



United Nations
M O L D O V A

Annual Consolidated Progress Report on Programmes Implemented under the Towards Unity in Action Multi-Donor Trust Fund

Reporting period: 1 January-31 December 2015

UN Country Team in the Republic of Moldova

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Introduction

This Annual Consolidated Progress Report on Programmes Implemented under the Towards Unity in Action Multi-Donor Trust Fund (henceforth 'the Fund') covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015 and reports on the implementation of programmes approved for funding under the Fund. In line with the Memoranda of Understanding between the Fund and Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs), and the Terms of Reference of the Fund, the Annual Consolidated Progress Report is compiled based on information and data submitted in PUNOs' individual Annual Narrative Programme Reports. UNICEF signed the Fund Memorandum of Understanding in 2015, increasing the number of PUNOs to eleven: FAO, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, OHCHR, UN Women, and WHO.

In line with the Fund's Terms of Reference, a Steering Committee was established and its Terms of Reference approved in 2015. The Steering Committee is co-chaired by the State Chancellery as the national coordinating authority for the Republic of Moldova-UN Partnership Framework 2013-2017 (UNPF), and the UN Resident Coordinator. The donors to the Fund and PUNOs sit on the Steering Committee, which provides oversight and approves the attribution of available funds according to the priority areas identified in the UNPF and its Action Plan. The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place in December 2015.

The Republic of Moldova went through severe political, financial and economic challenges in 2015. The lack of stable parliamentary majority produced a number of different Governments during the year, and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the wider geo-political context contributed to a tense political atmosphere.

GDP contracted by 0.5% in 2015. In an economy heavily dependent on the agricultural sector and on remittances, 2015 saw both a bad harvest and a 20% decrease in remittances from abroad, chiefly caused by the economic turmoil in the Russian Federation. Poverty levels has declined in recent years, but the current economic situation has a negative impact on household income, especially in rural areas. This is likely to exacerbate social exclusion and the already significant urban-rural inequalities. Migration continues to remain an important factor exercising significant influence on the socio-economic development of the country, with the migration rates remaining at high ratios similar to those of 2014; approximately a quarter of the citizens reside abroad.

Negotiations between Chisinau and the breakaway region of Transnistria, facilitated by the OSCE, registered virtually no progress in 2015. The Transnistrian region was engulfed in a deep economic and financial crisis, putting the *de facto* leadership under internal political pressure. Import, export and production fell sharply, and the region ran a substantial budget deficit. As a result, public employees' salaries and social benefits were cut and paid in arrears.

Against this negative backdrop, the role of the UN as an impartial actor and trusted partner has become more pronounced. The protracted political instability poses a serious challenge for development work, but the UN has established a strong strategic position in the country, which is instrumental for the Organization's ability to fulfil its mandate. With its robust normative framework and operational capacity, the UN is well placed to continue providing qualified and strategic development assistance for the benefit of the people of Moldova.

Programmes Implemented under the Fund

UNCT Strategic Action Supporting Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Programme Overview

The purpose of the programme is to increase awareness of the persons with disabilities in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova of their rights under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and empower them to influence a broader social change through advocacy action. Further, the programme aims to increase local public authorities' and other public employees' understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities and cooperate with the disability organization for creating accessibility, service provision and awareness raising.

The action takes place within the United Nations-Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework (UNPF) 2013–2017, under the pillar “Democratic Governance, Justice, Equality and Human Rights”, and is expected to contribute to increased capacity of women and men from vulnerable groups, including children, to claim and stand for their rights.

Results

To achieve sustainable results in the long run, organizations of persons with disabilities were involved at all stages of the programme cycle from the conceptualization phase to completion and final evaluation of results.

OHCHR reached out to organizations of parents of children with disabilities and self-advocacy groups of adults with disabilities, namely the World of Equal Opportunities (Bender), Alye Parusa (Dubasari), Tsvetik Semitsvetik (Dubasari), OSORC (Tiraspol) and TASDI (Tiraspol). The non-governmental organization World of Equal Opportunities from Bender has been selected as partner NGO. The role of the partner was to assist the emerging human rights advocates from within the community of persons with disabilities, provide trainings and knowledge transfer, mentoring and the various resources needed to empower them.

Outcome 1. Women and men with disabilities have increased understanding of their rights and consolidated their efforts for advancing disability rights in the Transnistrian region.

The main purpose under the first outcome, as defined in the programme document, was to create a consolidated group of self-advocates who would be prepared to initiate activities aimed at promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in their communities. The group of persons with disabilities has received training on human rights and the CRPD and has been involved in learning by doing exercises aimed at endowing the members with the necessary knowledge and skills necessary for a human rights advocate.

The first meeting was held on 20 May 2015, at which 11 adults with disabilities learned about what self-advocacy is and presented the idea of setting a self-advocacy group on disability rights. The group continued to meet regularly, as originally agreed, and the sessions covered a wide range of topics related to human rights and advocacy.

Apart from theoretical knowledge, the group had a few hands-on doing experiences, such as the organization of the Disability Film Festival “Breaking Down Barriers”. In preparation for the event, the group of women and men with disabilities, developed the program of the film festival, decided on the strategic messaging to be conveyed by the movies, on the key issues to be raised during the post screening debate and took the lead on putting the event together.

The group carried out an exercise of monitoring of accessibility of the public buildings, and the results of their findings have been introduced on the accessibility map which is available on the internet <http://motivatie.md/karta/>. As of the finalization of this programme, the group was advocating with the members of the municipal council to upload the accessibility map on the official page of the Bender mayoralty.

The programme strived at building sustainable and inclusive communities, therefore a set of activities aimed at engaging a group of girls and boys with and without disabilities which in social and learning activities to build understanding of diversity has been implemented. The events received the support of the *de facto* Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, contributing to their understanding of social inclusion policies and practices as opposed to practices of institutionalization and segregation.

This further consolidated the bond between the children, reinforced positive perceptions related to diversity and respect for differences and acquired new skills for the children which would considerably enrich their life in the future. This was also a very exiting leisure activity for the children, who because of the expenses of equine therapy is out-of-reach for the majority of families and their children. Therefore, the programme created a unique opportunity for children and opened the doors for future cooperation with the hippodrome.

Outcome 2. Local public authorities and members of the broader society have increased understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities and cooperate with the disability organizations for creating accessibility, service provision and awareness raising.

Because of the Soviet legacy of segregation and exclusion of children with disabilities from schools children without disabilities never interact or see their peers with a disability. This separation contributed to the creation of stereotypes and fear of persons with disabilities. To address this issue, the implementing partners reached out to the *de facto* Education Department of the Bender rayon with a proposal for cooperation on raising disability awareness in schools. As a result, a series of 18 training sessions on the rights of persons with disabilities were carried out in the schools of Bender. The trainings were formatted in a fun, inspiring and emotive manner and delivered by facilitators with disabilities which were able to talk not only theory but also personal experiences. At the end of the training sessions, the students and their teachers recognized that their understanding of human diversity and the human rights approach towards persons with disabilities has increased and expressed willingness to have peers with disabilities learning together in inclusive classes.

Within the programme, the World of Equal Opportunity received the necessary support for addressing the *de facto* Bender administration and advocating for increasing the accessibility of the city's infrastructure. As a result, the local public authority called a meeting on assessing the implementation of the city's "Program on Accessibility of the Public Spaces 2014–2019" which led to the adoption of a resolution on measures to accelerate creation of accessibility in the city. Amongst other measures, the resolution envisages the establishment the Accessibility Evaluation Council, mandated to assess compliance of newly build objects to the accessibility requirements. Dmitrii Kuzuc, director of the World of Equal Opportunity, became a plenipotentiary member of the Council and without his approval none of the public buildings can be put into operation. This decision, gave a positive impetus to the architects, urban planners and building owners to consult Kuzuc on accessibility related issues at the concept and design phases.

The organization World of Equal Opportunities was provided a consultancy status to the *de facto* Ministry of Social Protection Advisory Council. As a result the *de facto* Minister of Social Protection Tatiana Bulanova, ordered all local administrations to present report on the accessibility situation within their administrative units, prepare action plans on advancing accessibility and regularly submit monitoring report.

Within the scope of the programme, an analysis of the current regulatory framework on disability has been conducted and recommendations for introducing the non-discrimination clause into the social protection legislation have been presented to the *de facto* Minister of Social Protection.

The results of the programme were acknowledged and highly praised by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms. Catalina Devandas, who undertook the first ever official visit of the mandate to a country, visiting also the Transnistrian region:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16441&LangID=E#sthash.JOIyXkTn.dpuf>

Challenges and Management Response

In general, there have been fears about the political stability in the Transnistrian region, given the geo-political context, but these have not materialized. On the contrary, the new Moldovan Government has seriously engaged with de-facto Transnistrian authorities, revamping as well the activity of the technical working groups.

It can be concluded that when a programme is developed in a participatory and inclusive manner, and with the active engagement from the UN Resident Coordinator to facilitate high-level political contacts and coordination with the Government and the *de facto* authorities, the experience from Moldova shows that even in times of political instability and economic crisis, donor funded programmes can catalyze major reforms and advance realization of human rights in targeted areas.

To achieve best results an implementing partner already working with the target communities in the Transnistrian region was selected. With UN facilitation, it managed to establish a close cooperation with the local public authorities, thus anchoring the outcomes of the programme within the local development policies and creating commitment to the programme from local authorities. The successful implementation of the accessibility programme in the Bender municipality has huge replication potential.

In addition, the UN team has made strategic use of the visits of international human rights experts and special procedure mandate holders. This should be considered an excellent practice for several reasons. The visits of Special Rapporteurs and other experts were effectively used to raise the general attention of the rights of groups of persons vulnerable to discrimination and human rights abuse. They were also used to seek the receiving authorities' enhanced commitment to the issues addressed and to specific programme activities. In addition, written contributions by visiting experts (recommendations, guidelines, press statements) were used after their departure to keep up the momentum around specific rights and rights deficits, discussed with the authorities during the visits of the experts.

Indicator Based Performance Assessment

	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Indicator: A resource group of adults with disabilities has acquired the competencies necessary for promoting the human rights of persons with disabilities and implement initiatives aimed at changing the public perception of people with disabilities.</p> <p>Baseline: n/a</p> <p>Planned Target: Resource group created</p>	<p>A resource group of 9 adults with disabilities (4 men and 5 women) from the cities of Bender, Tiraspol, Slobozia and Varnita has acquired the competencies necessary for promoting the human rights of persons with disabilities and implement initiatives aimed at changing the public perception of people with disabilities.</p>		<p>Media reports Meeting minutes Progress reports</p>
<p>Output 1.1</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.1 Capacity building sessions organized</p> <p>Baseline: n/a</p> <p>Planned Target: 10 capacity building sessions organized</p>	<p>Organized 11 capacity building meetings, for the members of the group, aimed at increasing their understanding of human rights and the human rights approach to disability.</p> <p>A group of 35 children with and without disabilities participated together in a number of 5 art therapy sessions and 2 equine therapy classes at the hippodrome.</p>		<p>Media reports Meeting minutes Progress reports</p>
<p>Indicator 1.1.2 Public awareness raising events organized</p> <p>Baseline: n/a</p> <p>Planned Target: At least 3 public awareness raising events organized</p>	<p>On 27 May 2015 the Disability Film Festival “Breaking Down Barriers” took place. The event, held in the premises of the Bender cinema, was attended by a number of 220 children and adults from the Transnistrian region.</p> <p>On 1 June 2015, the Spartakiada event was organised. The event was attended by a number of 100 children from the Bender internat, Republican Centre for Rehabilitation, Day Care Centre for Children with Disabilities, and children from mainstream schools, was organized. The aim of the Spartakiada was to promote participation of children with disabilities in sports and recreational activities.</p> <p>For the identification of the infrastructural objects to be made accessible from the budget of the programme, focus groups with a total of 100 women and men with disabilities from the cities of Bender and Tiraspol were conducted.</p>		<p>Media reports Meeting minutes Progress reports</p>
<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Indicator: Children and their teachers in mainstream schools that have acquired knowledge on the rights of persons with disabilities</p>	<p>A series of 18 training sessions on the rights of persons with disabilities with the participation of 473 pupils from 12 schools were carried out in the schools of Bender (participation lists annexed).</p>		<p>Participation lists Meeting minutes Progress reports</p>

<p>Baseline: n/a</p> <p>Planned Target: 450 pupils from 12 schools from Bender rayon and their teachers</p>			
<p>Output 2.1</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.1 Accessibility ramps established</p> <p>Baseline: n/a</p> <p>Planned Target: 2 ramps</p>	<p>A ramp in the Bender primary care hospital which serves a population of 1,500 children and adults per month and a ramp at the Social Protection Department of Bender which serves at least 2,000 persons per month were installed.</p>		<p>Empirical verification</p>
<p>Output 2.2</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1 The organizations of persons with disabilities work together with the local public administration for creation of accessibility standards</p> <p>Baseline: n/a</p> <p>Planned Target: Accessibility guidelines with concrete examples of accessible public objects of infrastructure existing in Bender developed and introduced into the work of the Accessibility Evaluation Committee</p>	<p>Establishment of the Accessibility Evaluation Committee, mandated to assess compliance of newly build objects to the accessibility requirements, and revitalization of the city's "Program on Accessibility of the Public Spaces 2014–2019".</p> <p>Legislative initiative on amending the <i>de facto</i> legislation to introduce express banning of discrimination on grounds of disability introduced for voting in the city council (the body which has national legislative initiative).</p>		

Joint Action to Strengthen Human Rights in the Transnistrian Region of the Republic of Moldova

Programme Overview

As the response to the Thomas Hammarberg report on Human Rights from 2013 and the Transnistrian *de facto* authorities openness to address critical HIV response issues in the region, UNAIDS, UNDP, WHO and UNODC launched a programme on HIV and human rights, which also aims to contribute to confidence building and expansion of networks across the Nistru river. Further, the programme addresses issues related to minorities and discrimination. The region remains the most HIV affected in Moldova (representing one third of cumulative registered cases), especially due to limited access to best practices and international standards in the field; lack of a human rights and gender focused approach to the response; as well as limited access to prevention services for the most affected populations, i.e. people who inject drugs (PWID), sex workers (SW) and men having sex with men (MSM). Further, these groups suffer from lack of recognition, stigma and discrimination, which is compounded by dysfunctional dialogue between NGOs and *de facto* authorities such as health and justice institutions.

This programme is financed by the Government of Sweden and implemented jointly by OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNODC and WHO. The objective of the programme is to provide support to ensure universal equitable access to high-quality, integrated and rights-based HIV prevention, treatment and care services for most-at-risk populations including in prisons of the Transnistrian region. It contributes to the achievement of UNPF outcomes 1.3 (State bodies and other actors effectively promote and protect human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, with particular attention to the marginalized and the vulnerable) and 2.2 (People enjoy equitable access to quality public health and health care services and protection against financial risks).

Results

Outcome 1: Four policy documents on integrated care developed

Three strategic documents were developed in 2015 with the support of the programme. One of the documents was updated at the end of the year to better reflect stakeholder input.

