

**JOINT INTEGRATED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
MPTF OFFICE GENERIC FINAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY 2013– 31 DECEMBER 2015**

<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Title: Joint Integrated Local Development Programme / JILDLP MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 00085561 	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</p>
<p align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <p>UNDP UN Women</p>	<p>Republic of Moldova</p>
<p align="center">Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: MPTF /JP Contribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP 4,668,938 UN Women 597,177 <p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP 211,145 	<p>United Nations Partnership Framework Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities 2.1. People have access to more sustainable regional development, economic opportunities – innovation and agriculture in particular – and decent work
<p>Government Contribution <i>(if applicable)</i></p> <p>Other Contributions: Denmark US\$ 5,319,461</p>	<p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Chancellery of the Government of Moldova
<p>TOTAL: US\$ 5,530,606</p>	<p align="center">Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration: <i>36 months</i> Start Date <i>01.01.2013</i></p> <p>Original End Date <i>31.12.2015</i></p> <p>Actual End date <i>31.12.2015</i></p> <p>Have agency(ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system? Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Expected Financial Closure date: 31 December 2016</p>
<p>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</p> <p>Evaluation Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>December 2015</i></p> <p>Evaluation Report - Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>December 2015</i></p>	<p align="center">Report Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Narine Sahakyan Title: UNDP Deputy Resident representative Participating Organization (Lead): UNDP Moldova Email address: narine.sahakyan@undp.org

ABBREVIATIONS

APA	Academy of Public Administration
CALM	Congress of Local Authorities of Republic of Moldova
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CPA	Central Public Administration
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	Denmark development cooperation under Ministry of Foreign Affairs
EU	European Union
GE	Gender Equality
GIZ	German International Development Cooperation Agency
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IMC	Inter-municipal Cooperation
JILD	Joint Integrated Local Development Programme
LPA	Local Public Administration
LSED	Local socio-economic development strategies
ME	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDS	National Decentralization Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PC	Parity Commission
SC	State Chancellery
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WG	Working Group

FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP) is implemented by the Government of the Republic of Moldova with the assistance of UNDP and UN Women and the financial support of the Governments of Sweden and Denmark. JILDP was designed to improve the policy framework and to support the administrative systems and procedures focused on transfer of competencies to Local Public Administrations (LPA), decentralization and promotion of LPAs' role in decision-making. JILDP applies two complementary approaches, namely gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in order to eliminate direct and indirect discrimination and violation of women's rights, to engender laws, policies and budget decisions, to enhance democratic citizenship and to make service delivery more gender-responsive.

The **main results of the programme implementation** could be summarized as following.

Despite the considerable drawback of funding for the policy work, during 2013-2015, the Programme continued to support the Government of Moldova in the implementation of decentralization reform. Within the reported period, the programme offered **permanent legal expertise, informational, clerical and technical assistance for the activity of Parity Commission and its sectoral working groups**.

Based on JILDP support, since 2015 **Moldova introduced the new system of local finances**, which changed radically the way local governments are founded, as well as the accountability and motivation of local authorities for a more efficient and transparent financial management. The preliminary Impact Assessment (applied on pilot LPAs) proved that the new fiscal system is more transparent, predictable, gives more autonomy in managing local budgets, and provided strong incentives for increasing local revenues.

Moldova has been assisted to introduce a **new modern methodology on performance based budgeting**. In partnership with the Ministry of Finance, JILDP carried out a nationwide training programme, which targeted all local governments.

JILDP assisted the Government of Moldova to design an all-inclusive **policy paper related to the implementation of the Administrative-Territorial Reform**. The offered support quantified in several possible scenarios, detailing the strong and weak points of each.

In line with the provisions of National Decentralization Strategy, JILDP has undertaken a complex of activities aiming to strengthen the capacities of local authorities, as well as to create model municipalities – "champions of change" – for further replication and scaling up.

A comprehensive nationwide training program was implemented after 2015 general local elections, as result over **80% of newly elected mayors being professionally trained for a better performance**.

The **National Congress of Local Public Authorities (CALM) has been continually supported in its activities, as well as in its organization**. Particularly, it has been supported the creation of the Network of Women Mayors, which has been strategized and strengthened to fulfil its mission. Additionally, CALM has been supported to organize various regional and national events, aiming to increase the capacity and cooperation of local authorities.

30 targeted 'model municipalities' have been deeply assisted to improve the institutional performance, human capacities and financial strengths. In this regard, the targeted municipalities were supported to design and implement ambitious community development strategies, and institutional development plans. Over 552 public servants (including 386 women and 176 men) have received advanced professional trainings, as well as a significant on-job coaching assistance. The targeted municipalities have been supported with financial grants to improve their institutional capacities, as well as to implement one prioritized community project.

Six in-country and 5 abroad study visits were organized for relevant knowledge transfer to Moldovan mayors, local public servants and managers of local utility operators.

A package of innovative e-tools in local governments have been implemented in target communities:

(i) E-Documents Management System has been developed and piloted in 10 LPAs, (ii) SMS-ing for local public information, (iii) GPS monitoring of public equipment, (iii) Web pages of LPAs, (iv) electronic billboards, etc.

With the support of JILDP, **Moldova developed and piloted a functional model of Inter-Municipal Cooperation for joint organization of utility sector in rural area.** In this regard, 10 pilot IMC projects were implemented throughout Moldova, as well as a more supportive legal framework being upgraded. To date, the created pilot IMC utility companies are serving over 40 localities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. So far, over 40,000 citizens from rural area obtained access to regular waste management services, and other 10,000 to public street lighting. Over 50,000 rural inhabitants got access to basic roads maintenance services, inclusively effective and timely snow removal during the winter. More than 10 illegal landfills were liquidated and others are in the process. All established IMCs are functional and effective, and do not require subsidy from the local government.

Being supported by JILDP consultants, the target municipalities, in partnership with the community groups, **succeeded to mobilize additional founding of over 1 mln USD from other different donors.**

A special intervention of the JILDP has been directed to the empowerment of community groups. As result, 18 community-based organizations were created, and 57 projects on HR&GM were supported to be implemented.

During the implementation period, the Programme succeeded to organize a **massive nationwide campaign in supporting decentralization and local public administration reform:** a total of 300 appearances in national media were registered. 7000 visibility products were printed, 20 street banners installed, 7 video toolkits were elaborated, 30 visibility national and local events organized.

I. Purpose

JILDP builds on the priorities of the Government Programme ‘European Integration. Freedom, Democracy and Wellbeing’, as well as the National Decentralization Strategy (2013-2014) and UN-Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (2013-2017), in which increase transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities and ensure people access to more sustainable regional development, economic opportunities – innovation and agriculture in particular – and decent work are identified as major concerns.

The JILDP development objective is 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 Decentralization Strategy.

Immediate Objectives of the programme are:

- To support the Government in improving the policy and legal framework as mandated by the National Decentralization Strategy, to ensure local autonomy, availability of resources, and more effective local management for better and equitable service provision.
- To improve the capacity of LPAs to deliver efficient, equitable and accessible local public services, to facilitate sustainable development and foster social inclusion.

While the JILDP applies a holistic approach to programming tackling the challenges at all levels of the governance, it puts the human rights and gender equality issues in the centre of all its activities. Thus, at the policy level the programme focused on ensuring transparent, non – discriminative, inclusive and evidence-based policy making. At the local level the programme’s key focus was on development of capacities of local authorities on rights based and gender responsive policy and budget planning and implementation.

The following **outputs** are planned for completion in the programme components:

- Policy and legal frameworks to support autonomous, efficient and financially-sustainable LPAs developed and implemented
- Capacities of LPAs and communities strengthened to deliver better services to citizens and create models of LPAs - in line with changes brought by the Decentralization Strategy.

