Nistru river in relation to attitudes towards HIV/AIDS, where the tolerance level is much lower on the left bank.

Ms. Jamsran of UN Women highlighted that UN Women contributes to the objectives of the programme by supporting and empowering victims of domestic violence.

b. Enhancing Women’s Political Representation through Improved Capacity and Enhanced Support in Moldova (UNDP/UN Women)

Ms. Varbanova of UN Women held a presentation outlining key facts about the programme and results achieved thus far.

- Overall objective: The programme aims at supporting the increased participation of women in politics and in the decision-making process by creating an environment conducive to their meaningful participation, and to support capacity development of women before, during and after the elections at the central and local levels. The programme also seeks to promote increased public awareness of women’s contribution to political leadership and supports the realization of women’s rights and commitments undertaken by the Government of Moldova.
- **Specific objectives:**
  o 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.
  o Gender equality advocates influence legal framework and policies to increase women’s leadership and political participation.

- **Progress to date:**
  o Extensive advocacy for the adoption of a Legislative Package on promoting women in decision-making and gender equality has taken place utilizing different strategies and Law no. 71 on amending and supplementing some legislative acts voted on April 14, 2016. Known as, the Law introduces for the first time 40% gender quotas for party list candidates and cabinet nominees, paternity leave in the duration of 14 days as well as other important amendments in the area of gender equality, affecting a total of 15 Laws and Codes. The Law 71 entered into force on May 27, 2016. The Programme has supported raising knowledge and awareness on the Law among duty bearers and rights holders to advance its implementation.
  o The Network of Romani women and girls received support to convene on a regular basis, get further formalized, as well as to empower its members for stronger public and civic engagement. A first of its kind summer camp for 30 young Roma girls and boys took place on gender equality and women’s empowerment, to be followed by three civic initiatives.
  o The CCET and CEC have gained international recognition in advancing gender inclusive electoral management and are in the lead of establishing an International Association of Women in Electoral Management Bodies. The Associations' organizational documents and its website have been developed and its goal defined as "to advocate, inspire and empower women and remove barriers to women’s full representation in EMBs, particularly in senior leadership positions."
  o A series of 15 regional parliamentary forums facilitated by the Programme gave the possibility to 650 citizens, including 542 women particularly from marginalized groups to address their issues directly to 26 Members of Parliament (12 women and 14 men) and local decision makers. For 60% of the participants, these dialogues represented a first such opportunity.
  o The Gender Equality Platform - consisting of 28 prominent NGOs and individuals advocating for gender equality - was formalized and is acting as an active and unified voice of civil society advocating for gender equality in front of decision-makers.
  o The share of articles featuring women and mainly women as protagonists increased by 7 percent points, from 14% in September 2015 to 21% in April 2016 as a result of 30 media outlets engagement in self-monitoring process on their coverage from a gender equality perspective. Following the eight months of self-assessment, seven of the 30 participating media outlets have nearly balanced their coverage, achieving a relatively equal presence of men and women as main subjects in their political, economic and social sections.
  o The first ever in Moldova National Photo Contest for amateur and professional photographers has been organized. 50 photographs have been selected and were featured in 30 national and local level exhibitions and debates, which serve to showcase inspirational women and men in non-traditional domains, as well as how gender equality is perceived in the country. About 15,000 women and men from across the country attended the photo exhibitions, and over 1600 young women and men attended 30 accompanying debates on gender equality organized in educational institutions. 70% of those who attended have noted participated in discussions on gender equality before, and 57% consider that gender equality in Moldova is not respected.
  o Five political clubs were established in five districts (Briceni, Str??eni, Telene?ti, Cimi?lia, and Cahul and 20 surrounding communities) to facilitate the dialogue between prospective women candidates and political parties and to serve as knowledge, leadership and capacity development centers for aspiring women candidates, as well as for elected women in decision making.
positions at the local level. Since their establishment the political clubs have served over 600 women, before and after the elections, as candidates and as elected councilors. In 2017, two more political clubs were established (in Sorocca and Orhei) following the good practices from the other clubs.

- 429 women and 35 men first-time councilors from 23 districts, Balti municipality and Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia enhanced their capacities in areas of local council functioning, fostering gender equality in local development agenda, finance, fundraising, communication and advocacy. As result of the training, women councilors reported being more active in the local councils, including raising gender-equality issues, designed and secured development projects for their communities and set up local women clubs around women's rights.

- A pioneering mentorship and small grants program for first-mandate women local councilors was completed for 27 participants from 20 districts. As a result, 24 community initiatives were implemented that addressed concrete problems related to health, environment, education, violence against women, etc. as well as increased the visibility of women as agents of change and role models. In 20 communities, the mentees spearheaded their councils to develop and adopt local Plans on Strengthening Good Governance. In 2017, a new mentorship program was launched for women from 7 communities with zero representation of women in local public administration.