1. Report on assessment of legal and normative framework of human rights integration into the Transnistrian region's HIV response. The assessment was conducted under OHCHR guidance and implemented by a local consultant from Transnistria. It was mainly based on a desk review of the entire Transnistrian *de facto* legal and normative framework; looking in details at the full range of human rights. It looks at barriers imposed by the legislation that limit people's access to services and improved life quality. The recommendations propose to remove all those barriers and integrate a human rights approach into the *de facto* Transnistrian legal framework. The report has not been presented to stakeholders yet, due to the fact that the task was performed at the end of 2015. The Transnistrian *de facto* authorities have showed a willingness to make the recommended changes, which then would be undertaken in the second phase of the programme (2016-2017).

2. National AIDS control and prophylaxis programme for the period 2016-2020, including interventions for the Transnistrian region. The document is based on epidemiological evidence and was developed based on results based management principles, thus presenting a robust and well prioritized approach. For the first time, it incorporates prevention programmes for SW and MSM in the Transnistrian region. It aims to increase the coverage of prevention among PWID on both banks of the river up to 60% as per the international recommendations, having circa 30% as the baseline (2014). It also aims at fast-tracking testing, treatment, care and support services as per the 90%-90%-90% UNAIDS strategy (90% of those estimated living with HIV are diagnosed, 90% of those diagnosed are enrolled in treatment, 90% of those in treatment have an undetectable viral load), with the objective of tripling the number of patients in treatment by 2020. The new programme makes the voice of Transnistrian stakeholders heard and integrates their needs into the national policy, covering the full territory of Moldova, which also contributes to confidence building between both banks of the Nistru river. The programme went through all required procedures and is awaiting the approval of the Government by mid-2016.

3. *Road map on provision of a comprehensive package of services to PWID.* The document aims to identify ways to improve and scale up existing services to PWID, including opioid substitution treatment (OST), which is not available in the Transnistrian region. The document was developed in July 2015 and updated in a workshop in December 2015. The workshop saw high-level representation from the Transnistrian side, i.e. *de facto* Minister of Justice, *de facto* Deputy Minister of Health, AIDS coordinator, health specialists and NGO representatives. The document contains a SWOT analysis, actions to be taken by the *de facto* authorities, e.g. in the field of health, social protection, interior, justice, local public authorities, as well as by the civil society. The updated document from December proposes clear actions for 2016-2017.

Output 1.1.1: Needs assessment report

Changes have been operated to this output twice. Firstly, it was negotiated with the donor to allow UNODC to organize a study visit for prison staff from both banks of the Nistru river to Geneva, Switzerland, which is an example of best practices of comprehensive services for PWID in prisons. Due to objective reasons (lack of time, extensive organizational arrangement required) the activity was postponed for the second phase of the programme (2016-2017). Instead of the needs assessment, it was agreed with the donor to improve health infrastructure in prisons, with the objective to improve inmates' health conditions and indirectly also to strengthen the *de facto* prison authorities' relations with local NGOs, which were tasked to undertake the refurbishments. As a result, for the first time in five years, the NGOs reported that the *de facto* authorities had allowed them to enter the prisons to provide peer to peer prevention, care and support services to PWID and PLWH. One of the NGOs, "Reforme medicale", signed a memorandum of cooperation on providing HIV services to prisoners with the *de facto* prison authorities for 2016. The infrastructure of one prison in Tiraspol was fully refurbished and dental equipment procured.

Output 1.1.2: Knowledge and competencies of key stakeholders to provide TB treatment and care consolidated

Further to extensive consultations and based on a 2013 WHO working visit (by the National TB Program (NTP) representatives from Chisinau to Estonian the NTP), WHO negotiated and prepared a working visit to Estonia, organized for 10 persons on 7-11 September 2015, in partnership with the secretariat of Moldova's National Coordination Council (NCC) for HIV and TB Programmes. The concept note of the working visit defined the overarching goal and specific objectives, expected outcomes and deliverables of the visit, as well as set forth the next steps, including follow-up policy dialogues to keep track of progress in the implementation of suggested recommendations. The participants included a balance of governmental and civil society organizations working in HIV, TB and PWID from both sides of the Nistru river, as well as decision-makers from the relevant national and subnational health authorities. An international consultant, Manfred Danilovits, TB program coordinator from Tartu, who participated in the WHO TB program review in Moldova in February 2013 and in the WHO policy dialogue on TB case holding and outpatient care in May 2014, facilitated the visit. It provided an opportunity for group and individual meetings with relevant stakeholders, including Q&A sessions, and visits to selected sites and service providers in Tallinn, Tartu, Virumaa and Viljandi. International travel costs were cost-shared with the NCC secretariat (with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) funds through one of its local principal recipients, the Unit of Programme Coordination, Implementation and Monitoring (UCIMP).

Output 1.1.3: Knowledge and competencies of key stakeholders to provide integrated HIV/TB/drug addiction treatment consolidated

The WHO Country Office in the Moldova organized a workshop on "Improving the Quality of Pharmacotherapy of Opioid Dependence and HIV Prevention in Moldova: an Integrated Approach at the Vilnius Center for Addictive Disorders (VPLC)" in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 3-5 August 2015, under the aegis of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Harm Reduction. The latter was established with the support of the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN) and VPLC. The visit targeted technical issues and aimed at exposing selected professionals from both sides of the Nistru river to integrated care in HIV and injecting drug use (IDU), with special focus on harm reduction and pharmacotherapy with methadone (PTM) in an attempt to scale up evidence-based comprehensive interventions. Besides the core training package usually taught at the VPLC, it also featured topics of specific interest to Moldova, as per the latest findings and knowledge gaps identified during the assessment missions conducted by VPLC in Moldova over the last couple of years, including in the Transnistrian region and prisons. The workshop included lectures with Q&A sessions and visits to selected sites of interest and service providers.

Workshop participants included 5 national or subnational representatives of the drug addiction, HIV and tuberculosis services from the Government side, and 2 representatives of civil society organizations (CSO) providing advocacy and specific services in selected areas (e.g. harm reduction), from Chisinau and Tiraspol. A WHO Country Office representative accompanied them during the workshop. The workshop helped participants update their knowledge about harm reduction specific activities and comprehensive rehabilitation options for substance abuse, including PTM, outlining key advantages and disadvantages of each. It also showed how different HIV, TB and IDU integrated care services works in practice, including the roles of mobile clinics, non-state actors and other service providers, and interaction of those. Various health system dimensions related to harm reduction and sustainability were raised, such as stewardship, financing, staffing and equipment, or service provision. The cross-sector approach was explored and the role of health and social workers in case management, including complex cases (HIV, TB, IDU, viral hepatitis), group versus individual treatment plans, principles of IDU rehabilitation at community level, social and professional (re)integration of service users. Participants were also introduced to principles of patient motivation and quality assessment and improvement tools.

Output 1.1.4: Health staff trained to provide integrated care services on HIV/TB, especially prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT)

A total of 61 health specialists from both banks of the Nistru river are now able to provide more qualitative and friendly services to people infected and affected with HIV, after they were trained on integrated care services on HIV/TB, during a set of three trainings organized in October 2015. Participants were capacitated based on the general situation on latest scientific development in HIV/AIDS field, improved their skills in prevention, PMTCT and co-infections (HIV/TB). Special attention was dedicated to discrimination and stigmatization issues. Also, participants received a full set of normative acts related to HIV/AIDS. All participants were evaluated pre- and post- training. The initial evaluation showed a level of knowledge of around 45%, but post-training the level reached up to 95%.

Outcome 2: A twinning platform between Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, and Belarus created and consolidated

The platform between Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, and Belarus was created especially with the goal to reap mutual benefits from both countries' experience of ensuring access of PWID to a comprehensive package of services, including OST (which is not yet accessible in the Transnistrian region). Belarus was chosen due to its similarities with the context of the Transnistrian region, and due to the efficiency of their programme to address the needs of PWID despite political sensitivities; Transnistrian *de facto* authorities generally follow repressive Russian policies towards PWID. Moreover, the right-bank Moldovan health authorities are known for best practices in harm reduction, including OST in prisons, which is of major interest for Belarus. The platform was informally agreed with the Minister of Health of Belarus, the Deputy Minister of Health of Moldova and *de facto* Ministry of Health of the Transnistrian region. As a result, all parties benefited from being exposed to best practices, capacity building and experience sharing (see below for more details).

Output 2.1.1: Narcological services from both banks of the river, including civil society, providing services for injecting drug users (IDU) exposed to best practices

In the period of 27-28 April 2015, a delegation of 9 persons (3 narcological professionals from each side of the Nistru river, 2 persons representing NGOs, as well as a UNODC representative) participated in a study visit to Belarus. The agenda of the visit focused on the integrated and comprehensive package of services for IDUs, ensuring 1 day of visits and presentations on methadone substitutions therapy. Specialists from both banks of the Nistru improved their knowledge during a 2 days visit to the OST site, harm reduction program, and national rehabilitation centres. The target was overachieved, as it was initially planned to have 7 persons involved in the visit.

Output 2.1.2: Knowledge and competencies of narcological professionals to provide/drug addiction treatment consolidated

In the period 16-19 July 2015, after negotiations between UNAIDS Moldova and the Ministry of Health of Belarus, two international consultants from Belarus: Ivan Konorazov, main narcological specialist, and Alexei Alexandrov, deputy medical director of the health institution "Regional Clinical Center of Minsk for Psychiatry and Narcology" visited

Moldova. The visit aimed at promoting OST in the Transnistrian region and scale up of the services on the right bank of the Nistru river. The consultants met the Deputy Minister of Health, Department of Penitentiary Institutions and narcological services in Moldova, and the *de facto* Minister of Health and technical specialists from the Transnistrian region. Through these meetings the basis of the joint Moldova-Belarus platform was established, and consensus on further mutual support and assistance was achieved.

The second part of the visit was aimed at providing training to 50 specialists in the field. A full day training was conducted for 25 specialists from the right bank of the Nistru (covering all rayons providing harm reduction and OST) and 25 specialists from the left bank. Representatives of NGOs providing social services to PWID were also present. The participants were trained on the basis of the latest scientific evidence, the expertise of the instructors, and international standards.

Output 2.1.3: Organize a series of trainings using the TreatNet tool developed by UNODC for the narcologists drug dependency specialists from the Transnistrian region

During 6-8 July 2015, 20 medical professionals specialized in drug dependency treatment and communicable diseases from both banks of the Nistru participated in a training on complex approaches to treatment of drug dependency and associated comorbidities, and made proposals on how to address this issue.

The seminar "Evidence-based drug dependence treatment and HIV prevention amongst people who use drugs" is part of the specialized training modules based on TreatNet, a tool developed by the UNODC Treatment and Rehabilitation section. The international expert Dr. Claude Uhlinger, a Swiss psychiatrist, certified in TreatNet trainings, shared his knowledge about the most advanced drug dependence treatment methods. During group work, the participants of the seminar discussed the need for complex approaches to treatment of drug dependency and associated comorbidities. Participants from both banks of the Nistru river agreed about the need to intensify efforts for combating the phenomena of stigmatization of patients with drug dependency and to increase the application of bio-psycho-social assistance methods in the process of PWID rehabilitation.

Outcome 3: Tolerant attitudes towards most in risk populations and HIV persons developed

Stigma and discrimination was addressed through 2 major communication and social campaigns, which are described in detail below. The campaigns reached thousands of persons from 8 major cities, including 2 from the Transnistrian region, Tiraspol and Ribnita. A number of key results were achieved by the campaigns: (1) attitudes among the general population towards people living with HIV improved, (2) a wide range of stakeholders (ministries, development partners, civil society from both banks of the Nistru) were mobilized to counter stereotypes and fight and stigma and discrimination.

Output 3.1: Elaboration of information, education, communication (IEC) materials on HIV and TB prevention for health workers, police/militia, social workers

As a result of an assessment on needs of IEC undertaken by the Transnistrian NGO "Zdorovoie Buduscee" and the national AIDS coordinator in the Transnistrian region, several informative booklets addressed to youth and the general population on issues such as HIV prevention, voluntary counseling and testing for HIV and hepatitis, as well as anti-retroviral treatment (ARV) adherence were developed.

The following list of informational materials was developed and printed in the last trimester of 2015:

- Booklet "Change your view on HIV" – 20,000 copies;
- Booklet "Protect yourself from HIV" – 15,000 copies;
- Booklet "Voluntary Counseling and Testing in HIV and Hepatitis" – 15,000 copies;
- Brochure "Adherence to ARV therapy" – 1,000 copies;
- Brochure "About us. Information for women who inject drugs" – 5,000 copies.

The target was overachieved, without affecting the programme budget. The materials will be distributed to the beneficiaries in 2016-2017.

Output 3.2. Awareness events to fight stigma and discrimination organized on both banks of the Nistru river

The first major communication and social campaign to increase awareness among the general population and to reduce stigma and discrimination was organized in May 2015 on the occasion of the International Candlelight Day/ Commemoration Day. In order to increase the impact, the technical working group on communication and prevention of the Country Coordination Mechanism on TB/AIDS (CCM) recommended having a joint national communication campaign. The financial resources for the joint national campaign were provided by the Global Fund and the Government of Sweden. The programme provided small grants to NGOs active on both banks of the Nistru river for implementation of the campaign.

The campaign was built on the slogan “My status is not a secret”. It aimed to improve the understanding among the general population that PLWH are not different from other people, that they can have families, good jobs and lead good lives. Thus, 8 persons living with HIV declared their status publicly, including one from the Transnistrian region. 41 billboards and 10 LCD screens were used to tell the stories of these courageous persons across the country. The campaign was launched at a press conference, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, the chairman of the NGO “Positive Initiative”, as well as participants in the social campaign “My status is not a secret”. As a part of the campaign, the action “Safe Route” aimed at informing the general population about HIV/AIDS prevention through the distribution of informational materials in public places, on streets, public transport, etc. Car drivers were urged to show tolerance towards people living with HIV, and to stick a red ribbon on their cars. In Balti, community activities for commemoration of persons who died from AIDS and information actions for the general population about HIV and AIDS, including awareness and media events, were organized. The NGO “Zdorovoe Budushee” (Healthy Future) from Tiraspol organized an information campaign aimed at increasing tolerance towards people living with HIV. They succeeded to broadcast a spot on HIV prevention on outdoor screens and in cinemas in Tiraspol and Bender, and distributed information materials through different channels. The campaign resulted in a large number of comments, opinions, and reactions among the general population and in the field of HIV prevention professionals, as well as on the Internet. The reactions demonstrated improved attitudes and acceptance towards people living with HIV.