II. Assessment of Programme Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

Programme outcomes

The main outcome of JILDIP's assistance at the national level was the improvement of the policy and legal framework in decentralization. Provisions of the draft sectoral decentralization strategy were integrated in the Education Code approved in July 2014 and the National Youth Strategy (2014-2020). A new system of local government finances was piloted in the three rayons and in the Capital City during 2014, and introduced from 2015 in the entire country. The new system changes radically the way local governments are funded, thus strongly improving the quality and sustainability of Moldovan democracy.

At the local level the main outcome of JILDIP activity was strengthening the capacity of 30 target communities to become 'champions of change' and model local governments. To boost the technical performance of the local governments, the staff of local governments were schooled in their main areas of activities during 4 comprehensive institutional development programs (in human resource management, public procurement, public property management, and public finance management), and coached to improve internal regulations and procedures in the same areas. Small grants were offered to all 30 target mayoralities to meet their needs according to their institutional development plans, which aim for better systems and procedures within the local governments, thus making them more efficient, transparent and accountable to the citizens. For the successful implementation of the fiscal decentralization reform, the capacity building activities were extended to cover all 74 localities that piloted the new system of local public finance in 2014. Training in local public finance management and developing plans for local revenue capitalization, along with assistance in organizing public debates were the main interventions of the JILDIP in pilot communities. The piloting of inter-municipal cooperation was initiated in 10 JILDIP target communities and more than 40 neighboring villages with the purpose of setting up joint communal services operators, joint waste management enterprises, common building and exploration of road infrastructure and joint emergency units. All these to reach the ultimate goal of the decentralization reform – more efficient and accessible local public services for the citizens.

The gender mainstreaming and human rights-based approach continued to be the cross-cutting issue in both the elaboration and promotion of the decentralization policies and in the implementation of local development initiatives. Empowered women and men representing vulnerable groups created community-based organizations, which increased social inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups and their meaningful involvement in development processes and participation in local decision making, thus ensuring that all benefit equitably from the new policies promoted and improved services provided at the local level. This contributes to accountable and good local governance as well as to an equitable and sustainable local development.

Programme Outputs and Results:

Due to the fact that at the end of 2013 the Embassy of Sweden withdrew its financial support for developing policies to implement the decentralization strategy, the JILDIP support was limited to technical assistance and advice to the Ministry of Finance and LPAs on fiscal decentralization and the State Chancellery on capacity development to led implementation of the decentralization reform, as well as for the completion of the drafting of sectoral strategies in the fields of social, education, environment, health, culture, youth and sports. Nerveless, during the period 2014-2015, some interventions on specific topics were initiated and financed from UNDP's and UN Women's TRAC funds, as well as by other donors and with the active involvement of the JILDIP team. At the same time, some activities like the assistance provided to the districts piloting the new local public finance system and the elaboration of the sectoral decentralization strategies for communal services were financed from the Local Governance and Development Component of JILDIP. In this context, the main achievements are presented as part of the Policy Framework Support component.

Output 1: Policy and legal frameworks to support autonomous, efficient and financially sustainable LPAs developed and implemented

During 2013-2015 JILDP provided **support to the Parity Commission to function efficiently and lead the decentralization process**. The programme offered permanent legal expertise, informational, clerical and technical assistance for the 3 regular meetings of the Parity Commission and its sectoral working groups, where important documents like fiscal decentralization, sectoral decentralization strategies, the methodology for local governments' capacity assessment, etc. were discussed and endorsed.

Based on JILDP supported analysis and simulations, a **new system of local government finances was introduced from 2015**, with three districts and Chisinau Municipality piloted the system during 2014. An amended **Law on local public finances was approved by the Parliament in November 2013**, and local officials (mayors, finance directors, etc.) were informed and trained on calculating revenues and planning budgets under the provisions of the revised law. The new local government finance system is a long awaited legal act, aiming to eliminate a very important remnant of the Soviet governance system; it changes radically the way local governments are funded, thus improving strongly the quality and sustainability of Moldovan democracy. By setting fixed tax shares and formula-based equalization transfers, allocated directly through the treasury, **the new system improves the equity and transparency of the state-local transfer system, while practically eliminating the political influence in the way local authorities receive funds for regular operations**. The amount of the transfer is independent of local revenue collection and provides full autonomy on allocating and spending funds according to local priorities. The **new system provides strong incentives for rational and efficient fiscal management, incentivizes the establishment of local taxes and increases accountability** of local authorities to their constituencies.

JILDP provided **technical assistance to all pilot communities through a package of interventions that includes trainings, consultations, and support in disseminating the new financing system for pilot LPAs** at the request of the State Chancellery.

Also with the assistance of JILDP, the **Impact Assessment report of the new fiscal system implemented in pilot LPAs** was developed. The main conclusions of the report indicate that the new system is more transparent, predictable and provides more autonomy in the management of local budgets and offers opportunities for increasing local revenues. The pilot LPAs were able to direct budget funds to solving the pressing problems of communities. It is recommended that the new fiscal system is strengthened with the implementation of the other two important components of fiscal decentralization - increasing local revenue tax base and improving local financial management.

A new modern performance based budgeting methodology was introduced by the Ministry of Finance, which will become mandatory for first tier local governments starting in 2016, after being implemented at the second tier local governments in the previous budgetary year. Due to the complexity of this reform and its direct link to the overall fiscal decentralization reform, a **nationwide training programme on performance based budgeting for all local governments** from Moldova was carried out for all 898 local governments in Moldova. The JILDP Programme was the main partner of the Ministry of Finance in this crucial initiative for advancing the reform in modernizing the public finance system.

A report on **international practices on fiscal incentives for inter-municipal cooperation was developed and presented to the Ministry of Finance** in support to developing future policy options in this field.

At the request of the Parity Commission, all Ministries have initiated the **elaboration of gender-mainstreamed Sectoral Decentralization strategies** using technical assistance provided by JILDP. To support this process a **guide of sectoral decentralization strategies** was elaborated and presented at a workshop for the representatives of sectoral working groups. In addition, CPA representatives increased capacities in mainstreaming gender in public policies, with focus on sector decentralization strategies.

The Ministries of Education and Social Protection completed the drafts of these policy documents. The Ministry of Education organized 2 public consultations and **included provisions of the Education**

decentralization strategy in the Education Code, which was approved by the Parliament in April 2014. Initial recommendations for gender mainstreaming of the developed drafts were provided to both Ministries.

The other four working groups of Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Environment **developed the draft of sectoral strategies and organized public debates with the main stakeholders.**

Following a Decision of the Parity Commission, the **Methodology for assessment of LPA capacity was tested on 50 selected 1st and 2nd levels LPAs.** According to the results of the assessment it is estimated that 84% of the rural LPAs, 22% of the small towns and 25% of the districts do not have enough administrative capacities to deliver local public services.

The **study of local revenues and proposals on increasing the local revenue base**, developed by Slovak experts with JILDIP logistic support, has been discussed within the fiscal decentralization working group. The task force group created by order of the Minister of Finance has synthesized the conclusions of the study and presented proposals for legal framework amendments. Additionally, the task force group representatives shared experience on consolidation of the local taxes base during a study visit to Slovakia.

Following the State Chancellery request a **public policy document (PPD) for territorial-administrative reform** was developed and later discussed during several meetings with State Chancellery representatives, Special Parliamentary Commission on Decentralization, and development partners. The PPD identifies and examines the problems related to territorial administrative fragmentation and presents three options for improving the territorial-administrative structure of the country, and provides a brief analysis, scenarios and roadmap for each of the options.

Advisory notes on mainstreaming HRBA and gender into the development of the **administrative-territorial reform options** and related processes, and the monitoring and evaluation process of the new local public finance system in the pilot localities were also developed and considered at the elaboration of the administrative-territorial reform options.

For the implementation of the National Decentralization Strategy the draft **Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) Methodology was developed** and discussed with the working groups. The ME Methodology includes the conceptual framework, methods and tools for monitoring and evaluation as well as the system of indicators of implementation for CPAs and LPAs. As result, the **Decentralization Reform Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Report** was developed, and decisions on advancing the decentralization reform have been made by the Parity Commission.