- 250 members of the Women's Network of the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova, primarily women mayors, improved their knowledge on how to better manage and develop a public administration by participating in 10 exchange study visits in 15 communities considered as good practices. Following the visits, the majority of participants confirmed that they implemented different initiatives in their communities, based on the learning they received, in areas ranging from increasing citizen's engagement to tackling environment issues. In 2017, comprehensive capacity building program was initiated for women mayors in their first mandate.

Furthermore, Ms. Varbanova emphasized the importance of ensuring that achievements made by the programme are maintained as the country goes through major reforms of the political system and public administration. The programme had initiated discussions with Government counterparts on this subject.

Ms. Jamsran of UN Women highlighted the importance of flexibility considering the dynamic context and thanked the donor, Government of Sweden, for its flexible approach in supporting the programme implementation.

c. Moldova: Contribution to the Confidence Building Measures Program in Transnistria - Health Sector, Phase 2 (UNDP/UNICEF/WHO)

Mr. Hajrulahovic of WHO expressed his gratitude to the Government, Ministry of Health, donors and implementing agencies for supporting the implementation of the programme.

Mr. Ciobanu of WHO held a presentation outlining key facts about the programme and results achieved thus far.

- Overall objectives:
  - Newborns and mothers from the Transnistria region benefit from qualitative integrated perinatal services, including nutrition (perinatal services);
    - high quality mother and child health (MCH) care services at hospital care level;
    - high quality MCH services at antenatal and postnatal care levels, incl. home visits;
• updated breastfeeding knowledge and competences of health care professionals (primary and hospital levels) and community
  o Vaccine coverage and immunization rates for traditional and new or underutilized vaccines are improved on both banks of the Dniester River (immunizations);
    ▪ Making comprehensive quality immunization services available to all children, as per the national vaccination schedule, including new vaccines (e.g., RV, PCV excluding Transnistria region), including through health system strengthening
  o The population on both banks of the Dniester River has increased their MCH-related health literacy related to infant feeding and awareness about availability of MCH services and their right to access them (awareness and community mobilization).
    ▪ Increasing the population’s health literacy related to MCH and its awareness about availability of services and the right to access those.

• Progress to date:
  o Effective perinatal care practices improved in target maternities as compared to those not covered with training;
  o Training of trainers in using the WHO pocket book on hospital care for children;
  o Following a needs assessment, medical consumables and accessories were purchased and provided to 5 perinatal care centers in the Transnistria region, tallying up 19,063 items presented by 35 categories, and training how to handle the medical equipment, while updating the relevant database of health commodity supplies for better planning;
  o International consultations on nutrition and pregnancy at a WHO sub-regional workshop to contribute to developing of antenatal care standards in the Transnistria region;
  o Technical support to review and update the clinical protocols for obstetricians as per WHO recommendations and piloting those in certain maternity wards in the Transnistria region, including a local workshop;
  o A system for supportive supervision in child healthcare was put in place, reviewing the current internal and external audits and bridging the primary health care and hospital care services;
  o Follow-up meetings on near-miss case review implementation and further improving of the tool;
  o WHO conducted an assessment of the quality of care in 4 pediatric hospitals in the Transnistria region, providing recommendations for improvement;
  o A quality of care assessment of the inpatient perinatal care services conducted in four different facilities by using the WHO Quality of Care assessment tool and brief summary results were communicated to the facility staff;
  o Work has been started to implement perinatal audit as a tool in improving perinatal health care, following a WHO sub-regional meeting;
  o Immunization program coordinators from Chisinau and Tiraspol participated in the WHO sub-regional integrated training workshop on adverse events following immunization (AEFI) surveillance, causality assessment and communications. A draft national AEFI action plan has been developed for further consultations and endorsement;
  o Public health specialists from the Transnistria region have been trained in applying contextualized standard operating procedures (SOPs) for effective vaccine management;
  o There were 8 SOPs developed to ensure effective cold chain functioning in the Transnistria region;
  o As many as 100 public health and primary health care professionals from Moldova, including the Transnistria region, improved their skills in the area of quality of immunization services, detection of contraindication and false contraindications for vaccination, work
with population for immunization advocacy, safety of vaccines, detection and management of adverse effects following immunization;

- A costed comprehensive multi-year plan (cMYP) was drafted for Moldova for 2016-2020, which is critical to benefit from new vaccines and GAVI support;
- Support was provided to ensure the switch from trivalent to bivalent oral polio vaccine (OPV), as globally mandated by the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), including ongoing surveillance over Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases (to ensure the polio-free status of Moldova);
- Specific advocacy materials have been developed and distributed (7 breastfeeding posters, flyers on pregnancy and smoking, 2 posters on pregnancy/children smoking);
- European Immunization Week activities have been organized in April, with partners’ support, including, flash mobs in Central Square and Mother and Child Care Institute, posters and billboards, advocacy materials and specific flyers targeting selected audience groups (e.g., care givers, health workers);
- A behaviour-change communication strategy for vaccines 2017-2020 has been drafted and endorsed by the Government