The second major communication campaign was launched on the occasion of World AIDS Day 1 December 2015. The same approach was used in the implementation – a nation-wide campaign, covering all regions, including Transnistria. The December campaign was designed around the first 90% from the global UNAIDS initiative 90%-90%-90%. It addressed HIV testing; currently only around 5% of persons in the groups with higher risk of infection in Moldova have been tested for HIV. The activities in Moldova was part of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia regional campaign, and was conducted under the slogan “It concerns you! It concerns everyone!”. Eight well-known persons from Moldova joined the campaign: Dara (Moldovan Goodwill Ambassador), the music group Zdob&Zdub, Yan Feldman (chair of the Equality Council), Lucia Berdos (Owner of Felicia Pharmaceutical network), Natalia Morari (journalist), Victor Micusa (hairstylist), including 2 persons from the Transnistrian region, Elena Pahomova (journalist) and Tatiana Scripnic (*de facto* Minister of Health). A strong mobilization of efforts and financial resources (from UNAIDS core funds, the Global Fund, the Government of Sweden and the private sector in Moldova) resulted in a successful campaign. The campaign video was broadcast by 3 TV stations: Moldova 1, TVR Moldova and TV 7. The audio material was broadcast on Radio Zum, Super-Radio Moldova, and АвтоРадио-Молдова. NGOs were also involved in the implementation of the campaign; the main activities were organized in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, Comrat and Cahul by the NGOs “Positive Initiative”, “Youth for the Right to Live”, and “Society, Human, Rights, Future”. As an outcome of the campaign, the Ministry of Health issued an order to ensure that all persons who approach health institutions for HIV testing are offered this service.

Challenges and Management Response

A number of key lessons can be drawn from the implementation of the programme thus far:

- Joint activities, such as study visits, trainings, and exchanges involving stakeholders from both banks of the Nistru river create bridges for confidence building;
- The programme targets technical level medical staff from both banks of the Nistru. To ensure effective change and full institutional commitment, involvement of senior management and high-level authorities is required. At the same time, every activity needs to be considered carefully and the involvement of senior administrative

staff from Transnistrian *de facto* authorities balanced with political risks due to the sensitivity of the subject matter;

- Care should be exercised in the selection of the location for exposing staff from the Transnistrian region to international standards and best practices. For sensitive policies and practices, such as the use of methadone in the health sector, Belarus turned out to be a good choice, which was readily accepted by the Transnistrian counterparts;
- Establishing a dialogue with law enforcement authorities and civil society is instrumental for smooth implementation of the comprehensive package of services for HIV/AIDS prevention among those most at risk and vulnerable groups;
- The programme has not yet been able to present the assessment of integration of human rights into the HIV response in the Transnistrian region. This assessment was planned to be undertaken at the end of the programme, after the Transnistrian stakeholders had been exposed to human rights best practices. However, issues related to legislation are highly sensitive for the Transnistrian counterparts, thus the coordination of the exercise took more time than planned. As a solution, it was agreed to follow up on this activity in the second phase of the programme (2016-2017).

Indicator Based Performance Assessment

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>Outcome 1 Four policy documents on integrated care developed</p> <p>Indicator: Number of documents on integrated care developed</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 4</p>	Three documents developed	Work involving the Transnistrian region requires extensive and time consuming coordination, which poses challenges to the timely implementation of activities. However, one of the documents (the road map) was updated and revised, which had not been originally planned.	Narrative report
<p>Output 1.1.1 Needs assessed</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.1 Number of reports presented</p> <p>Baseline: 1</p> <p>Planned Target: 0</p>	None/a new activity was proposed: Improvement of prison health infrastructure (achieved)	It was agreed with the donor (the Government of Sweden) that an additional needs assessment would not give added value since the Hammarberg report already provides relevant information. In order to improve health conditions of prisoners and indirectly strengthen the dialogue between the <i>de facto</i> prison sector and NGOs (which implemented the activity), it was decided to revise the output to <i>improvement of prison health infrastructure</i> (achieved).	Narrative report
<p>Output 1.1.2 Knowledge and competencies of key stakeholders to provide TB treatment and care consolidated</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2: Number of staff participating in study visit</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 7</p> <p>Output 1.1.3: Knowledge and competencies of key stakeholders to provide integrated HIV/TB/drug addiction treatment consolidated</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.3: Number of staff participating in study visit</p>	<p>Indicator 1.1.2: 7 staff participated</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.3: 7 staff participated</p>		<p>Narrative report</p> <p>Narrative report</p>

<p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 7</p>			
<p>Output 1.1.4 Health staff trained to provide integrated care services on HIV/TB, especially PMTCT</p> <p>Indicator: Number of staff trained</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 60</p>	61 staff trained		Narrative report
<p>Outcome 2 The twinning platform between Moldova/Transnistria and Belarus created and consolidated</p> <p>Indicator: The twinning platform between Moldova/Transnistria and Belarus created and functional</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: Platform functional</p>	Platform functional		Narrative report
<p>Output 2.1.1 Narcological services from both banks of the Nistru river, including civil society providing services for IDUs, exposed to best practices</p> <p>Indicator: Number of staff participating in site visit</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 7</p>	9 staff participated		Narrative report
<p>Output 2.1.2 Knowledge and competencies of narcological professionals to provide/drug addiction treatment consolidated</p> <p>Indicator: Number of staff trained</p>	50 staff trained		Narrative report

<p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 50</p>			
<p>Output 2.1.3 Organize a series of trainings using TreatNet tool developed by UNODC for the narcologists drug dependency specialists from the Transnistrian region</p> <p>Indicator: Number of staff trained</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 20</p>	20 staff trained		Narrative report
<p>Outcome 3 Tolerant attitudes towards most in risk populations and HIV persons developed</p> <p>Indicator: Number of persons reached by the events</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 2,000</p>	More than 2,000 persons reached		Narrative report
<p>Output 3.1 Elaboration of information, education, communication (IEC) materials on HIV and TB prevention for health workers, police/militia, social workers</p> <p>Indicator: Number of informational materials distributed</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned target: 1,000</p>	56,000		Narrative report

<p>Output 3.2 Awareness events to fight stigma and discrimination organized on both banks of the Nistru river</p> <p>Indicator: Number of campaigns organized</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 2</p>	<p>2 campaigns organized</p>		<p>Narrative report</p>
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Support to National Human Rights Institutions

Programme Overview

The overall goal of the programme is 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. The programme seeks to catalyse the emergence of the strongest possible independent national human rights institutions for Moldova – Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council – and to increase their focus around core strategic human rights goals to maximize their impact. The programme aims to build the capacities, independence and empowerment of the two institutions to maximize their impact in mainstreaming human rights and equality, including gender equality, in acting on strategic issues and for the resolution of individual cases. The programme contributes to outcome 1.3 of the UN-Moldova Partnership Framework 2013-2017 (State bodies and other actors effectively promote and protect human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, with particular attention to the marginalized and the vulnerable). There are three expected programme outputs:

1. Environment for the Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council strengthened;
2. Organizational capacities and sustainability of the Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council strengthened;
3. Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council powers maximized to act to Moldova's premiere national human rights institutions.

Results

Component 1. Support an enabling environment for the National Human Rights Institutions

1.1 Strengthen Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council's legislative frameworks

This activity envisaged analyzing the Law nr. 121 on ensuring equality and the Law nr. 298 on Regulations of functioning of the Equality Council in view of international human rights standards. The National Consultant contracted for this specific task delivered a draft analysis on the Law nr. 121 that did not fully meet the expectations, with very limited chance that such information may bring relevant contribution to advancing the national anti-discrimination law and practice. In addition, the programme identified that an analysis of Law nr. 121 had been already performed by civil society and is in the process of being finalized by the Council of Europe, which covers also the Law nr. 121 compliance with the UN Human Rights standards. Therefore, as a result of consultations with the Equality Council a joint decision was taken in favor of concentrating the programme efforts on carrying out comprehensive analyses of the Regulations of functioning of the Equality Council, the decisions issued by the Equality Council and by the domestic courts.

During 2015 the programme coordinated its efforts with the Equality Council, Council of Europe and civil society representatives on the issues of equality, anti-discrimination law and practice advancements. In this context during November 2015 a Working Group (WG) was created with the aim to coordinate all stakeholders' actions in the area, especially discussing the progress and results of the legislative analysis and further drafting of amendments to the legislation. There were conducted 2 meetings of the WG so far.

During the reporting period the programme was also directly involved in the Working Group on Hate Crimes (WGHC) at the Ministry of Justice, by contributing with substantial inputs to amending the Criminal and Contravention code on the parts related to hate crime. About 95% of the programme recommendations were considered by the WGHC members and therefore included in the draft amendments law, further published for public consultations last December (draft law nr. 266 and 267).¹ Currently the draft law is under expert review of the OSCE, before submitting it further to the Government.

¹ <http://justice.gov.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=192>

During the reporting period the programme contributed with substantive inputs to the draft Regulations on functioning of the Ombudsperson Office, adopted by the Parliament under the Law nr. 164,² which entered into force in November 2015.

1.2 Support Ombudsperson Office' application for the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) A-status

During 2015, consultations with the Ombudsperson Office were conducted in order to explore the capacity of the office in applying for the A-Status. In this context, OHCHR Geneva colleagues were involved in the discussions and a package of relevant documents were provided, including the application form. The Ombudsperson Office has mobilized its internal resources for initiating the task so far. As result of the legal analysis exercise of the Law nr. 52, the need of deepening the understanding and application of the Paris Principles by the Ombudsperson Office staff has arisen. The institution has also been advised/guided on its current B-status level and ensured that no accreditation/re-accreditation procedure can be started by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (ICC) without an express request from the institution side.

1.3 Support high level debates on human rights and equality

Consultations were held both with NHRIs and UNDP on parliamentary support in order to coordinate common efforts for reviewing the regulations on hearings in the Parliament of the NHRIs annual and thematic (*ad hoc*) reports on one hand, and how to strengthen the collaboration between the NHRIs and Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights on the other.

1.4 Conduct studies on human rights and equality perceptions and attitudes

The “Study on Equality Attitudes and Perceptions in the Republic of Moldova” was elaborated in full cooperation with the Equality Council and UNDP. The study was publicly discussed on 1 December 2015. The study measures the attitudes and perceptions of the population regarding a number of 14 categories of vulnerable and marginalized groups in Moldova for the period of year 2015, by highlighting:

- (i) the social distance towards representatives of vulnerable and marginalized groups; and
- (ii) surfaces the existing stereotypes in society towards people from vulnerable and marginalized groups.

During the public event the findings of the study were promoted and the Equality Council, the central and local authorities and civil society were provided with evidence based information for further concrete actions.

This study was carried out on a representative sample of 1,013 respondents from 13 regions of the country. According to the findings of the study, none of the given vulnerable groups enjoys total tolerance, with a social distance index equal to zero. *The biggest social distance* (5.2 points) is registered for the *LGBT persons*, meaning their acceptance over the level of visitor in the country. The next vulnerable groups registering a big social distance are: *persons living with HIV/AIDS* (4.3 points), *ex-detainees* (3.6 points), *persons with mental and intellectual disabilities* (3.6 points), *persons of Muslim religion* (3.3 points), *persons of African origin* (3.1 points) and *Roma people* (3.1 points). On the other hand, *the smallest social distance* is manifested for the *Russian speakers* (0.9 points) and *Russians living in the Republic of Moldova* (0.9 points), meaning their acceptance under the level of friend.

For the other “Study on Human Rights Attitudes and Perceptions in the Republic of Moldova”, the field data collection started in November 2015. The quantitative data was collected and is under analysis by the human rights expert. The elaboration of the study is fully coordinated with the Ombudsperson Office as the main partner for the task.

Component 2. Strengthen organizational capacities and sustainability of the NHRIs

2.1 Expose NHRIs staff to the regional/international experience of Ombudsman Institutions and Equality Bodies

² <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=361146&lang=1>

During the reporting period NHRIs participation in international training courses and international events was supported and two study visits were organized.

Training courses: Five NHRIs staff (4 women, 1 man) raised their qualifications as a result of participating in the following international capacity building activities:

- In June 2015, one representative (man) of the Ombudsperson Office participated in the international training course “When Citizens Complain” in London, UK. The study programme was aimed for Ombudsperson and staff from similar complaint-handling organizations and agencies.
- In July 2015, one representative (woman) of the Equality Council attended the Equinet Seminar “Work-Life Balance and Pregnancy and Parenthood related Discrimination” in Tallinn, Estonia, hosted by Equinet and the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner of Estonia, and raised her knowledge about best practices and successful methods for addressing pregnancy-related discrimination and absence of work-life balance measures.
- In September 2015, two representatives (2 women) of the Equality Council participated in a two-day seminar “International and National Norms on Minority Protection and their Role in Equality Protection” organized by European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in Minsk, Belarus.
- In October 2015, one representative (woman) of Ombudsperson Office participated in a training course on Policy and Advocacy Influencing.
- In November 2015, one representative (man) of Ombudsperson Office participated in a complex two-week training on identification and understanding relevant EU funding programmes and related requirements, raising his knowledge and understanding on EU funding requirements, EU calls for proposals, newly revised EU format, etc.

Study visits: The programme identified several destinations for study visits to expose the NHRIs staff to the experience, best practices and lessons learned of Ombudsman institutions and Equality bodies. The identified destinations for the study visits in 2015 were Latvia and Serbia. These were chosen for their effective management, reputation for high quality services in the field of human rights, as well as similarity of backgrounds and issues dealt with and faced by the NHRIs in Moldova. As a result, in October 2015, 8 persons (4 from each institution), out of which 6 women and 2 men, participated in a two-day study visit to Ombudsman Office in Riga, Latvia, which doubles as an equality body, and in November 2015, 10 persons (5 from each institution) out of which 7 women and 3 men, participated in a study visit to the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and Protector of the Citizens (Ombudsman) Office in Belgrade, Serbia.

The programme supported participation of the Ombudsperson, Mihail Cotorobai, in three international and regional events aimed at increasing his understanding of work of other Ombudsmen and allowing him to exchange experiences with his counterparts in other countries.

In October 2015, the programme supported the participation of a member of the Equality Council, Andrei Brighidin, to the Annual General Meeting of Equinet with the aim of advocating for membership of the Equality Council of Moldova in Equinet European network of equality bodies as well as to increase his understanding of work of other Equality Bodies and exchange experiences with his counterparts in other countries.

Equinet membership: In the original programme plan, support to the Equality Council’s participation/membership in Equinet was planned for both 2015 and 2016. However, after the participation of the member of the Equality Council in the Annual General Meeting of Equinet as well as follow-up requests from the Equality Council, the response was that only equality bodies from EU Member States or candidate countries can be members of Equinet. Therefore, this activity was cancelled.

2.2 Support the improvement of management of and diversity in NHRIs

The programme supported the development and capacity building of the management of both institutions through provision of expertise and support on institutional management and administration of the Equality Council and

strengthening the organizational management of the Ombudsperson Office. As a result, the following results were achieved during the reporting period by the Equality Council:

- 7 action plans were developed;
- 6 organizational regulations were developed/revised;
- 7 job descriptions were elaborated/revised.

By December 2015, the Ombudsperson Office achieved the following results:

- Organizational structure;
- Functional matrix;
- Rules of organization and functioning of the Human Resources, Internal Audit, Legal, Finance and Logistics subdivisions.