Following the provisions of a communication strategy/plan in support of Decentralization, **communication officers from all line ministries and districts were trained** on how to deliver key messages to the public, including the human rights and gender aspects. A visual identity for the reform was developed and internet based, social networking campaigns were conducted.

Moldova's positive experience and best practices on the field of fiscal decentralization, participatory process on conceptualization and institutionalization of the decentralization reform, as well as good practices on local governance and local empowerment, shared by the Moldovan Government representatives at the International Conference "Making Decentralization Reform Work: Opportunities and Innovations for Local Governance and Service Delivery", organized in Kyiv (Ukraine), were highly appreciated by the Conference participants from other 15 countries.

Additionally, JILDIP adapted its activities to the priority areas of the **National Program on Ensuring Gender Equality 2010-2015**, such as: improvement of gender disaggregated data collection and analysis, capacity development of local authorities for gender mainstreaming, etc. JILDIP, through its Roma social inclusion and Romani women's empowerment initiatives, continued its support to the implementation of the **National Action Plan for Roma support (2011-2015).**

Output 2: Capacities of LPAs and communities strengthened to deliver better services to citizens and create models of LPAs - in line with changes brought by the Decentralization Strategy

Key Results:

2.1 Strengthen local self-governance and public management performance in 20 target communes to better respond to the needs of women and men, particularly the most vulnerable (National Decentralization Strategy: Objectives 2, 3, 6, 7)

The target of JILDP was to develop **model local communities** in line with the provisions of the National Decentralization Strategy; hence increasing the administrative capacities of target local governments was an imperative objective. The capacity building support was extended to all 30 target communities, although initially intended for only 20 of them.

JILDP’s approach to building the capacities of local governments was **broad in scope and multilayered**, linking central policies to local practices and covering all main areas of competence of local governments. The design of capacity building interventions targeted the **institutional** (mayoralty), **personal** (local governments’ staff) and **inter-institution levels** (Table 1). To this end, a number of tools and methodologies were applied, like facilitation of participatory planning, comprehensive professional development trainings, coaching and consultancy, networking and exchange of information, with the view to improving administrative performance and efficiency of local governments, as well as their accountability to and engagement with community members for an inclusive local development.

Table 1. Capacity building approach implemented by JILDP at local level

	Improved Institutional Arrangements	Improved public services (access and quality)
Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity assessment • Institutional development plans • Institutional development grants • Coaching and mentoring for local strategic planning and improving the internal systems, procedures and operations • ICT tools for daily internal operations – webpages, social media profiles, documents and records management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants for improving specific local services • Technical support and equipment for local municipal enterprises • IMC models • Feasibility studies • Coaching and mentoring to develop IMC models
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development trainings • Local and international study visits • E-learning platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching and mentoring to develop IMC models • Local and international study visits
Inter-governmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly mayors meetings • Local and international study visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching and mentoring to develop IMC models • Local and international study visits

The institutional and administrative capacity of 30 target local governments improved as result a of JILDP interventions. The initial **capacity assessment exercise** performed in each community helped identifying needs and **planning institutional development**, and tailoring the program’s support accordingly. **30 small scale institutional development projects** that resulted after this effort and financed by the JILDP, provided the necessary impetus to local staff and were conducive to improving the institutional performance and outcomes of target local governments, an aspect often disregarded by local mayors. The institutional development projects improved the work conditions for local staff though small scale renovations and

upgrading IT equipment, increased transparency and communication through information boards and newsletters, facilitated access to mayoralty's services through front desks and ramps, and created the necessary facilities for community gatherings.

A significant effort was channeled to **upgrading skills and improving knowledge** of all categories of local governments' staff in their professional areas of competence - mayors, vice-mayors, chief accountants and accountants, tax and land management specialists, local councils' secretaries. The **comprehensive professional development training programs** included circa 95% of staff of all 30 target communities (552 public servants, including 386 women and 175 men) and extended to subjects like managing public finance, local taxes, public property, human resources and performing public procurement according to official requirements and standards, upgrading computer skills and using information systems for human resources. Additionally, members of local communities and mayoralties were also trained and coached in writing and submitting to different donors regional development projects.

The sustainability of the training program materials was ensured by transferring them to the Academy of Public Administration (APA) for further use in its professional development curricula. For that purpose, APA trainers were taught in delivering the developed training programs pertaining to the core areas of activity of public administration (namely the programs on: **human resource management and public procurement** (4 training days each program), **public property management** and **tax collection** (3 days each program) and **local public finance management** (9 days training program).

Through on-the-job coaching, local governments **improved their operation and functionality**. As a result of these interventions, local governments developed/updated their internal operations and documents referring to their main areas of activity, like guidelines for new employees and job descriptions, procurement plans, applied the provisions of the new public finance system and performance based budgeting for the local budget, organized public debates on the local budget, and other.

Acknowledging the importance of sharing experience for fostering capacity development of local governments, JILDIP successfully **stimulated networking, peer-to-peer learning and transfer of knowledge** through regular mayors meetings and study visits. During **9 quarterly meetings**, the mayors from 30 target communities discussed issues related to local governance, institutional development, decentralization policies, the new fiscal decentralization system, e-governance, fundraising, local economic development, cultural and youth activities at local level, etc. Those **six in-country study visits** proved to be efficient in stimulating cooperation among mayors and learning first-hand information and best practices on how to implement local development projects, improve transparency and engage communities in local processes, and foster local economic development. At the same time, JILDIP was successful in transferring knowledge by exposing mayors from target communities to international practices during **5 study visits abroad** to Estonia (on e-governance), Poland (on economic development), Ukraine and Romania (on cross-border cooperation, local development, local services), Czech Republic (on IMC), as well as participation in several international conferences and fora. These study visits also occasioned the development of several partnerships and joint initiatives with mayors from those countries.

Innovative practices and e-tools were tested in target communities with the view to identify potential areas of localizing the e-transformation agenda. The trust-based relationship resulted from JILDIP's intensive and comprehensive interventions in its target communities provided the favorable environment for testing innovative approaches and some e-tools for local governance. This refers to **testing re-engineering** of a public service using the **design thinking** methodology with the support of MiLab/UNDP, and also introducing **innovative and e-tools** for local governance. More specifically, a **documents and records management system** was developed and piloted in 10 communities and provided to the State Chancellery for further scaling up. The system increases the performance and efficiency of the daily activity of the mayoralties by simplifying the internal documents' flow, improving tracking and record of documents, as well as generating reports. At the same time, four local governments were supported in piloting several **e-mayoralty type of tools**, like sms-ing to increase public information, GPS monitoring systems for public equipment, local websites to stimulate local employment and agri-business, electronic billboards to increase

transparency and broadcasting online meetings of the local councils. The target LPAs share their good practices, some of them being replicated by other communities. The **online presence and activity of target LPAs significantly increased** with JILDP support, by the end of the program half of the localities developed web-pages and most of them have social media profiles. The national average indicates that only 28% of local governments have webpages, whereas only three of target communities had them at the onset of JILDP.

JILDP adapted and responded to the **capacity needs triggered by the 2015 local general elections**, when 898 mayors were elected in local public offices. In this context, circa **80% of newly elected mayors benefited from induction trainings** (and a total number of 907 beneficiaries - mayors, vice-mayors, local councilors, etc.) that helped them better understand the specific of public service and their main duties in the context of the decentralization reform. This nation-wide induction-training program was a continuation of JILDP's previous successful experience, when similar activities were conducted after the 2007 and 2011 local elections.

At the same time, an innovative tool was piloted in 2015, when in cooperation with the APA, the induction training program for the elected officials was developed in an e-learning format. **The e-learning platform** shall be further maintained and updated by APA, hence reducing future costs of trainings and ensuring easy and fast access of all elected officials from the country to induction training and knowledge about public service.