Ms. Mangasaryan of UNICEF thanked the Swiss Government for supporting the programme and highlighted that it complements previous work done by the UN on vaccination, in particular in relation to the cold chain. Mr. Amberg of the Embassy of Sweden also stressed the importance of the support from the Swiss Government, which complements other donors’ development assistance in an effective way. Further, Ms. Gercheva of the UN highlighted that in an environment where ODA is limited it is of utmost importance to seek complementarities and synergies between development partners and programmes.

d. Support to National Human Rights Institutions (OHCHR/UNDP)

Mr. Balan of OHCHR held a presentation outlining key facts about the programme and results achieved thus far.

- Overall objective: To contribute to the effective protection and promotion of human rights, equality and non-discrimination in the Republic of Moldova with particular attention to women, minorities, marginalized and vulnerable groups through strengthening independent national human rights institutions – Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council – and enhancing their focus on core strategic human rights goals to maximize their impact.

- Specific objectives:
  - Strengthening environment for the Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council functioning;
  - Strengthening organizational capacities and sustainability of the Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council;
  - Maximizing powers of the Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council to act as Moldova’s premiere national human rights institutions.

- Progress to date:
  - Human rights/equality monitoring and reporting capacity of NHRIs greatly increased:
    - Human Rights and Equality Perceptions Studies, rights in healthcare study;
    - Alternative Reports under UPR and UN human rights treaty bodies;
Stronger Annual Reports of NHRIs presented publicly.
- Case management and strategic litigation capacity significantly increased;
- Methodology on human rights and equality analysis of public policies and legislation developed and piloted;
- Communication and Outreach capacities significantly increased:
  - 2016 Equality Law information campaign, inclusive of targeted video spots, fact-sheets and info-cards;
  - More visible, transparent, informative institutional web-site of EqC accessible for all societal groups;
  - Public presentations in the regions.
- Collaboration with civil society increased:
  - Public consultations of reports prepared by the NHRIs;
  - Advisory Council(s) of CSOs.
- Laws on NHRIs reviewed and recommendations for improvement prepared and tabled:
  - Enhancing the powers of the institutions;
  - Ensuring full independence, including financial;
  - Improving operational functionality (staffing, etc).
- Hate crime legislative amendments prepared;
- Strategic planning initiated and pre-requisites for application towards A-status created.

Mr. Balan highlighted that the timing of the programme had been very opportune as it was initiated in conjunction with the new law on the Ombudsperson Office and the establishment of the Equality Council. He informed the meeting that the first draft of the new National Human Rights Action Plan had been submitted for consultations by the Ministry of Justice on 21 June 2017. In relation to the development of the national development strategy Moldova 2030, Mr. Balan stressed the importance of linking the strategy clearly to the Sustainable Development Goals and the country’s human rights commitments. OHCHR stands ready to provide support in this context. Further, Mr. Balan emphasized that the establishment of a permanent secretariat for human rights is crucial for the implementation of human rights in the country.

Ms. Tcaci of UNODC drew attention to the link between human rights and health issues. Framing health issues in a human rights context had greatly facilitated UNODC’s work in the country. Furthermore, the Ombudsperson Office had been instrumental in highlighting the situation of vulnerable groups in Moldova.

Ms. Palii of the State Chancellery mentioned the importance of taking into account human rights in the implementation of the upcoming major reforms of the political system in Moldova. The State Chancellery remains open to moving the Secretariat for Human Rights from the Ministry of Justice to the State Chancellery, and discussions were ongoing on this issue. This could possibly strengthen the role of the Secretariat for Human Rights.

Ms. Gercheva of the UN underscored that human rights are a cross-cutting issue that should be furthered by the Prime Minister and mainstreamed across all sectors.

### 3. Approval of the MDTF Moldova Consolidated Progress Report for 2016

The Steering Committee approved the MDTF Moldova Consolidated Progress Report for 2016.
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<td>5. AOB</td>
<td>a. The next meeting will take place in November 2017.</td>
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<td>b. Ms. Palii of the State Chancellery said that the Steering Committee was an important forum for exchange of views between the Government, UN agencies and development partners. Joint programmes are an important tool to address development challenges in the country, for instance in relation to human rights, gender equality and women’s role in politics, health and confidence building between the two banks of the Nistru river. All priorities pursued by the programmes in the Fund were in line with Government priorities and she encouraged development partners to continue implementing joint programmes.</td>
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<td>Finally, Ms. Gercheva of the UN suggested that the focus of the next Steering Committee meeting should be to discuss ideas for new joint programmes.</td>
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