2.3 Building effective case management at the Equality Council

With the aim of identifying the gaps in decision drafting skills, training and coaching for Equality Council members and relevant staff in legal technics, analysis, argumentation, and decision drafting skills. Due to a *force majeure* situation (personal circumstances) an assessment of the decisions of the Equality Council was conducted, and as a result of a two-day training, 10 staff of Equality Council (8 women, 2 men) improved the understanding and knowledge on applying international non-discrimination principles and best practices when deliberating and writing decisions.

The programme actively supported effective case management within the Equality Council, through ensuring the decisions of the Equality Council and information is accessible to the public, linguistic minorities and international community. The audience of the information published by the NHRIs on their web-sites as well as social media pages to linguistic minorities and international community was greatly expanded through publishing of 27 decisions of the Equality Council in Russian, 6 decisions in English. Two Equality Council annual reports from 2013 and 2014 became available in English. Based on an assessment of the Ombudsperson Office needs and possibilities, the Programme supported the Office with translation of materials of more than 40 informative bulletins and articles of the Ombudsperson Office were published in both Russian and English.

2.4 Technical organizational/capacity development

Based on evaluation of needs, the NHRIs were provided with the necessary equipment and furniture. The Equality Council was equipped with an audio recording system “SRS FEMIDA” for case hearings which is also used in the Moldovan courts so as to improve the efficiency of their hearings and transcription of hearings/decisions. The Ombudsperson Office was provided with equipment so as to enable the staff to carry out monitoring visits effectively and be able to record their findings efficiently.

Component 3. Support for maximizing the power of the Ombudsperson Office and Equality Council to act as Moldova’s premiere national human rights institutions

3.1 Support for the NHRIs to maximize their impact on human rights and diversity mainstreaming

During the reporting period, to maximize their impact on human rights and diversity mainstreaming, the NHRIs were supported in the following ways:

- A background paper/report was prepared on Human Rights Mainstreaming into Policy and Law-Making in Moldova, which includes a background overview of the key components of human rights mainstreaming, based on the comparative experiences of the UN, Sweden, Canada, as well as previous local experiences, the current situation with regard to human rights mainstreaming in the Republic of Moldova with potential entry points for such an approach, and practical recommendations for operationalization of such an approach;

- A methodology for reviewing policies and legislation in line with the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) was developed for NHRIs;
- A two-day training in November 2015 increased the capacities of 15 representatives of the NHRIs (10 women and 5 men) on applying the HRBA when reviewing policies and legislation of the Republic of Moldova;
- 18 NHRIs representatives (13 women and 5 men) increased their knowledge and capacities to monitor the implementation of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations and draft stakeholder reports for the second UPR cycle as a result of a two-day training as well as expertise, training and coaching on monitoring the implementation of the UPR recommendations and UPR reporting provided to the NHRIs.

3.2 Support for the NHRIs to maximize their impact on strategic and individual cases

The National Consultant on Documentation of Discrimination cases (woman)³ supported the Equality Council with online media and employment announcements monitoring, with identification of discriminatory situations in mind. At the end of December 2015, 23 cases were documented. One case about Roma discrimination was directly solved via mediation. In 8 cases victims were supported to file complaints to the Equality Council and discrimination was found in 4 of them. Other 3 cases are still under evaluation of the Equality Council, and in one case discrimination was not found. The following grounds of discrimination have been claimed by the petitioners: Roma ethnicity – 3 cases (access to social benefits, racial profiling⁴ and racial hatred via social networks); physical disability – 1 case (access to public services⁵); political opinion - 1 case (harassment at the work place); incitement to discrimination by written mass media – 2 cases⁶; age and sex in job announcements – 1 case (that refers to 3 business agencies⁷). One of the cases specified above involved the opinion of the Audiovisual Coordinating Council (ACC) regarding the discrimination of Roma in mass-media. In this regards, an open discussion on the topic of Roma and mass-media was organized on 24 November 2015, with the participation of the Equality Council, the ACC, journalists and Roma leaders with the aim of raising awareness of mass-media toward the issue. The ACC expressed the willingness to collaborate with both the programme and the Equality Council for further raising awareness toward discrimination and mass-media, especially during regional seminars done for mass-media actors by ACC each semester (in the North, Centre and South of Moldova). Two of such joint field missions, ACC-OHCHR-Equality Council, took place during December 2015, one in Balti and one in Cahul.

The national consultant on strengthening the capacities of the Ombudsperson Office to petition the Constitutional Court contracted in July 2015⁸ (woman) could not continue to task in the next months due to personal reasons (family problems). A new public selection procedure was launched⁹ and unluckily, at the last stage of the selection process, no applicants were qualified for undertaking the position. Considering the fact that this is a specific consultancy and the fact that the Ombudsperson itself is an expert of the matter, as a former judge of the Constitutional Court, the decision was taken that the current specialized staff of the institution will take over the task with the possibility of employing additional person/persons during the first semester of 2016. Therefore, the initial budget allocated for this task will be redirected for other institution's needs. According to the request received from the Ombudsperson Office in December 2015, these sources will be redirected to building the capacities of the Ombudsperson Office on monitoring the implementation by the State of the UN treaty bodies and Special Rapporteurs recommendations and Ombudsperson Office reporting to the UN treaty bodies.

One national consultant on the right to health for the Ombudsperson Office¹⁰ (woman) was contracted in supported the institution with expert advice and guidance on the right to health and access to health services. As a result, 10 concrete cases on the right to health and access to health services were analyzed and advised on, an analysis of systemic issues/gaps related to human rights violations during provision of medical assistance was elaborated, an expert group on medical issues was created and drafted its regulations, the principles of collaboration of

³ <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/741/>

⁴ <http://egalitate.md/index.php?pag=news&id=836&rid=744&l=ro>

⁵ http://egalitate.md/media/files/files/decizie_327_2015_depersionalizat_8344245.pdf

⁶ <http://egalitate.md/index.php?pag=news&id=836&rid=857&l=ro>

⁷ <http://egalitate.md/index.php?pag=news&id=836&rid=858&l=ro>

⁸ <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/884/>

⁹ <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/1129/>

¹⁰ <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/996/>

Ombudsperson Office with the National Council of Evaluation and Accreditation in Health were developed, and the communication strategy of the Ombudsperson Office in the field of the right to health was drafted.

The programme activities resulted in NHRI's taking a more pro-active role in tackling human rights challenges in Moldova, in the situation of current political and social crisis, as well as in strengthening solidarity and mutual support between the two institutions. The Equality Council continued to take up and pursue cases *ex officio* to prevent and combat discrimination. The Ombudsperson Office issued public messages addressing concern with human rights issues connected to events and major social and political developments. It is expected that the cooperation and mutual support between the two institutions and their outspokenness on public issues will only increase in 2016.

3.3 Campaigns and actions around key human rights issues

After two opinion studies/surveys of the internal and external images of the NHRIs were completed, with their results in mind, the Communication Strategies of both institutions were evaluated, developed/updated and finalized with the objective of increasing the transparency, accountability and visibility of the NHRIs. The rebranding of the Ombudsperson Office was completed in 2015.

The "Study on Equality Attitudes and Perceptions in the Republic of Moldova" produced within the programme (see point 1.4) was an important source of information for the awareness raising campaigns. A joint NHRIs-UN-civil society campaign focused on HIV was organized around the movie "Above the Sky" produced by UNDP Belarus in 2012. The message of the movie is very relevant to the realities of Moldova. National TV public broadcaster "Moldova 1" aired the movie free of charge at the end of November – beginning of December 2015 thus also linking the campaign with the World AIDS Day (1 December). The airing was accompanied with an on-line (digital) promotion campaign (internet and social networks), with banners placed on 53 websites, also reaching 157,277 unique users on Facebook and 627,575 unique users on Odnoklassniki (the most popular social network in Moldova). A bi-lingual landing page (webpage) was visited by 5,174 unique users. The joint public awareness campaigning on HIV issues proved to be effective using online social networks and other communication channels and further HIV campaigning is planned for 2016.

Efforts to recruit a national consultant for training and coaching the press officer of the Equality Council were challenged by lack of candidates during the first two competitions¹¹ (the second competition¹² was announced in Romanian and Russian to attract a larger pool of candidates). The third competition¹³ resulted in contracting of a national consultant (woman), who performed an evaluation of the capacities of the Equality Council press officer, and developed a training and coaching plan to be implemented in 2016.

On 8 December 2015, a national conference on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Moldova was organized with joint efforts of the Ombudsperson Office, UNDP and UNICEF and brought together 150 participants, representatives of central and local government with responsibility for children's rights, civil society representatives. The conference brought media and public attention to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child during the past two decades by the Republic of Moldova.

3.4 Work with Governmental structures and NGOs on strategic themes

During the reporting period two grants programmes were launched: one for civil society and the other for mass media and mass-media NGOs:

- GP-2015: Civil Society for Equality¹⁴; and
- GP-2015: Mass Media for Equality.¹⁵

¹¹ <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/894/>

¹² <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/1025/>

¹³ <http://www.undp.md/jobs/jobdetails/1119/>

¹⁴ <http://www.undp.md/tenders/details/1023/>

¹⁵ <http://www.undp.md/tenders/details/1030/>

The grant programmes fund 12 programmes (six within each grant programme) focused on mainstreaming equality and human rights, public awareness, cooperation with the Ombudsperson Office for equality, human rights protection and promotion and submission of complaints to the Equality Council from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, including Transnistrian region. As a result, 11 NGOs from the capital, as well as from Gagauzia and Transnistrian region ensuring wider geographical coverage and involving people from minority groups were awarded with 12 grants and started implementation of their respective programmes.

Challenges and Management Response

The main challenges that affected the programme were unforeseen circumstances, which triggered changes in the original programme plan and financial losses due to exchange rate fluctuation, which resulted in a re-consideration of some activities. For example, the original programme plan stipulated support to the Equality Council's participation/membership in Equinet. However, only equality bodies from EU Member States or candidate countries can be members of Equinet. Therefore, this activity was cancelled.

Challenges were also encountered during contracting processes for certain consultancy positions within the programme as well as force majeure situation where consultants were not able to finalize their tasks. In all cases, the Programme management considered carefully the already achieved results and held consultations with both Equality Council and Ombudsperson Office to determine the best courses of action. In some cases activities were mostly adjusted to ensure that the needs of the NHRIs were satisfied in a responsive, sustainable, cost-effective and appropriate manner.

One of the challenges that remains to be addressed is the no-cost extension until December 2016 necessary for finalization of UPR related activities. This comes as a result of the timing of the UPR session, planned for November 2016, combined with aim to involve NHRIs in the UPR hearings.

Indicator Based Performance Assessment

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1 - UNPF Outcome 1.3 State bodies and other actors effectively promote and protect human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, with particular attention to the marginalized and the vulnerable			
Output 1: Enabling environment for the National Human Rights Institutions supported			
Indicators:			
I1: Identification of gaps in the NHRIs legislation in line with the international standards and recommendations;			
I2: Updates to the data on public perceptions on human rights, attitudes giving rise to discrimination and conformity of implementation of law in the relevant areas.			
Baselines:			
B1: No clarity to what extent the relevant NHRIs' legislation is in compliance with international standards and recommendations;			
B2: Data on the public perceptions on human rights and attitudes giving rise to discrimination is outdated or otherwise insufficient; adequacy and conformity of judicial or quasi-judicial decisions vis-à-vis international law requirements inadequately known.			
Targets (for the full implementation period 2014-2016):			
T1: Gaps in the NHRIs legislation in-line with the international standards and recommendations identified;			
T2: Data on public perceptions on human rights, attitudes giving rise to discrimination is updated and publicly available.			
Targets Year 1 (2015):			
1. Analysis of the relevant NHRIs legislation done;	Draft analyses of relevant NHRIs carried out but the outcomes not fully accepted by the institutions (related to Law 121). This analysis remains at the level of drafts only, without being printed, public discussed and disseminated (this decision has also been taken due to lose of funds in view of high fluctuation rates).	For the time being the analyses done by the civil society and other development partners are considered by the NHRIs sufficient for further drafting the law amendments. If need be, further discussion will be initiated with NHRIs in view of legal analysis in the upcoming years.	Draft analyses of Law 121 and Law 52 and written communications with NHRIs; Public job announcements and consultancy contracts.
2. Ombudsperson Office application for A-status NHRI elaborated;	A-Status application package translated and sent to Ombudsperson office and substantive guidance offered;	The A-Status application form not completed due to the fact that the Ombudsperson Office realised that the institution is not sufficiently prepared for being re-accredited with the A-Status (the application is postponed). The capacities of the institution will be strengthened by supporting it with one capacity building training on Paris Principles and one training on UN treaty bodies mechanisms (TBM).	The A-Status application package translated and written communications with NHRIs.

3. Regulation on the NHRIs annual reports hearings in the Parliament drafted;	There was no need to draft a regulation on the NHRIs annual report hearings in the Parliament due to the fact that the Parliament elaborated general regulation on hearings (including reports) and there was no need to include hearings of the reports of the NHRIs in a separate regulation. Close collaboration with UNDP program on support to Parliament was built, thus, jointly facilitating the hearings of the NHRIs reports in the upcoming months of 2016.		
4. Studies on human rights attitudes and compliance with international human rights law are elaborated.	The Study on Human Rights Perception in the Republic of Moldova is under elaboration, with the aim to have it finalized by May 2016.		Tender's documents, contract; Qualitative and quantitative tools for data collection; Draft analysis of data collected.
<p>Output 2: Organizational capacities and sustainability of NHRIs strengthened</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>I1. Number of Equality Council decisions accessible for linguistic minorities; I2. Decrease in the backlog of the Equality Council's cases.</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>B1. Only 2 Equality Council decisions are accessible for linguistic minorities; B2. Equality Council has a backlog of 46 cases.</p>			
Targets Year 1 (2015):			
1. Qualification of at least 20 NHRIs' staff raised through the exposure to the international experience and ToT;	Qualification of 19 NHRIs staff (15 women, 4 men) raised.	The NHRIs were not fully staffed during 2015	Back to office reports
2. Equality Council is becoming a member of the Equinet;	Equinet explained that only equality bodies from EU Member States or candidate countries can be members of Equinet. Therefore, this activity was cancelled.		
3. Diversity mainstreamed into the employment rules and regulations of the NHRIs;	<p>Two consultants on organizational management are working with the management of the NHRIs to review the rules and regulations of the NHRIs. As a result:</p> <p>Equality Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 action plans were developed; • 6 organizational regulations were developed/revised; • 7 job descriptions were elaborated/revised. <p>Ombudsperson Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational structure was developed • Functional matrix was developed; • Two internal activities on the organization structure were carried out; • Rules of organization and functioning of the Human Resources, Internal Audit, Legal, Finance and Logistics subdivisions were developed. 		Internal rules and regulations, consultants reports