Due to the on-the job facilitation and coaching provided to each target communities, the mayoralties have **improved transparency and communication** with local communities, through local information boards, community meetings and events and updating internal transparency regulations. The active involvement of local governments in the **Transparency Week'** national awareness raising campaign significantly increased from one year to another, indicating on internalized practices and acknowledging the importance of accountability and transparent governance for local development.

Congress of Local Authorities of Republic of Moldova (CALM) as a voice for local governments in Moldova was supported in strengthening the capacity of local governments, both political leadership and technical specialists. The Network of Women Mayors created under the auspices of CALM was continuously supported in finalizing its **Plan of Actions for 2014-2017** and identifying priority directions for development, raising women's issues and promoting women's leadership. A database of women secretaries of local councils was created, and capacity building needs, leadership and women empowerment in local governance were identified by the newly created network of women secretaries of local councils, which contributed to strengthening the LPA's institutional and leadership capacities. Further, the CALM Women Network was assisted to share regionally their positive experience, and to develop the first draft of the new **CALM Women Network strategy**.

Also, the Programme supported the empowerment of community groups in becoming dialogue partners of LPAs. As the result of mobilization and empowerment process, and capacity building provided to the community groups, the **newly created 18 community-based organizations** (11 of them led by women), and other 12 existing CBOs, implemented **22 human rights and gender mainstreamed projects** supported by JILDP (including 4 with focus on Romani community groups), and other over 15 local projects implemented with own resources and other over 20 projects implemented in cooperation with LPAs with local resources and from other donors, which contributed to improved access to pre-school education, healthcare, sports and social services, as well as ensured capacity building and social inclusion of marginalized groups.

JIDP also fostered **networking and exchange of experience** among CBOs on local development and social projects, learning and replicating viable project ideas, cooperation between vulnerable groups and local governments, volunteering and fundraising for local development through in-country study visits.

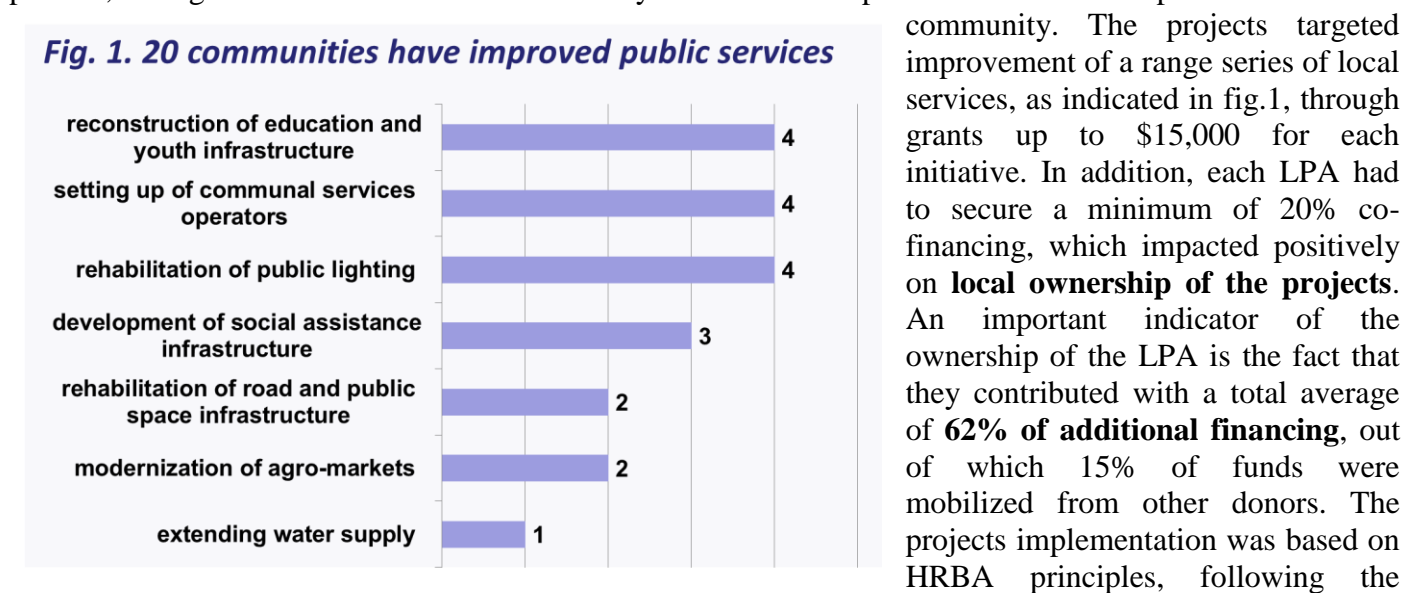
The ongoing **support to Roma women and girls** from target communities resulted in the creation and registration of a new Roma Women and Girls organization – NGO "Romano Alav", which today has 3

charter and 14 other active members of the organization, and have implemented several projects for ensuring information, guidance and assistance to further empower Roma girls and women in Moldova. The Roma Women and Girls network was strengthened with JILD DP support and backed up with a small grant in 2014. Later capacity building interventions made by UN Women-UNDP joint project “Women in Politics” led to two Roma women, for the first time in Moldova, being elected as councilors.

2.2 Improve management, access and quality of municipal service provision in 20 communes and 10 clusters of communities (National Decentralization Strategy: Objectives 1, 3, 4, 5)

By receiving the comprehensive JILD DP technical assistance packages, **30 target communities succeeded to update their socio-economic development plans** in compliance with the human rights and gender equality principles hence setting the base for an integrated local development. These plans are also conducive to an enabling environment for rural economic and business development. It was for the first time when these communities prioritized their development projects by involving not just active local stakeholders (administration, business and civil society organizations), but also representatives of women groups and community vulnerable groups: elderly, poor, disabled, youth, ethnical (particularly Roma) and religious minorities groups.

Following the identified priorities, 20 communities were supported with on-going coaching to prepare, submit, implement and monitor **20 community development projects** to improve the service delivery at local level. The project ideas were selected and implemented through a transparent and participatory process, through consultation with the community inhabitants and prioritization of development needs of the

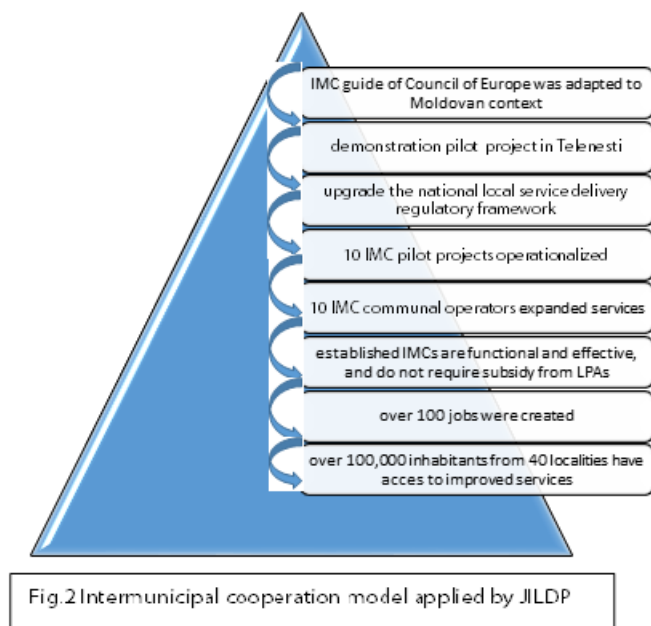


community. The projects targeted improvement of a range series of local services, as indicated in fig.1, through grants up to \$15,000 for each initiative. In addition, each LPA had to secure a minimum of 20% co-financing, which impacted positively on **local ownership of the projects**. An important indicator of the ownership of the LPA is the fact that they contributed with a total average of **62% of additional financing**, out of which 15% of funds were mobilized from other donors. The projects implementation was based on HRBA principles, following the

inclusiveness and transparency principles. The support JILD DP provided to the LPAs in the process of strategic planning and improvement of above-mentioned local services was a **successful capacity building and on-job coaching exercise**. Benefiting from guidance in a learning-by-doing type of process, local governments were capacitated to **project writing and applying** for funding to meet communities’ development needs. Based on this experience, LPAs, in partnership with community groups, developed about 100 additional project proposals and submitted to other donors; about 50 received support, thus **mobilizing about 1 mln USD** additional funding for local priorities.

The programme investment in piloting partnerships between LPAs through building **inter-municipal cooperation** and other forms of partnerships, as models for improved local services is an example of **best practice**. The inter-municipal cooperation component focused on **10 clusters** of municipalities, which were assisted to pilot several forms of inter-municipal cooperation for common priority sectors and services, encouraging clustering of municipalities around common needs.

The **IMC model was developed** based on lessons learned and models from other countries (e.g. Romania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Czech Republic, etc.), but building in the local solutions, through bottom up and needs based approach for organizing services in more effective manner (fig.2).



Document review and stakeholder consultations with LPAs applying IMC but also wider stakeholder groups confirm that IMC is an instrument for improving efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and offer better service for lower cost. Joining services brings some 25% of cost reduction for individual municipalities (sewerage, waste, water) and especially if more communities join to organize regional hubs. The approach to building IMC included joint trainings, exchanges and joint work towards developing partnerships: from planning and

creating them, selecting the most appropriate model of cooperation to effectively managing and maintaining the selected public services.

Following the Governmental priority to promote the Inter-Municipal Cooperation (IMC) as an important tool in supporting the decentralization, the JILD contributed significantly to **upgrade the national local service delivery regulatory framework**, by allowing the IMC schemes in organizing and operating the legal units for communal services. In this regard, the regulatory changes offered to the LPAs the right to establish joint municipal enterprises – operators with several LPAs-founders (the Government Decision from 03.07.2014 on adjusting the Regulation on municipal enterprises), building the necessary local capacities and setting up the ground for piloting a wide range of public services based on IMC.

At the same time, prior to the scale-up in 10 clusters, a **demonstration pilot project on joint waste management service provision** has been implemented in the Telenesti cluster (Telenesti town and 7 neighborhood communities), ensuring access to garbage collection services to over 25,000 citizens.

The practical capacities of the representatives of targeted-LPAs have been increased through **transfer of knowledge** from Czech Republic in the field of Inter-municipal cooperation (study tour to demonstrative IMC associations in Czech Republic for 16 mayors and government officials).

Applying the acquired knowledge and national legislation, **10 pilot and demonstrative projects on inter-municipal cooperation (IMC) have been operationalized**. In this regard, 40 municipalities, bunched in 10 territorial clusters, have been assisted with a comprehensive methodological guidance (professional legal, economical and technical expertise), as well as granted with a \$100,000 funding (per each cluster) for technical endowment. Three contracted consultancy entities delivered **comprehensive assistance packages** to 10 target LPA-clusters: trainings, opportunities assessments, feasibility studies, inter-municipal cooperation agreements, management plans.

The granted assistance resulted in setting up of 10 Inter-Municipal Cooperation Associations (the pioneering initiatives in Moldova) for joint communal service provision: settled up 10 joint communal operators, established joint regulatory framework, as well as a single tariff system. It is worth to be mentioned that, for the first time in Moldova – **4 communal operators have been founded as”joint public**

institution” – “municipal enterprises with several LPAs-founders”. Another 6 communal operators have been established by reorganizing, restructuring and revitalizing the existing communal operators, also extending them from “municipal” to “inter-municipal” activity approach. The 10 new IMC operators are planned to ensure a **multi-functional approach**, by covering the whole range of communal activities in targeted communities: water and sanitation, roads maintenance and snow removal, waste management and greening, public lighting. In this regard, the targeted communal operators have been endowed with new specialized multi-functional tractors and accessories (waste bins, electro tools, etc.). Within the capacity building measures, all targeted mayors and operators’ managers learned the most advanced national experience in organizing communal services in Telenesti and Ungheni.

The IMC support was **largely co-financed by the beneficiaries** (over 100,000 USD), but also enabled clusters of communities to benefit from the Regional Development Fund, which supports local and regional initiatives.

Being initiated on some basic public services (waste management, water supply and roads maintenance), the newly established joint IMC utility operators **have been strengthened to ensure the sustainability** and to launch **complimentary communal services** to citizens and firms, which are significantly increasing their financial and economic sustainability and viability. The projects implementation was based on HRBA principles, following the inclusiveness and transparency principles. From January to July 2015, **monitoring and evaluation frameworks** were put in place with support of community facilitators, thus ensuring interventions’ sustainability.

The JILDIP granted assistance resulted in pro-active business plans, enhanced financial management (breakeven points exceed), increased the staff number (over 100 jobs were created) and substantially extended technical capacities (JILDIP granted each enterprise with specialized vehicles, as well as full utility inventory: welding equipments, pump & trash pumps, gasoline generators, air-compressors with accessories, angle grinders, chainsaws, hammer drills, lawnmowers etc.). By expanding and diversifying their activities, the IMC utility operators are both **increasing the quality of life in deprived rural areas**, and ensuring their **financial and economic sustainability**. Within the capacity building measures, the targeted IMC operators’ managers learned the most advanced Romanian experience in organizing the utility services in rural area, by participating in a study tour to 12 IMC communal operators in different regions of Romania.

To date, the piloted IMC utility companies are serving over **40 localities with more than 100,000 inhabitants**. Over 40,000 citizens from rural area obtained access to **regular waste management services**, and other 10,000 to **public street lighting**. Over 50,000 rural inhabitants got access to **basic roads maintenance services**, inclusively effective and timely snow removal during the winter. More than 10 illegal landfills were liquidated and others are in the process. All established IMCs are **functional and effective**, and do not require subsidy from the local government.

So far, the JILDIP IMC model, based on ‘joint municipal enterprises’ legal form, became the **IMC model promoted by the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM)** among Moldovan municipalities. In partnership with CALM, within 3 regional seminars, over 60 mayors have been in field visits to piloted IMC projects, for results dissemination and replication.

As a result of efforts and lessons learned from modelling IMC, the **IMC Guide** of Council of Europe was adapted to Moldovan context and published, as a tool for raising awareness and guide how to organize such services locally.

For further enhancement of IMC in the Republic of Moldova, the Ministry of Finance has been supported to design a policy concept for developing **financial incentives to stimulate inter-municipal cooperation** (based on advanced international experience and national potential).

2.3 Support an enabling environment for rural business development, creation of economic opportunities and diversification of rural economies (National Decentralization Strategy Objectives 4, 7)

In order to support an enabling environment for rural business development, JILDP has developed and tested a multilayered approach to local economic development. Thus, **30 LPAs were supported to identify feasible instruments to foster local economic development.**

As first step, **a training program for all target communities** was implemented to respond to the needs of representatives from the target communities (mayors, deputy mayors, secretaries of local councils, head of municipal departments, representatives of local CBOs, etc.), in terms of understanding principles in LED, and role and actions of different actors in promoting and fostering local economic development. Out all 30 target communities, **12 were selected for testing a more advance approach**, defining the **economic profile of their localities** and, development objectives and opportunities and additional interventions necessary to enhance the economic factors. A series of workshops were carried out in these communities addressing two different target groups: (1) local authorities' representatives, and their role in Local Economic Development, and (2) private sector representatives, and their problems, needs and priorities for future development. As result, **12 selected communities developed and approved Local Economic Development Plans.** Over **40 LED initiatives** were developed additionally serving as base for future fundraising for LPAs in order to implement identified economic opportunities.

JILDP strengthened local CBOs to become reliable partners for LPAs and businesses in local economic development and engagement process.