4. Equality Council's case management improved using specialised software and strengthening staff skills;	The tendering process for software started in 2015.	Due to changes in internal structure of the Equality Council, the process of preparing the ToR for software was delayed. However, at the end of 2015 the tendering process was launched and the work on preparing the specialized software is planned to start in 2016.	Tender documents, contracts
5. At least 20 Equality Council cases are translated into Ru;	27 Equality Council decisions were translated from Romanian into Russian, 6 into English and published on the Equality Council web-site.		Equality Council web-site
6. Equality Council's decisions implementation tracking methods and Push Strategy drafted and tested.	The activity was cancelled due to loss of financial resources and reevaluation of priorities upon a request from the Equality Council.		
<p>Output 3: The power of the Ombudsperson Institution and Equality Council maximized to act as Moldova's premiere national human rights institutions</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>I1. Number of strategic human rights and equality issues NHRIs are working on;</p> <p>I2. Number of entities submitting alternative reports to UPR 2nd circle on Moldova</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>B1. NHRIs are not visible/lacking focus on working on strategic human rights and equality issues;</p> <p>B2. 12 national NGOs are involved into submissions to 2011 UPR.</p> <p>Targets:</p> <p>T1. Each NHRI is working on at least 3 strategic human rights and equality issues;</p> <p>T2. At least 24 stakeholders make submissions to the UPR 2nd circle on Moldova.</p>			
Targets Year 1 (2015):			
1. NHRIs monitor implementation of UPR recommendation and act on them;	NHRIs plan to prepare their reports for the UPR and have started preparing their UPR submissions.		UPR reports
2. Training for NHRIs' participation in the 2 nd UPR submission organized and completed;	18 NHRIs representatives (13 women and 5 men) increased their knowledge and capacities to monitor the implementation of UPR recommendations and draft stakeholder reports for the 2 nd UPR cycle.		Lists of participants

<p>3. NHRIs identify strategic human rights and equality issues and act on 2 of them;</p>	<p>23 cases of discrimination were documented and in 8 cases the victims were supported to file complaints to Equality Council; The Equality Council ruled on 4 of the cases;</p> <p>Roma discrimination in mass media: the issue of Roma discrimination in mass media was identified jointly with the Equality Council, thus a strategic work with the Audiovisual Council is done in form of capacity building for journalists (1 HR coffee break, participation in 2 regional trainings);</p> <p>Right to health: Ombudsperson office is working on monitoring of the right to health and access to health services as one major strategic human rights issue (a national monitoring and evaluation mechanism is being established by the national consultant contracted within the programme).</p>	<p>Consultancy for the Constitutional Court: the Consultant hired ceased the collaboration due to personal reasons. Another consultant was not found and the decision was taken that the Ombudsperson Office will allocate its internal human resources for the task. On the other hand the institution has already the support of the Council of Europe in this regards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public job announcements and consultancy contracts; • Data base with cases on discrimination; • Decisions of the Equality Council; • Roma discrimination in mass media: agenda and list of participants from the HR coffee break and agenda from the regional trainings; • Right to health: the analysis on gaps in the health sector; the petitions analyzed (10); the regulations for the expert group; the communication strategy; • Reports of the consultants.
<p>4. Communication strategy of the Ombudsperson Office is updated and communication strategy for the Equality Council designed;</p>	<p>Communication strategies for both institutions designed and started implementation.</p>		<p>Communication strategies</p>
<p>5. NPM is set up and trained;</p>	<p>Members of the Ombudsperson Office torture monitoring section raised their knowledge of monitoring closed type institutions through study visits.</p>	<p>Due to a non-functioning NPM, training NPM members was not possible. Ombudsperson Office started drafting NPM Regulation at the end of 2015 and NPM is expected to be set up in 2016.</p>	<p>Lists of participants</p>
<p>6. NHRIs' websites are made accessible for persons with disabilities and linguistic minorities.</p>	<p>ToRs for web-sites improvements prepared, to be launched in 2016, with special focus on the accessibility for people with disabilities.</p> <p>NHRIs increased the amount of information published in both Romanian and Russian thus strengthening their websites accessibility for linguistic minorities.</p>	<p>Due to changes in internal structure of the Equality Council and ongoing reorganization of the Ombudsperson Office, the processes of preparing the ToRs for web-sites improvements was delayed. However, at the end of 2015 the ToRs were finalized and the result will be achieved in 2016.</p>	<p>NHRIs' websites</p>

Output 4: Effective Programme management ensured

Overall targets:

- Ensure at 100% delivery rate;
- Timely implementation of planned activities;
- Timely development and submission of work plans and progress reports;
- Compliance with UNDP rules and regulations.

1.	Ensure at 100% delivery rate;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% delivery rate was achieved in 2015.		
2.	Timely implementation of planned activities;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities were implemented in a timely manner as planned, following the AWP. Where activities had to be amended or changed, this was collaborated with the programme partners and is reflected in the report.		
3.	Timely development and submission of work plans and progress reports;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress narrative and financial reports were drafted and submitted to the Programme Board and the Donor.		
4.	Compliance with UNDP rules and regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All contracting and procurement processes followed UNDP rules and regulations.		

Enhancing Women's Political Representation through Improved Capacity and Enhanced Support in Moldova

Programme Overview

The programme Women in Politics (WiP) is implemented by UN Women jointly with UNDP in partnership with two civil society organizations – East Europe Foundation (EEF) and the Centre Partnership for Development (CPD) – during 2014-2016 with financial support from the Government of Sweden. The overall goal of the Women in Politics Programme is to support 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. The programme is expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Legal frameworks and policies to advance women's right to participate in decision making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and/or implemented.

Outcome 2: Gender equality advocates influence legal frameworks and policies to increase women's leadership and political participation.

The expected outcomes of the programme are contributing to the following UN-Moldova Partnership Framework (2013-2017) outcomes:

- 1.1 Increased transparency, accountability and efficiency of central and local public authorities; and
- 1.2 State bodies and other actors effectively promote and protect human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, with particular attention to the marginalized and the vulnerable.

Results

Outcome 1: Legal frameworks and policies to advance women's right to participate in decision making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and/or implemented.

Key results: The programme extensively advocated for and provided technical support toward the adoption of new legal provisions by the Parliament, including 40% gender quota. The quota, at both legislative and executive branches of government, is contained in the Legislative Package 180, which was submitted by the Government to the Parliament for adoption in May 2014. The Parliamentary Committee for Human and Minority Rights gave its positive opinion of the provision of gender quota contained in the Law 180 at its sitting in December 2015. The active engagement of partners from civil society and the Central Electoral Commission, as well as individual women MPs, has been instrumental in this regard. However, the overall Legislative Package, which includes other provisions (introduction of paternity leave, definition of sexism as well as sanctions for non-compliance with the quota), has yet to be discussed and voted on in plenary session.

Output 1.1: Capacity at national and sub-national levels to develop and implement legal frameworks and policies to advance women's right to participate in decision making enhanced.

Key results: Advocacy for adoption of the Law 180 on gender quota, parental leave and sexism in advertising has contributed to the Law passing the next step in the legislative process (positive opinion at the Parliamentary

Committee for Human and Minority Rights); Draft legal amendments in the area of sexist advertising have been developed in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family.

WiP Programme continued high-level advocacy for the temporary special measures (TSMs) jointly with the civil society and media. A variety of advocacy strategies have been used.

One-on-one advocacy with key decision-makers took place during numerous meetings organized at the initiative of CSOs in the course of the year targeting decision-makers both from Government (Prime Minister, Minister of Labour) and Parliament (Speaker, Deputy Speaker of Parliament). The meetings were timed to coincide with strategic moments in the decision-making process (i.e. right after Prime Minister's nomination). Issues related to gender equality and the Legislative Package 180 were also put high on the agenda of regular forums of dialogue, such as the annual Conference on cooperation between the Parliament and the Civil Society. The NGOs that took part in meetings include National Participation Council, NGO Council, Public Policy Institute, Anticorruption Alliance, National Youth Council, CPD, EEF, etc. Recent advocacy efforts have been driven by the Gender Equality Platform, established in July 2015 under the WiP Programme and consisting of 17 NGOs and 2 individuals committed to gender equality. The Platform has been instrumental in scaling up advocacy efforts and representing a unified and independent CSO voice. Increasingly during the year, advocacy also has focused on the Parliamentary Women's Caucus established in March, which brings together all women MPs. Three high-level meetings also took place in 2015, where the UN top leadership in Moldova raised the issue of gender equality in front of key decision-makers, in particular members of Parliamentary political parties, of extra-parliamentary political parties, members of Government and international donors. Evidence to present arguments in favour of gender equality and international experiences have been fully utilized in the advocacy for TSMs. EEF facilitated the development and submission of six position papers, including a public appeal and a public statement, which were handed to different stakeholders, and included demands based on each stakeholders' roles and positions.

The engagement of men in promoting gender equality in politics has been at the forefront of the programme's efforts in 2015. The programme supported the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM) and the Network of Women Mayors under CALM in organizing a regional conference with counterparts from Romania. The event brought together over 250 men and women mayors from the two countries and served as a platform for notable male politicians to advocate for the final adoption of the gender equality legislative package by the Moldovan Parliament. The gender male advocates who spoke at the event in favor of gender equality in politics were the Ambassador of Romania to Moldova, Marius Lazurca; the former Deputy Speaker of the Moldovan Parliament, Valeriu Matei; and the president of the Mayors Network of Romania, Emil Draghici. Responding to the need voiced by Moldovan women mayors, a master-class on election campaigning was offered by a prominent expert from Romania who ran the communication campaigns of several Romanian presidential candidates. The event received wide media coverage.

To intensify the advocacy efforts for gender equality, nine male champions have been identified to publicly express their commitment to women's empowerment and participation in politics and public life, and join the global UN Women HeForShe Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality. These men come from different professional and social backgrounds and are the first ones involved in a nation-wide awareness campaign, which is expected to attract more male champions in the following months. Three "call for action" video spots¹⁶ with the HeForShe champions' declarations to support women have been broadcast on TV with a nationwide coverage, including in Gagauzia.

In support of the advocacy efforts, 12 TV spots on promoting gender quotas in politics and in the decision-making were prepared, presenting the best practices examples from countries that have already adopted quotas. The spots have been broadcast on the national TV channel Moldova 1 (with full nationwide coverage) and Canal Regional TV channels in Russian and Romanian languages and have been oriented to bring people's attention to the advantages of gender quota's adoption. Also, 5 press conferences have been organized by EEF to shed light on critical issues, as well as a TV debate broadcast at Moldova 1, within the talk show "Buna seara with Mircea Surdu" and attended by approximately 100 participants. Within a small grants program initiated by EEF, the three grants that have been awarded rely extensively on the use of media to advocate for the adoption of gender quota and other initiatives aimed

¹⁶ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M67qHSGpX4A>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttlMuboABuo>

at substantive gender equality. Under a grant with the NGO “Meridian”, 10 TV shows were developed and broadcast within the network of local TV stations “Meridian TV”, with the participation of women leaders and political parties, show-casing successful women and urging the MPs to adopt the gender quotas. The NGO “Asociatia Telejurnalistilor Independenti” developed investigative media products on gender equality in Parliament, national and local governments, including 4 TV shows and radio shows, and printed and online articles. These will be aired/published in the coming period. The NGO “Gender Centru” has raised awareness about gender equality through a talk show at Moldova 1 TV, and conducted 5 regional debates with political parties.

One of the important areas of legislative changes proposed in package No. 180 is in the area of sexist advertising, which is not regulated by any law in Moldova, despite strong recommendations of the CEDAW Committee in this area. As the Package only proposes a definition of sexist advertising and considering the delays in its adoption, the WIP Programme initiated elaboration of more detailed proposals for amendments to the Law on Advertising, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, and the Association of Advertising Agencies from Moldova. The legislation in the field of sexism in advertising and social advertising has been reviewed and relevant amendments have been proposed in order to correlate national legal framework to the international standards. Nine (9) legal acts have been reviewed¹⁷ (and amendments for 14 articles of 4 laws have been elaborated (Law on advertising, The Code on audio-visual and radio, Fiscal Code, Contravention Code). The MLSPP was supported to organize a first round table with relevant ministries and partners to discuss the proposed amendments in November and has expressed interest to have further discussions in order to achieve consensus among all relevant parties, prior to moving the legislative process further along.

In order to monitor the local elections which took place on 14 June and on 28 June, 2015, from a gender prism, CPD performed gender sensitive monitoring of numerous aspects of the local electoral cycle. This includes percentage of women on candidates’ lists, the party platforms of the candidates for the Chisinau Town Hall, mass-media portrayal of male and female candidates, and the declared assets of male and female candidates¹⁸. The final results were presented at a press conference on 14 July, focused on the small, but significant progress that women mayor candidates have achieved in these elections: 19 more women (2 pp) have been elected this year than in the 2011 elections, bringing the number of women mayors to 185 (out of total of 898).

The monitoring revealed that 2015 recorded the highest level of participation of women candidates for local councilors and an increase in their placement on candidate lists. The share of women candidates in local councils in the June elections represents 34.9%, which is higher than one-third - the share that was set up as a voluntary target by many political parties. In comparison, the women’s share on candidates lists for local elections for 2011 was 33.2% and for 2007, 29.8%.¹⁹ Women’s placement on party lists has also increased. While in the elections for local councils in 2011, women occupied a meagre 5.85% of the top 20 placements on party lists (places 1-10 – 3.7%; places 11-20 - 8%), there has been a four-fold increase in the 2015 local elections. Women occupied 23% of placements (places 1-10 – 18.3%, places 11 -20 – 27.7%).²⁰

Also, jointly with Center for Sociological Research and Marketing, CPD carried out a national survey on the perception of voters of male and female candidates. This is the fourth survey in a row, with the first one being conducted in 2006. Since 2012, there has been some positive progress in the way that citizens perceive the suitability of women and men to hold positions of power, namely Chief of Districts and mayors. While in 2012, 4.1% of citizens said they prefer a woman as a Chief of District and 5.4% as a mayor, in 2015 this share has increased to 14.7% and 18.1% respectively (for men there is also an increase but by half as much). At the same time, those who say that “gender does not matter”

¹⁷ Law on advertising, Code on audiovisual and radio, Law on equal chances of women and men, Law on equal chances, Resolution on adopting the Regulation on Governmental Commission for gender equality, Law on functioning the Committee on prevention and elimination of discrimination and ensuring the equality, Law on charity and sponsorship, Fiscal Code, Contravention Code.

¹⁸ Şanse egale în procesul electoral. Studiu de caz: alegerile locale generale din 14 și 28 iunie 2015, CDP, Chisinau, 2015.

<http://progen.md/?pag=n&opa=view&id=330&tip=publicatii&start=&l=>

¹⁹ Şanse egale în procesul electoral. Studiu de caz: alegerile locale generale din 14 și 28 iunie 2015, CDP, Chisinau, 2015, p. 20.

<http://progen.md/?pag=n&opa=view&id=330&tip=publicatii&start=&l=>

²⁰ Ibid. Şanse Egale în Procesul Electoral: Cazul Alegerilor Locale 2011”, CPD, Chisinau, page 20, figure 15.

http://progen.md/files/8720_raport.pdf

in their preferences has decreased significantly, thus additional analysis is needed to confirm what is behind these trends (to be carried out under the programme in 2016). Importantly, since 2006, no significant changes are observed for gender preferences in Parliament. Also, while the banking crisis and the fall of two Governments led to an overall decline in people's trust in state institutions, the level of public confidence in women in decision-making positions was relatively higher than in men in similar positions. Women in Parliament scored 9 pp higher on public trust than men MPs, women in Government - 6.1 pp higher, and women in district leadership - 5.3 pp higher.²¹

Output 1.2 Capacities at all levels to promote women's participation in electoral processes both as candidates and voters enhanced.

Key results: Nearly 1,000 women candidates received training or individual coaching before the local elections through the combined efforts of the WiP Programme partners. 8 of these were subsequently elected as mayors and 90 as local councilors. Significant effort was invested to identify women candidates in the first place, through nomination campaign and outreach in the communities. The Gender Equality Platform – consisting of 19 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, from the government and Parliament. Advocacy for adoption of the Law 180 has been a key focus of the Platform in 2015. 11,163 people, nearly 80% of which are women, have been trained by the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) prior to the local elections of 2015 on the basis of electoral training materials gender-mainstreamed with support of the WiP Programme. The CCET has been a prominent voice for gender equality in elections and politics, and together with the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), Moldova engaged directly over 2,000 people, primarily youth and people living outside Chisinau, in awareness raising events on elections and gender equality in the course of 2015. The two institutions are currently in the lead of establishing the first ever International Association of Women in Electoral Management Bodies. In order to increase the positive image of women among the public, over 200 success stories of women leaders from different walks of life have been featured in various types of media. Innovative arts forums have been used to challenge traditional perceptions of women and men, notably the first in Moldova photo contest on Gender Equality through the eyes of photographers.

Working with women candidates prior to elections

Needs of women candidates for local elections have been identified based on needs assessment exercises carried out with the participation of 121 potential women candidates (46 women assessed in February, 75 women assessed in May). Based on the findings, capacity building trainings have been conducted in the framework of local elections to increase women's candidates and potential candidates' capacities to run for office locally and regionally. Nearly 1,000 women candidates received training or individual coaching before the local elections through the combined efforts of the WiP Programme partners. 8 of these were subsequently elected as mayors and 90 as local councilors. Despite the fact that the share of elected women who benefited by WiP support is relatively small (approx. 4% of women elected as mayors and 3% of women elected as local councilors have been involved in capacity building activities), the election of trained women in decision making and their feedback to the capacity development support provided proves that this type of capacity building is a relevant tool to increase the share of elected women.

The trainings included topics such as public image, electoral team, political speech, fundraising for electoral campaign, elaboration of electoral program, messages and slogans, the techniques of carrying out an electoral campaign, etc. Besides election-oriented skills development, all capacity development activities included a special focus on gender equality and how gender equality principles should be incorporated in the work at the local level. The participants highly appreciated the provided trainings. For example, out of 95 participants attending the training organized by IDIS "Viitorul" and filling in the questionnaire, 90% scored the training as very useful and the remaining 10% as useful. In order to follow up the applicability and usefulness of training sessions a few months after the elections, the

²¹ Public Opinion Poll; Institute for Public Policies; April 2015, pages 39-40; http://www.ipp.md/public/files/Barometru/BOP_04.2015_prima_parte_finale.pdf and Public Opinion Poll; November 9, 2015; International Republican Institute; http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/2015-11-09_survey_of_moldovan_public_opinion_september_29-october_21_2015.pdf

programme is currently following up with some of the trained women to collect their feedback, and assess the current needs of those that have been elected.

Significant effort was invested to identify women candidates in the first place, through nomination campaign and outreach in the communities, including via newly established political clubs in 5 districts. The participatory nomination campaigns to encourage and empower women to stand for office identified over 119 potential women candidates who were invited to take part in the above trainings. Women leaders, potential candidates, were nominated by local CSOs (including EEF sub-grantees) and local opinion leaders, as well as being self-nominated in various localities.

Support to the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training

The programme provided support to further integrate gender equality in the operational documents and internal capacities of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training, namely in electoral training materials, Communication Strategy and Action Plan, and the pool of CCET trainers. This has ensured that CCET has embedded institutional capacities on gender mainstreaming to be utilized in the future and irrespective of external support.

A number of 11,163 people (8,603 women and 2,560 men) have been trained by the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) prior to the general local elections of 2015²² on basis of electoral training materials gender-mainstreamed with support of the Women in Politics Programme – 4 modules mainstreamed in 2015, and 10 modules in 2014. The programme further enhanced the gender capacities of the 25 local and regional CCET trainers in delivering gender-sensitive trainings to electoral managers²³.

On basis of the gender-sensitive CCET Communication Strategy 2015-2018 and Action Plan for 2015 developed with WiP support, CCET has been a prominent voice for gender equality in elections and politics together with CEC Moldova, engaging directly over 2,000 people, primarily youth and people living outside Chisinau, in awareness raising events on elections and gender equality in the course of 2015. Making use of innovating approaches in raising awareness about gender equality in electoral leadership and politics through art²⁴, CCET organized the first-of-its-kind public event to advocate for gender equality that reached out to a live audience of over 1,000 people. The event was broadcast live for broader coverage²⁵. An additional 1,000 people have been engaged in various educational and awareness activities prior to 2015 local elections with the help of communication expertise and coaching provided by WiP Programme.

As a committed promoter and knowledge hub of gender equality in elections, CCET has gained international recognition during the 24 Annual conference and General Assembly Meeting of the Association of European Election Officials held in Chisinau, Moldova, on 9-11 September 2015. At the conference, the practice of Moldova on “Reinventing Gender Equality and Leadership Trainings through art”²⁶ has been presented to over 92 Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) and electoral stakeholders worldwide with support from WiP Programme. Inspired by the discussions and attention to gender equality in elections expressed during the international conference held in Chisinau, and building upon the strong gender expertise and commitment to gender equality, CEC Moldova and CCET launched a global call for action to establish an International Association of Women in EMBs on 17 September 2015. Consequently, an Ad-hoc Working Group (AHWG) consisting of representatives from CEC, CCET, UN Women and UNDP has been created to define the future Association, with support by an international consultant²⁷. The AHWG

²² Report “ CCET report on training of electoral administrators in preparation of 2015 local elections.

http://cicde.md/media/files/files/raport_cicde_alg_2015_3516978.pdf

²³ Press release “22 electoral officials trained today on becoming leaders tomorrow”, 15 May, 2015.

<http://cicde.md/index.php?pag=news&id=1063&rid=777&l=ro>

²⁴ Public gender equality in leadership of EMBs and politics event “Let’s conduct together” video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPaObya9aE8>; Article <http://oficial.md/actual/diplomati-si-functionari-electorali-au-dirijat-in-cadrul-unui-concert-in-capitala-foto>

²⁵ Live broadcast of the public event “Let’s Conducted together” <https://www.privesc.eu/arhiva/61805/Spectacolul--Dirijam-impreuna---organizat-de-Centrul-de-Instruire-Continua-in-Domeniul-Electoral>

²⁶ Presentation of CCET during international conference on election on “Reinventing Leadership and Gender Equality Training Through Art”.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPM6xQyHFCc&feature=youtu.be>

²⁷ The Hon. Sarmite D. Bulte, P.C., a lawyer and former Member of Parliament of the Government of Canada has been engaged to assist in the creation of the Association.

undertook a SWOT analysis and a series of strategic planning sessions where the Values, Vision, and Mission of the Association have been defined. With continued support from the Women in Politics programme, an initial Charter of the future Association has been drafted and a name of the association has been proposed – Women in Electoral Management (WEM) – International. Therefore, the proposed aim of WEM-International is *to advocate, inspire and empower women and remove barriers to women’s full representation in EMBs, particularly in senior leadership positions.*

As result of the call for action due on 15 November 2015, several national EMBs and electoral stakeholders expressed interest in taking part in establishing the Association.²⁸ Concurrently, the concept of the Association has been presented during the “Regional Conference on Gender Equality in Elections” organized in Tbilisi, Georgia on 25-26 November 2015, by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe. The idea received positive feedback from the conference participants and the need for establishing such an association has been endorsed in the final synopsis of the event²⁹. In 2016, the Women in Politics Programme will further support CEC and CCET in further conceptualizing and establishing WEM-International.

Support to Women’s Organizations of Political Parties

Women’s organizations of political parties received support to strengthen their capacities to recruit, train and support potential women candidates. The women’s organization of 3 political parties (Liberal Party, Democrat Party and Liberal Democrat Party) have benefited from a number of capacity building activities provided by CPD, including assessing institutional capacities; provision of tools on recruiting new members within women’s organizations; and training of trainers (ToT) for women’s organizations on topics such as recruiting, communication skills, etc. In order to reach out to the women’s organizations of all parliamentary political parties, letters with information about offered support to their women’s organizations have been sent to all parties represented in Parliament. The above 3 manifested interest to benefit by proposed capacity building. Nevertheless, members of all parliamentary and most active non-parliamentary parties participated in various trainings provided via the programme’s implementing partners. For example, the programme has managed to engage the women of the Socialist and Communist parties, including their women’s organizations, in the national capacity building activities on leadership and communication, as well as in the regional discussion forums organized in the course of 2015.

Based on the methodology for evaluating the institutional capacities of women’s organizations in political parties developed by CPD previously, the women’s organizations of the Liberal Party and Democratic Party have been evaluated through analysis of relevant documents and semi-structured interviews with their executive teams. A set of recommendations for their further development have been elaborated, including strategic capacity development plans to be developed during 2016. Along with this, CPD is providing expertise and methodological support to the Democratic Party regional women’s chapters to pilot recruitment plans for new women members. Also, 91 members of the Democratic Party received training and enhanced their capacities on retention of old and recruitment of new members and how to organize and carry out recruitment campaigns, with a focus on women.

Initial steps were undertaken to support the Women’s Organization within Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM). A CPD expert developed training methodology and materials to be used by the organization internally, and internal trainers have been identified to receive individual coaching. The first ToT was organized in November 2015 for 7 PLDM women members and covered topics such as how to recruit new women members, communication skills, and motivation of political party’s members. Each of the resource persons developed a complete training program and piloted in their local/municipal setting, while being aided by individual coaching sessions. CPD suggested Liberal Democratic Party to build on this result and develop a more comprehensive training program for the party, which is currently under consideration.

²⁸ CECs of Albania, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Romania and Canada, as well as the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), and Council of Europe (CoE).

²⁹ Synopsis of the Regional Conference of the Venice Commission on Gender Equality in Electoral Processes, Tbilisi 25-26 November 2015. [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-EL\(2015\)015syn-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-EL(2015)015syn-e)

In late 2016, CPD initiated discussions with the newly created European People's Party in order to provide potential institutional support in setting up a strong women's organization within that party. These discussions will be taken forward in the beginning of 2016.

Support to CSO umbrella organizations

The WiP Programme from its very start has been designed as a joint collaboration with two prominent human rights and gender NGOs: East Europe Foundation (EEF) and Centre Partnership for Development (CPD) that are equal partners with UN Women and UNDP. One of the main objectives of EEF and CPD was to consolidate the platform of NGOs active in the area of gender equality promotion and to use it as a tool of pressure on the stakeholders responsible for TSM adoption. This objective was achieved with the establishment of the Gender Equality Platform in July 2015. Currently, the Platform brings together 19 prominent NGOs and individuals committed to gender equality (such as Women's Political Club 50/50, Centre Partnership for Development, Gender Centre, Promo-Lex, CReDO, East Europe Foundation, Tineri si Liberi Resource Centre, Association of Women's Entrepreneurs from Moldova, etc.). EEF facilitated the official launch of the Platform. It has been instrumental in scaling up advocacy efforts and representing a unified and independent CSO voice for gender equality, including TSMs. Several events were organized during 2015 based on the Platform's "Gender Equality Agenda: Proposals for Governance Programme in the Area of Gender Equality 2014-2018"³⁰ as well as a series of flash mobs during the Parliamentary elections aiming at promotion of women's representation on electoral lists and adoption of TSMs. As described above, the Platform is continuously involved in lobbying and dialogue with the key national stakeholders to keep the adoption of the Law no. 180 on the Parliament's agenda. The WiP Programme is further strengthening the institutional capacity of the Gender Equality Platform through supporting its Secretariat.

The second edition of the annual CSOs conference under the Programme was organized on 9 December 2015. While the first one served as a platform for elaboration of proposals for the new programme of the Moldovan Government for 2015-2018, the 2015 one is around four thematic topics: (i) The minimum representation quota for both sexes in Parliament and Government: advocacy and challenges; (ii) Paternity leave: myths vs. opportunities; (iii) Framework-policies in the area of gender equality: shaping a new program for gender equality; (iv) Coordinated civil society efforts to advance gender equality in politics. A resolution has been adopted as a result comprising CSOs' demands related to the adoption of TSMs, including 40% gender quota, ratification of Istanbul Convention, adoption of the new PNGE for 2016-2020, adoption of paternal leave, etc., and was shared among MPs in order to inform them about CSOs' demands on ensuring gender equality.

Work through media and arts to change gender stereotypes on women in leadership

The programme has made significant contributions to increasing media reporting on positive and inspirational representation of women, as well as challenging the public's perceptions on "typical" positions and occupations of women and men. This has been done through partnerships with the Association of Independent Press, selected Public Relations (PR) agencies, the Association of Women in Business and notable journalists and photographers in the country. As a result:

186 "success stories" of women leaders from different walks of life – in politics, business, civil service, civil society, etc. – and from all corners of the country, have been identified and featured on print, on-line and audio-visual media in the course of the year. The stories reflect women in leading positions, non-traditional occupations, and who contributed to their communities' development. Having women prominently featured in media as successful politicians/entrepreneurs/opinion leaders or in other prominent roles is contributing to changing both public perceptions about the role of women in society, and journalist practice that has traditionally portrayed women in secondary or sexist roles. Besides this, the journalists involved in the developing of success stories became more aware about how to present women and gender equality topics in a non-stereotypical way, as well as to avoid sexism in language and in photos/ images. The WIP Programme provided individual feedback on each success story, and the

³⁰ Agenda Egalității de Gen: Propuneri pentru programul de guvernare în domeniul promovării egalității de gen pentru perioada 2014-2018.
<http://www.consiliulong.md/agenda-egalitatii-de-gen/>

improved performance of at least 18 journalists is noticeable, with sexism and stereotypical portrayal of women in their materials being avoided.

An additional 60 success stories about women entrepreneurship were developed and disseminated on different online platforms³¹ as well as in a brochure. 15 short videos were developed featuring some of the most inspiring women leaders in business.³² The information about all existing resources for women entrepreneurs is presented on a web platform: www.platformafemeilor.md. The platform aims at providing easy access to information for women entrepreneurs, as well as encouraging interested women to start their own businesses by showcasing positive examples.