An innovative instrument piloted in these 12 communities was the **support provided in setting-up a communication platform with the local business community** in order to enable creation and functionality of local economic councils. To date, the majority of the **12 communities have created and approved regulations for such local economic councils.**

The programme provided support in creation of **3 public-private partnerships** in the field of local service provision through providing trainings and assistance to elaborate feasibility studies and implement 3 selected PPPs, including at least one inter-community initiative.

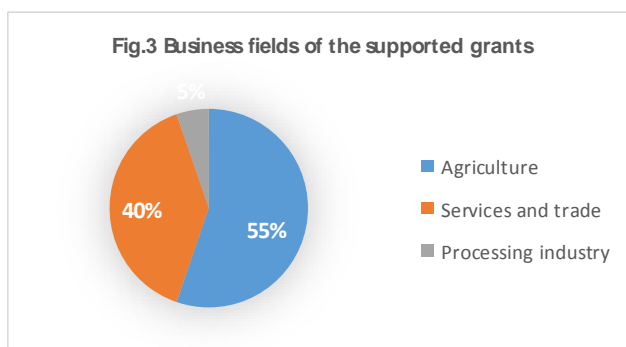
In addition to supporting LPAs, the programme has been providing **assistance to rural population from target communities to initiate small businesses and develop entrepreneurial skills.** During the first stage, a **series of business trainings** were conducted for 363 persons (including 233 women). The main goal was to capacitate the participants to open, expand, and manage innovative rural enterprises. It is worth mentioning that due to a great number of requests, the total number of trained participants was **double as planned initially.** Based on their assessment of general business management skills acquired after the trainings, almost half of the applicants were supported to draft business plans. As result, **164 of them (including 101 women) developed business plans** for their ongoing or new businesses, thus increasing employability potential at local level.

As result of the capacity building efforts described above, **38 small businesses of which 48% existent and 52% newly created benefited from assistance and support** in financing and business development. It's worth mentioning, that this component was implemented in two rounds, the first round in 20 localities with businesses financed by JILDP/UNDP and later, in 10 localities, financed by JILDP/UN Women. In the

second round, only women from JILDP localities were eligible to participate, and thus focusing on **women's economic empowerment.**

Creation of new jobs, especially for vulnerable people and women was the main purpose of providing financial support in the form of grant. As result of project implementation, in average, each business created 3 new jobs, summing up to a total of **115 new jobs created.**

38 financed businesses represent different business



areas, but **mostly agricultural sector**, including apiculture, zootechnics, food processing, horticulture, flower growing, crafts, clothing etc. (as per. Fig.3).

Additionally to the business grants, to further enable the local environment for increased employment opportunities for women and vulnerable groups, the CBOs and local governments in 4 communities, with JILDP support, created 1 crèche group and increased the number of places in 3 kindergartens, thus creating additional 4 new jobs and already providing opportunities for 42 women to get employed as result of extended child care services in their communities.

Scaling-Up

Supporting local development was the main focus of three consecutive programs phases (first phase -ILDP 2007-2009, second phase - JILDP 2010-2012, third phase JILDP 2013-2015), and shall remain for the next programmatic intervention (IMLDP 2015-2017). Throughout almost ten years of interventions, the JILDP was persistent in supporting the same policy level development related to decentralization, coupled with consistent methodologies and approaches to local development perpetuated and improved over time. The long-term interrupted work allowed the JILDP to address the issue of sustainability and scalability of its interventions programmatically, both vertically and horizontally. Hence, the JILDP ensured that policy level reforms were reflected in local level interventions, while local level practices were supported by a permissive legal framework.

More specifically, at policy level, the JILDP worked closely with the State Chancellery to develop the National Decentralization Strategy, and consequently its horizontal spread to other fields, particularly fiscal, education, environment, social protection, youth and culture, property, etc. At the same time, JILDP's support was significant in conceptualizing the fiscal decentralization reform, and subsequently piloting it in three rayons and Chisinau municipality, and expansion nation-wide the new system of local public finance. The pilots (in the ILDP phase) and the capacity building support of JILDP to all first level local governments (in 2015) in implementing the mandatory performance based budgeting methodology at local level is also noteworthy in this context.

At the same, at local level JILDP had successfully tested, piloted and ultimately extended to larger scale innovative models for local service provision (IMC) and community mobilization for empowerment. The first IMC tested in the second phase of JILDP provided valuable methodological insight for a functional IMC model in Moldova, and was further applied in the ten pilot IMC projects for different types of local public services. In parallel, the IMC piloting experience was used to inform the development and official approval of a supportive legal framework in the country with the support of JILDP. JILDP's soft interventions at local level were based on the community mobilization for empowerment methodology developed and piloted in its second phased, and continuously applied in its 2013-2015 phase as well. With its strong focus on including the vulnerable in the local decision making process, human rights and gender sensitive local strategic planning, this approach was applied in selecting, implementing and monitoring the specific public service investments and tailored interventions in each target community. This methodology is commonly referred to by the State Chancellery and other donors for ensuring genuine inclusive and participatory processes at local level.

Qualitative assessment

JILDP is a programme of the Government of Moldova, implemented in partnership with UNDP and UN Women, coordinated by the State Chancellery, with the financial support from the Governments of Sweden and Denmark.

The new system of local government finance enjoyed broad acceptance of the main central and local level stakeholders. The new system increases transparency and equity, as well as accountability to the people by removing the dependence on the rayon authorities and political influences.

The sectoral decentralization strategies are elaborated by working groups bringing together all stakeholders, using a HRBA/GE approach and providing direct input into the Sectoral development strategies and the new laws.

There are two underlying reasons for the broad acceptance, and many times consensus, of the reforms: a) the mutual trust built between the government (central and local) staff and the JILDP team and their experts, and b) the gradual strengthening of local governments' capacity and improvement of local services, as well as c) concerted communication efforts. Close cooperation and joint initiatives with other development partners, like USAID, GIZ, Council of Europe, and IMF on policy development and local interventions contributed to advancing the reform.

Joint implementation of the program by the two agencies – UNDP and UN Women – each with its specific set of expertise and knowledge is a key factor for ensuring the comprehensiveness and sustainability of the provided technical assistance and support, in line with the normative basis of the UN.

“One UN” coordination at all levels – from the highest to technical levels – brought the necessary synergy and mutual complementarity to the program implementation.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>Outcome: To support better and equitable service provision and sustainable local development, facilitated by improved legal and institutional framework resulting from the implementation of the National Decentralization Strategy</p> <p>Output 1: Policy and legal frameworks to support autonomous, efficient and financially-sustainable LPAs developed and implemented</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.1. A system of local public finance that ensures local governments' fiscal autonomy in place</p> <p>Baseline: Lack of a local public finance system in line with the Decentralization strategy. Policy options for fiscal decentralization elaborated</p> <p>Planned Target: new system of local public finances in line with Decentralization strategy in place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New system of local government finances approved for implementation from 2015, while three districts and the Capital City piloted the system during 2014. Communities in three pilot districts and Chisinau municipality assisted in the tax base analysis and development of plans for revenue capitalization, local budgeting and organization of budget public hearings in 2014 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law nr.267 from 1.11.2013, http://lex.justice.md/md/350367
<p>Indicator 1.2 Sectoral decentralization strategies designed and implemented in a gender-mainstreamed manner</p> <p>Baseline: Draft sectoral decentralization strategies for education, social services and property</p> <p>Planned Target: At least 3 sectoral decentralization strategies developed and 3 sectoral strategies implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation Methodology of the implementation of the National Decentralization Strategy developed • Monitoring and Evaluation Report of the implementation of the National Decentralization Strategy in 2013 was developed • Draft of Decentralization Strategy in Education adjusted after 2 public debates; provisions of the draft sectoral decentralization strategy were integrated in the Education Code approved in July 2014 • Sectoral Strategies for decentralization of services in water and sanitation, waste management and natural resources management developed • 7 public debates and consultation on sectoral decentralization issues organized • Methodology of gender-mainstreaming sector decentralization policies developed 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation Methodology of the implementation of the National Decentralization Strategy • Monitoring and Evaluation Report • Education Code 2014 • Draft of sectoral strategies for decentralization of services in water and sanitation, waste management and natural resources • Minutes from public debates • Guide for Sectoral decentralization strategies developed • Methodology of gender-mainstreaming sector decentralization policies
<p>Indicator 1.3 Legislation amended, # of proposals for amending the legal framework in main decentralization areas</p> <p>Baseline: Draft proposals for legislative framework amendment submitted to Parliamentary Commission on Decentralization (as of 2012)</p> <p>Planned Target: Legislation amended. Amendments provided to the relevant normative acts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National local service delivery regulatory framework related to IMC in organizing and operating legal units for communal services was amended. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Decision from 03.07.2014 on adjusting the Regulation on municipal enterprises
<p>Indicator 1.4 Training programs designed and embedded into Academy of Public Administration curricula</p> <p>Baseline: Introduction training on decentralization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Training programs elaborated on public property, public procurement, public finance management and tax collection, and human resource management in cooperation with APA; training of APA trainers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs on public property, public procurement, public finance management and tax collection, and human resource

	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
issues piloted Planned Target: Elaboration of 3 training modules for the APA initiated	organized for three of them and the training materials transferred to the Academy to be further used in their regular curriculum.		management
Indicator 1.5 .# of Governmental officials, LPA representatives, CSOs trained in specific decentralization areas including gender equality aspects Baseline: Limited number of Governmental officials, LPA representatives, CSOs trained in specific decentralization areas including on HRBA and GE Planned Target: At least 70 Governmental officials, LPA representatives trained in implementation mechanisms of specific decentralization areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 113 Mayors and accountants from 74 pilot localities improved their knowledge in public finance management • More than 1200 local officials (mayors, finance directors, etc) informed and trained on new system of local government finances • Advisory Note on gender-mainstreaming of public policies, with a focus on sector decentralization strategies developed; practical workshop on gender-mainstreaming of public policies, with focus on sector decentralization strategies, to over 50 representatives of 20 CPAs organized • Advisory note on mainstreaming HRBA and gender dimension into the development of the administrative-territorial reform options and related processes developed • Advisory note on the monitoring and evaluation process of the new local public finance system in the pilot localities developed • Advisory Note on HRBA/GE as applied to IMC developed 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda of seminars, workshops • Training modules/packages for seminars and workshops, evaluation forms, list of participants • Assessment Report on the impact of the new local public finance system in 74 pilot LPAs produced • Advisory Notes developed
Indicator 1.6 Functional technical committees within CALM to provide services to its members. Functional and strengthened CALM Women's Network Baseline: No functional technical committees within CALM. CALM Women's Network created in 2011. Planned Target: Functional technical committees within CALM to provide services to its members. Functional Network of Women mayors within CALM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 round tables for creation of professional network and capacity building of secretaries of LPAs in 2014 • CALM Women's Network assisted to share regionally their positive experience in 2013 • At least 5 capacity building activities for CALM women mayors implemented in 2013 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas, lists of participants from 5 round tables • Final report on round tables
Output 2: Capacities of LPAs and communities strengthened to deliver better services to citizens and create models of LPAs - in line with changes brought by the Decentralization Strategy			

	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>Indicator 2.1 # of LPAs with public management improved Baseline: 0 LPAs with improved public management performance at local level Planned Target: Selection of target communes based on a set of criteria. Baseline set up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 target rural communities were selected and approved by JILDPA board. • Out of the selected target communities, 10 are cluster centers for IMC projects, and 20 are beneficiaries of concentrated capacity building support 	Accomplished in 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection criteria concept paper • JILDPA Board minutes as of 21 March 2013
<p>Indicator 2.2 Systems and procedures applied to improve LPAs operations in the areas of gender-responsive and rights-based planning and financial management, tax collection, property, procurement, human resource management Baseline: Low public management performance and poor internal regulations and operations in the key areas of LPAs activity Planned Target: Systems and procedures in planning and financial management, tax collection, property, procurement, human resource management applied in 15 LPAs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 target local governments benefited from on-the-job qualified assistance to improve operations and procedures in the area of human resources management, public finance management and procurement • Local socio-economic development strategies focusing on local economic and business development, job creation and more equitable employment opportunities for women and men developed/updated in 30 target communities • Empowered community groups from 30 target communities have identified local issues and needs and implemented 15 micro-projects with own resources and together with LPAs – other 20 local projects with funds from other donors • 22 human rights and gender mainstreamed local development projects (including 4 with focus on empowerment of Roma) implemented 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field trip reports • Activity reports
<p>Indicator 2.3 % of local officials (public servants/elected officials) from target communes trained Baseline: Very limited number of public servants benefited from professional development trainings (only cca 30% of public servants from target LPAs in the last three years) Planned Target: 50% of local officials trained (public servants/elected officials)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 95% of public servants from 30 target communities (354 public servants, including 222 women and 132 men) improved their knowledge and management skills in their core areas of activity during comprehensive professional development trainings programs in human resource management and public procurement (4 training days each program), public finance management (9 days training program); tax collection and public property management (3 training days each program). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas • List of participants • Training materials • Activity reports • LPA capacity assessment questionnaire
<p>Indicator 2.4 # of local public services created/extended/improved disaggregated by: a) # of models of local public services (disaggregated by types) created b) # of model Inter-municipal projects implemented to be replicated nation-wide Baseline: a) limited number of public services created/developed and provided by LPAs at local level; b) no national experience in IMC projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 projects to develop model local public services in 20 target communes, and 10 IMC pilot projects for 40 communities grouped in 10 clusters have been implemented. a) Projects for the reconstruction of education and youth infrastructure in 5 communities, modernization of agro-markets in 2 communities, development of social assistance infrastructure in 1 community, rehabilitation of public lighting in 4 communities, 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the projects' evaluation committee • Project documents and contracts • Draft feasibility studies • Endorsed IMC agreements

	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>implementation Planned Target: Model local public services implemented: in 15 communes and IMC projects in 7 clusters of communities</p>	<p>extending water supply in 1 community, setting up of communal services operators in 4 communities, rehabilitation of road and public space infrastructure – 3 communities. b) Implemented 10 IMC projects for 10 clusters: setting up of 3 joint waste management enterprises, setting up of 6 joint communal services operators, and a joint re-construction and further maintenance of an inter-community pedestrian road.</p>		
<p>Indicator 1.1.2 More equitable access of women and men in target communities to improved local public services and infrastructure in 20 communes and 10 clusters of municipalities Baseline: Limited access of women, men and vulnerable groups to public services at local level Planned Target: At least 80,000 local stakeholders (50% of total number - women) benefiting from improved local public services and infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 120,000 inhabitants, out of which about 50% women and 1,000 local businesses benefit from better living and business environment, inclusively access to previously inexistent public services. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and contracts • Draft feasibility studies • Endorsed IMC agreements • Community Profiles
<p>Indicator 2.5 # of LPAs with regional development project proposals developed and submitted for financing Baseline: Limited number of LPAs that have accessed regional development funds and have developed regional development project proposal Planned Target: 15 LPAs with regional development project proposals developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility studies elaborated for 10 regional projects (IMC framework) • 15 local governments developed project proposals with regional impact and submitted for funding. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Draft feasibility studies • Endorsed IMC agreements • Project proposals
<p>Indicator 2.6 # of local businesses created, % of them women-owned (with equal involvement of women and men) Baseline: Almost no or very few employment opportunities at local level, particularly in the private sector; no tools for attracting investment and economic development at local level Planned Target: 10 new businesses initiated (with at least 40 women and men employed), 4 of them owned by women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 235 people from rural areas (including 45% women) were enabled to open/develop small businesses; 114 of them (including 45% women) developed business plans for their ongoing or new businesses, thus increasing employability potential at local level; 38 small businesses supported through grants (up to 5,000\$ each) 	<p>Due to a great number of requests, the total number of trained participants was double as planned initially.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas • List of participants • Training materials • Training reports

iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Evaluation

Evaluation of the results of project implementation was carried out by an international and a national evaluator and was accompanied by a final report. A summary of the conclusions are presented below.