The first ever in Moldova national photo contest “Equality through Lenses” for amateur and professional photographers was launched in July 2015. The objective of the contest has been to increase public awareness about gender equality and to challenge traditional notions of equality, and of women and men being active and successful in different domains. 245 photographs were submitted and 50 selected by a jury of notable photographers and experts to be featured in national and local level exhibitions and debates. As a result of the contest, the photo exhibition “Women and Men seen through the photographers’ lens: realities and inspirations”, featuring the best 50 photos accompanied by a public debate “Equality in pictures” were launched on Human Rights Day, 10 December, in Chisinau within the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts premises.

Another debate took place in December 2015 at the “Alecu Russo” State University from Balti. 30 exhibitions and public debates are to be organized across the country by May 2016 to improve people’s understanding about gender equality and sexism in images. The Facebook page created to promote the contest and showcase the photos is followed by 1,303 people from across the country³³. Three additional photo and arts contests and exhibitions (outside the scope of WiP) also related to the promotion of gender equality and women’s images have been initiated after launching of the “Equality through Lenses” contest and it can be assumed that the latter has served as an inspiration for those.

30 media institutions (print, on-line and audio-visual media) have initiated self-monitoring of women’s representation in their news, interviews and other media products (see more information under Output 2.1).

Output 1.3: Capacities of the Election Management Bodies on gender responsive electoral management enhanced

Key results: 3 comprehensive voter education campaigns were conducted in 27 localities in 12 districts prior to local elections, which targeted a total of 10,816 people, out of which the majority (9,915) were women, including from vulnerable groups such as Roma women, other ethnic minority women, and women with disabilities. They have been encouraged and informed to cast meaningful votes, particularly for women from these groups. As a result, the WIP Programme, alongside the efforts of other initiatives, contributed to increased voter turnout of the Roma population in the local elections in the target communities (on average up to 60%). The CEC reached a more gender-balanced representation of women and men in the senior management (chair, deputy chairs, and secretaries) of lower level Electoral Management Bodies.

The CEC continued to pursue its commitments in ensuring gender equality in electoral management during 2015, as well in strong cooperation with CCET. In 2015, CEC issued a decision recommending a balanced representation of men and women in leadership (at chair, deputy chair, and secretary of the Council positions) of each of the 35 District Level Electoral Commissions (DEC)³⁴ constituted prior to 2015 local elections. Complementarily, an educational and

³¹ Former ealider.md platform integrated within platformafemeilor.md, and AFAM’s Facebook page.

³² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpH2N7a4A6Y>

³³ <https://www.facebook.com/Egalitate-prin-Obiectiv-1604730449799449/?fref=ts>

³⁴ Quote, point 4 of CEC decision “Upon election of the chair, deputy chair and Secretary of the Council, it is recommended to observe the gender balance” CEC decision on the establishment of District Level Electoral Council (example Soldanesti), point.4, CEC, 22 April 2015. <http://www.cec.md/index.php?pag=news&id=1001&rid=12808&l=ro>

awareness video advocating for higher representation of women in leadership positions within EMBs³⁵ has been developed and incorporated in the mandatory CCET training kit for electoral officials.

The affirmative actions of the CEC coupled with awareness raising and gender mainstreamed electoral trainings managed by Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) contributed to reaching a representation of women in the senior management (chair, deputy chairs, and secretaries) of lower level Electoral Management Bodies. Women represent 53% senior management positions in Level II District DEC in 2015 (51% in 2011). However, the share of women as presidents of Level II DEC was of only 29% in 2015 (a decrease from 36% in 2011) indicating the need for further efforts in setting a certain % of women's representation in top positions of district level EMBs (specifically chairs) enforced by relevant and more binding provisions of CEC in this regard. At the same time, progress has been achieved at the levels of women vice-presidents of Level II DEC – 49% women vice-presidents in 2015 compared to 44% in 2011. At Precinct Electoral Bureau level, a slight trend for de-feminization of lowest level EMBs' senior management has been noted in 2015 (85%) compared to 2011 (86.2%).

The 3 comprehensive voter education campaigns conducted prior to local elections reached over 10,000 people, out of which 90% were women, including from vulnerable groups. The campaigns aimed to encourage active participation and meaningful voting in marginalized communities by means of: organizing public debates, scrutinizing the electoral platform of candidates for inclusion of the needs of the marginalized, production and distribution of relevant elections information materials in minority languages, including through door-to-door activities, mobile voter information caravans. The crosscutting message throughout the targeted interventions in vulnerable communities was to encourage people to vote for women at large, particularly women from ethnic minorities and other under-represented categories of women. In Chetrosu village alone, 98 percent of Roma people cast their vote during the June 2015 local elections, compared to some 35 percent voter turnout in 2011. In the other seven communities targeted by the campaign, the turnout of Roma voters increased, on average, to 60 percent.³⁶ As a result of increased voter participation and encouragement to vote for Roma women, coupled with capacity building support provided by UN Women to Roma women candidates, 2 Roma women were elected as local councilors for the first time in the history of Moldova (see more below under Output 2.1).

The gender dimension has been analyzed throughout the electoral cycle – pre-election, election, and post-election – and support to CEC and CCET staff on internalizing this capacity for further electoral exercises has been delivered. CEC produced a gender-analysis of 2015 local elections and disseminated it widely.³⁷ The report provides detailed sex-disaggregated information on candidates, elected officials, election management bodies, trained electoral personnel, etc., and fills a data gap observed in previous elections where official and reliable sex-disaggregated data on these categories has not been available. In line with this achievement, the programme has assisted CEC and CCET in assimilating the capacity and analyzing both parliamentary and local elections from the gender perspective.

Overall, the significant strides in advancing gender equality throughout all electoral processes undertaken by CEC and CCET Moldova have been acknowledged as best practice examples internationally in the UNDP-UN Women Publication on Inclusive Electoral Processes³⁸.

Outcome 2: Gender equality advocates influence legal frameworks and policies to increase women's leadership and political participation

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuW6SSmL7RI>

³⁶ Article "Let's vote: Roma communities take the lead", UNDP Moldova and UNDP RBEC, 2015, UNDP regional.

http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/successstories/let_s-vote--roma-communities-take-the-lead.html

³⁷ CEC Report on Sex-disaggregated data on local elections 2015, CEC Moldova. 3 December 2015.

http://www.cec.md/files/files/participareafemeilorinalegerilelocalegenerale2015_1909120.pdf

³⁸ Publication: Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation; UNDP and UN Women; 2015.

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/2015%20UNDP_UNWomen%20EMB%20Gender%20Mainstreaming%20Guide-En-LR.pdf

Key results: For the first time in the history of Moldova, Roma women (7 in total) were registered on electoral lists of political parties and as independent candidates in the local elections. 2 Romani women were elected as local counselors in Chetrosu village and in Riscani town – blazing trails and setting an example for other Romani women to follow. The programme worked individually with each of these Roma women, encouraging them to run for the local elections, as part of dedicated awareness-raising workshops. New networks and platforms representing the rights of women from specific groups and bringing women in public life together have been established and have engaged in advocacy with decision-makers on agreed priorities, as well as are working internally to empower their members for stronger public and civic engagement. Various forms of dialogue took place between Members of Parliament and women at the local level, for many of whom this represented the first opportunity to address their concerns directly to legislators and decision-makers. Significant tailor-made capacity development in the area of gender equality was provided to all key stakeholders in Parliament. Embedding gender equality in the ongoing work of Parliamentary structures, such as the Parliament Secretariat, Constituency Offices, and Standing Parliamentary Committees, as well as investing individually in each of the 21 women MPs, is likely to contribute to more gender sensitive Parliamentary operations, methods and work.

Output 2.1 Capacities of the media on gender responsive coverage of political issues enhanced.

Key results: Under the framework of partnership with the Association of Independent Press, 30 media outlets from print, online and audio-visual media have engaged in self-monitoring process of their coverage from a gender equality perspective. Since the beginning of the process, slight improvements are visible in the extent to which women are portrayed in TV and online media in the participating outlets: 16% of material focused on women in the first month of the monitoring, September 2015, compared to 20% by the end of the fourth month of monitoring, December 2015.

An eight-month long process on self-assessment of 30 media outlets on gender equality was initiated in September 2015. Under partnership with the Association of Independent Press (API), 10 print, 10 online and 10 audio-visual media outlets have been selected to participate in the self-assessment exercise.

The 2015-2016 media self-assessment comes as a follow-up to the first media self-assessment piloted in 2012-2013 by API with UN Women's support.³⁹ This process concluded with a recommendation on the need to improve the self-assessment methodology both at the level of data collection and interpretation by mass-media institutions.⁴⁰ Taking this into account, a revised and more comprehensive methodology has been elaborated. Revisions include: extending the process to audio-visual media (previously only print and online media were included); inclusion of articles targeting women migrants and migration phenomenon; adding a section dedicated to the "short description of the subject" in order to ensure qualitative assessment as well; in depth description of the indicators for each specific type of media, primary statistical analysis, inclusion of new monitoring indicators, while excluding those that have been deemed as irrelevant or "non-actionable" from the previous assessment.

Prior to launching the self-assessment process, API organized a training for 45 journalists of 34 media institutions in order to select those most interested and committed, and to build their capacities on gender sensitive reporting. Following the training, 30 of the participating media institutions expressed interest to get involved in the self-assessment process, of which 20 are engaging for the first time in such kind of exercise. Also, the methodology for gender self-assessment has been further developed at the training as discussed above.

In order to assess the progress made by participating media, an Evaluation Board has been set up consisting of 8 experts in media and gender⁴¹. The Board is evaluating the evolution of women's representation in media and providing guidance to the media outlets and their editorial offices on how to make improvements. During the four-month monitoring period, the share of women's representation in media has slightly increased: in September the

³⁹ Raport Final: Evaluarea institutiilor mass-media prin prisma dimensiunii de gen (presa scrisa si presa on-line), p. 16.

[http://www.api.md/upload/files/RAPORT_FINAL_autoevaluarea_institutiilor_mass-media_prin_prisma_dimensiunii_de_gen\(1\).pdf](http://www.api.md/upload/files/RAPORT_FINAL_autoevaluarea_institutiilor_mass-media_prin_prisma_dimensiunii_de_gen(1).pdf)

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 16.

⁴¹ Alexei Buzu- gender expert, Ludmila Andronic- media expert, Daniela Terzi-Barbarosie- gender expert, Olga Nicolenco- gender expert, Ion Bunduchi- media expert, Loretta Handrabura- the minister of Youth and Sport, Lilia Pascal- Department for Equal Opportunities/ MLSPF, Alina Radu- media expert.

percentage of materials focused on women or predominantly on women was 16%, in October - 17%, in November - 18% and in December – 20%. It is important to note that this positive trend is due to the increase within participating online and TV media outlets; however, in the case of print media, there has been in fact a decrease in the extent to which women are featured as predominant characters. The upcoming monitoring reports over the next months will confirm whether this is a real positive movement in enhancing women's representation in media (the media materials having men or almost men as principal characters have the following share: in September and October - 59%, in November - 57%, in December – 53%). Upon completion of the 8-month self-assessment, and in light of the similar methodology utilized before, it will also be possible to compare the results with those from the previous assessment conducted in 2012-2013 for media that are taking part in both processes.

Beyond the expected outcomes of the work of the Evaluation Board has been the development of an expert list of women that journalists can draw upon when developing their materials. Due to the fact the journalists seek for an expert opinion to integrate into their stories on different important topics (on economics, political situation, etc.) and these experts have so far been mostly men, the Evaluation Board elaborated a list of 11 women experts in different fields who can be interviewed by journalists. The list can be updated on a permanent basis. Finally, representatives of Press Association from Romania have expressed interest to replicate the media self-assessment monitoring process within their country.

Output 2.2: Capacity of gender equality advocates to promote women's leadership and political participation strengthened.

Key results: A total of 76 Roma women from 8 widely populated Roma communities⁴² took part in capacity development and awareness-raising workshops prior to the local elections. As a result, 7 Roma women among them registered on electoral lists of political parties and as independent candidates (5 and 2 respectively) in the local elections. They were among the 15 Roma who ran in local elections; previously, no Roma women had ever run for local office in Moldova. Another historic first took place on Election Day, when out of these 7, 2 Roma women were elected as local councilors in Chetrosu village and in Riscani town. Furthermore, the programme supported the Network of Romani women and girls to convene on a regular basis, get further formalized and sustainable, and to expand its membership. Five political clubs were established in five districts to facilitate the dialogue between prospective women candidates and political parties and to serve as centers of knowledge, leadership and information for women before and after elections. Since their establishment, the political clubs have served around 400 women.

Considering the non-existent participation of Roma women in decision-making and politics, the programme continued its comprehensive engagement to encourage and build capacities of Roma women to engage with the political process. Prior to the local elections, substantive preparatory work took place to identify, inspire and support Roma women to run for local office, including power mapping, needs assessment in other 8 target localities, and awareness raising and campaign training, which for the first time introduced the participating Roma women to the importance and benefits of engagement in local-level politics. Following capacity development workshops with Roma women prior to the local elections, for the first time, 7 Roma women have been registered on electoral lists of political parties and as independent candidates. This represents nearly 50% of all registered Roma (15 in total). Out of these 7, 2 Roma women were elected as local councilors in Chetrosu village and in Riscani town. Since their election, the two women have continued receiving support from WiP. For example, they participated in the first training session for elected women local councilors, their experience was featured prominently during networking events of Roma women, and they were provided with information about rights and obligations of a local councilor, and ways to promote proposals for community development within local council meetings.

Due to implication in WiP Programme, two elected Romani women are making efforts to mainstream gender in their work within their community by organizing meetings with women to persuade them to be more actively involved in politics. With the support of the programme, the Roma Women's Association "Romano Alav" developed and submitted to different donors 2 programme proposals, aimed at development of local communities with the 2 elected

⁴² Parcani (Calarasi), Stejareni (Straseni), Taraclia (Taraclia), Ceadir- Lunga (Comrat), Talmaza (Stefan Voda), Sorocea (Sorocea), Balti municipality, Carpineni (Hincesti), and Hincesti (Hincesti).

Romani women in the lead, as well as involving them in efforts to inspire other Romani women to become more active and visible in politics, one of them being awarded (financed by Foundation Soros Moldova).

To continue the work undertaken in 2014 with establishment of five National Forums/Networks of women from different groups, the WiP Programme provided support to two of the networks – Network of Roma Women and Girls and Association of Women in Business – to further convene and identify priorities and issue of their members. The Network of Roma women and girls brings together over 100 Roma women mediators, activists and leaders from most populated with Roma local communities. In the course of 2015, 4 meetings of the Network were supported, aimed at sharing information and experiences, and equipping Roma women with the skills as well as providing encouragement to them to serve as local leaders. The Action Plan for 2016 is in the process of being drafted, which will include internal capacity development as well as local and national level advocacy. The Network was registered as an NGO on 30 March 2015, and is already active in programme proposal writing and fund raising. As a further step, Network orients its activities also on identification of men who support Romani women’s empowerment and involve them to promote gender equality.