The programme has been relevant in view of existing and emerging priorities of the Moldovan government to furthering the decentralization reforms and in light of existing gaps in evidence-based policy inputs and solutions at central and local levels and also low awareness and skills of relevant actors of the process, new mechanisms and their benefits. The project addressed important gaps in the evidence base for existing and new policy frameworks, as well as capacity development needs of partners from government, civil society and business sector. The project also addressed the needs of right holders: most vulnerable groups, through empowering them to take more active part in community life.

Evaluation findings as regards contribution to envisaged results are positive, overall, albeit lower effects are recorded for support to policy level. The programme has succeeded in achieving strong results in its work with local level duty bearers and right holders. However, the achievements in the area policy making are partial, mainly due to external political factors, beyond control of the Programme. At policy level, contributions are visible in encouraging dialogue and supporting evidence based and inclusive policy making processes, albeit not all supported policy processes materialized in adopted and implemented policies. At local level, the Programme achieved a lot of promising results in stimulating an inclusive process of municipal planning and service delivery with enhanced good governance mechanisms. Programme's support to LPAs, CSOs, business and inter-municipal cooperation enhances access to social services, thus improving livelihoods and increasing economic prospects. Cooperation between civil society and local governments towards enabling access to, empowerment of vulnerable groups, and strengthening mechanisms for citizen participation are already bringing results in the communities.

JILDIP has been efficiently implemented, contributing to effectiveness of results. Yet, the programme has tackled a range of issues at different levels of governance and involving diverse stakeholders, both duty bearers and right holders, which provides the risk of spreading resources thin and fragmentation. This risk was mitigated by JILDIP's experienced team with expertise in policy making and local development as well as ongoing support by both UN Agencies involved in the programme and the donor. Management efforts by JILDIP team were appropriate and contributed to the effective and efficient implementation of planned initiatives. While grants and cooperation agreements with individual partners varied in size, they often contributed to achieving results that have the potential to positively influence further development of communities and partners.

However, the *sustainability prospects of the Programme achievements are mixed*. Envisaged policy changes have not been achieved as planned, which makes the sustainability of the development efforts limited only to areas where government response was ensured in the form of adopted policies/legislation (e.g. Sectorial decentralization strategies for education, social protection; Regulation for IMCs, etc.). At local level, acquired skills and institutionalized governance mechanisms, services and practices have higher sustainability prospects. Improved and established infrastructure and structures (IMCs, businesses, CSOs, social and community infrastructure) have also high sustainability prospects. Also, staff turnover, frequent institutional changes reduce the benefits of capacity building investment.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The main **conclusions and lessons learned** from the project implementation are:

Decentralization is one of the complex and difficult reform which require strong political will and government commitment. Usually, such a reform faces an inherent political risk. Five years is a too short period for the implementation; it provides no respite for overcoming some political risks related to elections, change of government or change of ministers.

The new system of local public finance positively influenced the advancement of the decentralization reform. Despite the fact that the new public finance system was piloted in a small number of LPAs (less than 8% of total numbers of LPAs), it covered a large number of inhabitants - over 30%. Piloting the new system made the fiscal decentralization reform irreversible, facilitated the establishment of new inter-relationships procedures and prepared the ground for implementing fiscal decentralization in the entire country.

Insufficient human and financial resources impeded the implementation of sectoral decentralization strategies. Despite the fact that main ministries have elaborated the sectoral decentralization strategies, their approval is pending because there are not enough human and financial resources for supporting the implementation of the action plan. Sectoral decentralization strategies have to be linked to / integrated into the general sectoral development strategies (e.g. Education Strategy and Education Code include decentralization provisions), which in their turn should be rights-based and gender-mainstreamed.

Territorial-administrative structure remains a key aspect of the decentralization process. The high fragmentation lead to inefficient use of human and financial resources, hindering development and access to local public services. Also territorial fragmentation makes it difficult and costly to fully implement a functional decentralization, for example, fiscal decentralization, property delimitation or the clarification of sectoral competences mandates. Although absolutely indispensable, territorial administrative reorganization is a difficult political subject. The government needs to find a rational solution, which will also be politically acceptable. As showed by the international experience, the voluntary territorial amalgamation could be beneficial for the initial stage of reform, but it could not take a long time If it is to be done, it can start from as soon as possible. The new more efficient territorial administrative structure would be created by 2019.

Strengthening capacities and changing institutional culture needs champions of change, characterized by motivation, commitment and trust that the change will bring benefits to the institution and wider community. Mathematical selection of targeted LPAs or central government beneficiaries is not enough – it does not analyze the ambition of the municipality/institution. Competitive selection of municipalities may bring additional results in programmes focusing on local development.

Modeling new approaches to service delivery and basing advocacy for new policy or legislative solutions for improvement of public services is a good approach. JILDP modelled IMCs and based its advocacy with the government on positive experiences and lessons learned gathered. Showcasing new practices and models assists government to grasp the extent to which new approaches can facilitate development, which in turn facilitates adopting decisions and legislative/policy solutions for replication of such practices.

Greater impact of program activities can be achieved when “hard” interventions are accompanied by “soft” activities. This approach is effective when targeting institutional development of local governments, but also when working toward improving service provision at local level. Small-scale granting and comprehensive training and specialized coaching for local governments proved to be an efficient mix of interventions in building understanding of the importance of efficient institutional management as a key element for better public service provision. Following the same philosophy, public service provision improvement should not be limited to technical consolidation, but should be linked to real local needs, involve all community stakeholders, and should be supported by a continuous learning and upgrading process.

Capacity building of local governments is particularly necessary when vast and complex national reforms are envisaged. Interventions targeting professional development and coaching in using the new analytical and practical tools were particularly timely for the pilot local governments to ensure their smooth transition and acceptance of the new local public finance system.

Investment in strengthening local level good governance through investment in LPAs and on community mobilization (through strengthening CSOs and entrepreneurship) brings positive outcomes for citizens. JILDIP experience shows that there is potential for positively affecting livelihoods by programmes that offer holistic approach towards strengthening duty bearers and empowering right holders.

Enhanced communication, cooperation and partnership between LPAs and communities should continue to be fostered for an integrated development. The decisions of the mayors and LPAs should respond to the needs the community members and respond to the community problems. To know the perspectives of all of the groups and to know how to respond to the needs of those groups LPAs should invest more in communication with the representatives of all groups in the community. By inviting the stakeholders to be involved and participate in community activities, by learning the others' perspectives, the ownership of the activities will be ensured and could be extended towards all the members of the community. This will also contribute to the sustainability of the activities undertaken in those communities.

Synergies amongst communities should be encouraged through study visits and exchange of best practices. People as well as LPAs learn better if they have a clear example of what was done and how was done. During the study visits, organized nationally and internationally, the participants get more ideas what could work in their own communities, learn lessons from their peers and may decide to replicate a certain model or avoid certain mistakes, steps have proved to be effective. Additionally, this contributes to a healthy networking.

After 20 years of international assistance, **Moldovan LPAs built up an ample magnitude of first-rate in-house know-how.** Consequently, the peer reviews (municipality-to-municipality) could be explored as an excellent opportunity to exchange information on successful and promising practices, approaches, organizational structures and tools used in the delivery of local public services.

Innovation and thinking out of the box should be encouraged. Each LPA is a living body with its own profile, processes and specificities. What works in one community does not necessarily work in another, therefore, if replicating an approach, system or product, the communities should take into account own specificities and adopt an individualized approach.