In partnership with the Association of Business Women from Moldova (AFAM), three regional workshops were organized in Balti, Ungheni and Cahul in order to identify the concrete needs and most common barriers of women entrepreneurs from those regions. Considering the lack of regionally representative women business associations and the differing needs and priorities of women entrepreneurs from Chisinau and the countryside, this is a first step in better understanding the latter and future advocacy. The workshops served to identify local women leaders to be focal point for women in business in their region, particularly in the North. It is also worth noting that following the convening of the first in the country National Forum of Women Lawyers, a non-governmental organization was established (Asociatia “Femeile Avocate din Moldova”) to represent their needs.

For promotion of best practices and good examples of women mayors and to inspire the potential candidates and women leaders to run for office locally and regionally, a series of study visits to 6 communities led by women mayors have been planned. The first visit took place in Budesti, Chisinau, prior to the kick-off of the election campaign and the remaining visits are planned to take place in 2016. The Budesti visit familiarized 12 women leaders from different social and professional groups with best practices for community development implemented by a woman mayor. In addition, women mayors have been invited to serve as inspirational speakers for the 6 training sessions with local women councilors, in order to share their experiences in community development and activism for the rights of women and marginalized groups.

Another group that the Programme has targeted is adolescent girls from vulnerable groups, namely from rural areas, Romani and with disabilities. 38 girls have been selected based on a call for applications and invited to take part in the first of its kind summer camp in the framework of the initiative “Girls Go IT” – a joint endeavour of UN Women, eGovernment Center, Novateca, ATIC and TEKEDU. As a result of IT programming and leadership skills obtained at the camp, 6 new web platforms have been created to promote solutions for community problems identified by the girls. Moreover, 6 local “Girls Go IT” chapters are to be created by participants to build leadership and IT skills of other young girls from their localities. There are plans in the making to expand the initiative and have the summer camps organized on a regular basis. Besides this, representatives of Romanian Ministry of Youth expressed their interest to replicate GirlsGoIT in their country, with the first summer camp in Romania to take place in April 2016.

Recognizing the need for more systematic and higher-level dialogue between political party leaders and gender advocates representing the needs of different target groups, the Programme provided support to the second edition of the Forum “Partnership for an Inclusive and Prosperous Moldova” (the first Forum took place in 2014 with UN Women support). Timed to take place during the month of March to highlight attention to women’s rights, the Forum used innovative “speed-dating” methodology, ensuring that political party representatives directly interacted and listened to the needs and priorities of women from 7 specific target groups (women victims of violence, women affected and infected with HIV, women migrants, women with special needs, Roma women and girls; elderly women, and women in business). Concrete demands by women representing the different groups were sent in written form to all parties represented in Parliament, and the Forum concluded with a “Summary of discussions and commitments”

assumed by each political party in respect of each of the six groups of women. This serves as a basis for further follow-up and advocacy by the gender activists.

With EEF's continuous support, the Women's Political Club 50/50 launched five regional women's political clubs in the following territorial administrative units: Briceni, Strășeni, Telenești, Cimișlia, and Cahul. EEF and Women's Political Club 50/50 facilitated the dialogue between prospective women candidates (from targeted towns and 20 surrounded communities) and political parties through the organization of round tables. One of the key roles of the Clubs is to serve as knowledge, leadership and capacity development centres for aspiring women candidates at the local level. 318 women candidates and potential candidates enhanced their capacities to run for office locally as a result of being trained within Political Clubs.

In October and November 2015, two joint meetings were conducted in Chisinau and in Telenesti respectively to discuss the progress and barriers in the work of Political Clubs, and various options were considered for ensuring their sustainability. On 12 December, the Women's Political Club 50/50 conducted an internal, interim review of the activity, at which the participants from the 5 political clubs articulated lessons learnt and priorities for 2016.

In addition, EEF worked to enable local NGOs to conduct women empowerment campaigns at the local level:

The organization "Tarna Rom" worked in 8 targeted communities populated by Roma (from Calarasi, Riscani and Hincesti), empowering 102 Roma women to get involved in politics, and raised awareness within these communities about the importance of taking part in the elections, by offering them capacity building and information.

The NGO "Femeia Moderna" trained 210 women in 12 localities from Orhei, Soldanesti and Rezina, encouraging them to get involved in politics. As a result, 2 women have been elected as mayors (v. Samascani/ Soldanesti and v. Ciniseuti/ Rezina). 34 elected women (2 mayors, 32 local councilors) enhanced their capacities on local public authority's administration, LPA's functioning and programme management.

The NGO Asociatia Comunitara Pepeni conducted a participatory nomination campaign, empowering 35 women from the respective village to get involved in politics. All 35 women identified after the nomination campaign received capacity building to run for elections and were registered as candidates on the political parties' lists.

Asociatia Comunitara Singerenii Noi facilitated the nomination campaign of 26 women in politics. The grantee facilitated the dialogue between the nominated women and political parties. The suffrage has been followed by a campaign involving women and men in a local development initiative.

The NGO VESTA encouraged 20 women from the Southern region of Moldova to participate as candidates in the local elections. As a result, 2 women have been elected as mayors and 11 women have been elected as local councilors. The grantee broadcast 4 TV shows and a spot on gender equality at the BAS TV station from Basarabasca.

Output 2.3 Capacities of elected women parliamentarians and councilors to perform the elected official's duties developed and strengthened.

Key results: Significant tailor-made capacity development in the area of gender equality was provided to all key stakeholders in Parliament – female Members of Parliament (MPs), newly elected as well as those in subsequent mandates, the Parliament Secretariat, including its leadership and Constituency Offices, Standing Committees. Embedding gender equality in the ongoing work of Parliamentary structures, as well as investing individually in each of the 21 current women MPs, is likely to contribute to more gender sensitive Parliamentary operations, methods and work. Almost 200 women elected as local and district councilors enhanced their capacities in areas of local council functioning, fostering gender equality, finance, fundraising and communications. A pioneering mentorship program for first-mandate women local councilors was launched for 27 participants, each of which has been paired with a mentor and has started working on a community programme proposal to be implemented in 2016. Various forms of dialogue took place between political figures and women at national and local levels, focusing on women from specific vulnerable groups (women from ethnic minorities, with disabilities, rural women, elderly, single mothers, etc.). For

over 60% of the over 200 women participating in the regional dialogues, this represented the first opportunity to address their concerns directly to legislators and decision-makers.

Shortly after resuming office, the programme provided critical support to all 13 newly elected women Parliamentarians in building and cultivating a favorable public image by providing tailor made training programmes and individual coaching on public speaking, personal branding, building strong media presence and relations, and making use of social media platforms to engage more closely with constituents and the general public⁴³. The programme also engaged the 9 women MPs with previous mandates and senior Parliament leadership, which did not benefit of this kind of tailored support so far. This ensured that all 21 women currently in the Parliament have undergone an individualized capacity building programme. The participating women parliamentarians commended the approach of the WiP to provide individual coaching to them as a tool not used before, and yet effectively addressed their specific development needs.

In addition, the newly elected women MPs, together with 48 women in decision-making roles in central and local governments, as well as the members and leadership of women's organizations of all 5 parliamentary parties, have been trained by the programme on strategic communications, media skills and political leadership, featuring international expertise. The training subjects delivered to elected women MPs were selected based on the needs voiced by women at earlier stages of programme implementation, as well as during constant consultation/validation of topics with members of the Women's Platform in the Parliament.

The programme consistently engaged with the Parliament Secretariat and Parliamentary Constituency Offices in advancing gender equality awareness and understanding among the staff at national and regional level. Thus, 46 members of Parliament Secretariat – senior managers of 17 departments and divisions of the Secretariat, the heads and consultants of the 4 Parliamentary constituency offices have enhanced their capacities on embedding gender equality in the work of the Parliament⁴⁴ and making use of sex-disaggregated⁴⁵ data for designing, amending and passing laws and debating policies and budgets. The development of the respective capacities is also aligned to the recommendations of the Parliament's gender audit.

The training reports, pre - and post-knowledge assessment forms and training feedback forms indicated that the level of knowledge of the participants from the Parliament Secretariat and PCIOs attending the training on sex-disaggregated data increased by 77% given that 85% of participants never had any training on data literacy before. Over 70% of participants indicated the need for further such trainings. In the same context, 84% of the senior managers in Parliament Secretariat and heads of PCIOs qualified as "excellent" and "very good" the relevance of the training on advancing gender equality in Parliament's work.

The programme also contributed to raising gender awareness and understanding of 26 newly elected male and female MPs, as well as 46 MPs' assistants and parliamentary staffers about the role of the Parliament in ensuring gender equality by integrating a dedicated session into the Induction Training Programme for new MPs, organized in cooperation with UNDP Democracy Programme.⁴⁶

Since the issues faced by women are mostly in the competence of the 3 key standing committees of the Parliament - committee on Economy, Budget and Finance - Committee on Human Rights and Committee on Social Protection, the programme, in partnership with the UNDP Democracy Programme capacitated the advisors of the respective committees in gender-sensitive legislation development and scrutiny. Such capacity support also comes in line with the

⁴³ Women MPs from Moldova are closer to the people, thanks to social networks, UN Moldova, 20 October 2015.

<http://www.un.md/viewnews/357/>

⁴⁴ "Management, Leadership and Gender Equality in Public Service", Parliament of Moldova Facebook Page, 11 November 2015.

<https://www.facebook.com/ParliamentRM/posts/1005070189515508>

⁴⁵ Press release "Parliament of Moldova Staffers trained in the use of sex-disaggregated statistics", 23 November 2015, Parliament of Moldova. <http://www.parliament.md/Actualitate/Comunicatedepresa/tabid/90/ContentId/2336/Page/0/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

⁴⁶ Press release "Training Programme for Newly Elected MPs", Parliament of Moldova, 31 March 2015.

<http://www.parliament.md/Actualitate/Comunicatedepresa/tabid/90/ContentId/2076/Page/24/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

recommendation of the recent Gender Audit of the Parliament that indicated insufficient capacities of the parliament in gender sensitive lawmaking and gender screening of legislation.

Parliament commitment to gender equality and inclusiveness increased due to dedicated dialogue and engagement with women constituents, particularly from vulnerable groups by means of 5 regional parliamentary forums that gave the unique possibility to over 200 vulnerable women in 5 districts to voice their needs and address concerns directly with 15 Moldovan MPs. The Parliamentary Constituency and Information Offices (PCIOs) were the driving force in facilitating the respective forums under the overall leadership and support of the Parliament Secretariat. Notably, over 60% of women participating in the respective forums indicated these meetings as their first opportunity to address their concerns and needs directly with Moldovan politicians. As result of each meeting, the issues raised by women during the meetings have been consolidated and submitted to the MPs for further uptake, including to the Women's Caucus in the Parliament. To ensure the sustainability of MPs' practice to engage with women constituents, particularly the marginalized ones beyond the lifespan of the Programme, two sets of guidelines – one each for MPs⁴⁷ and the Parliamentary Constituency Offices - have been produced⁴⁸. The guides describe the key issues women face in the 4 regions covered by the constituency offices, and provide step-by-step advice to the staff of the constituency offices in further organizing similar events.

Taking into account the findings of a needs-assessment exercise conducted among women from vulnerable groups located in the 4 regions covered by the Parliamentary Constituency Offices, coupled with gender and human rights sensitization provided to over 30 members of Parliament Secretariat nationally and regionally, cross-cutting provisions on engaging with marginalized groups, particularly women, have been embedded in the Standard Operating Procedures of Parliamentary Constituency Offices in 2015. The respective achievement is another example of successful synergies with the efforts of the UNDP Democracy Programme aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity of the Parliament Secretariat in the area of gender equality and human rights.

Considering the emerging role of the Women's Caucus in Parliament as a possible driver of legislative action dedicated to gender equality, the programme engaged with the Caucus in different ways. Through its Secretary, the Caucus was invited to take part in the regional forums and in this way, increased its visibility toward women constituents at the local level. WIP implementing agencies and partners also provided information on key gender equality issues (TSM, violence against women) to the Caucus in order to encourage further legislative action.

Shortly after the 2015 local elections, the programme enhanced the capacities of 108 women newly elected as local and district councilors in 9 pilot districts in areas of local council functioning, fostering gender equality in local development agenda, building strategic local partnerships, fundraising, local budgeting, and communication with constituents. The 2 Roma women elected for first time as local councilors in 2015 have also been capacitated in the areas mentioned above. Each participant was provided with *Local Councilors Induction Kit* containing user-friendly information on the areas mentioned above, including the key laws regulating the functions, rights and responsibilities of local councilors. In addition to getting practical skills, the trainings were also an opportunity for women to network and form informal self-support groups, as well as to get inspiration and ideas from experienced women mayors who were invited to serve as speakers at each training. The feedback from the participants reveals the usefulness and timeliness of support at the early stage of their mandates, specifically concerning the role the women play in advancing gender equality initiatives in their communities and the tools to do so. On average, the women councilors rated with 9.8 points out of 10 the usefulness of the training, while the increase in the knowledge gained during the training course constituted 41% on average. The need for other types of support was expressed, such as skills on communicating with constituency and field visits to "successful" communities, which the programme will respond to in 2016.

⁴⁷ Guide for MPs participating in Parliamentary Forums "Dialogue with Citizens", UNDP Project, UNDP, 2015.

<http://www.md.undp.org/content/dam/moldova/img/Publications/deputat.pdf>

⁴⁸ Guidelines for PCIOs on organizing Parliamentary Forums "Dialogue with Citizens", UNDP, 2015.

<http://www.md.undp.org/content/dam/moldova/img/Publications/otip.pdf>

In addition, 86 elected women have been trained by the five Political Clubs on such topics as how to integrate gender dimension in LPA's administration, gender responsible budget, fundraising and programme management.

A comprehensive mentorship program for first-time councilwomen, elected in the 2015 local elections, was launched by CPD. This is the first time such a methodology of capacity development has been applied to this target group. The leadership abilities of 27 women are to be improved and they are to be empowered to use the principles of good governance, community mobilization and gender responsive budgeting throughout their mandates. Each participant has been paired with a mentor and has started working on a comprehensive reform agenda and a community programme proposal to be supported by the program in 2016.

Challenges and Management Response

Despite some progress being made, the number of women in local self-governance bodies has increased only slightly following the general local elections in 2015 and, alongside women's representation in the Parliament, still has a long way to go from the gender quota at 40% contained in the Legal Package 180. The main challenges and risks for the programme during this period remain the volatile political situation, which affected efforts to build constituency around gender equality. The political crisis reached its peak in October, when people took to the streets in massive protests, unseen in Moldova, over corruption and banking scandals. The consistent risk of early elections paired with much political reshuffling and changing party affiliations, affected Parliamentary activity during the year. In this context, gender equality issues have been de-prioritized and political will to promote gender equality and women's participation and representation in politics has remained insufficient.

Despite strong and consistent lobbying and advocacy by CSOs, UN and development partners, as well as despite individual MPs' promises regarding final adoption of the TSM in the second reading, there has been only slight progress in this direction. Over a year has passed since the first hearing and there is a risk that the Legislative Package No. 180 will not be adopted, that the Bill might suffer modifications watering it down, or that important provisions could be entirely excluded. That situation points to overall resistance by Parliament and entails a lost momentum for greater women's participation and representation in all aspects of decision-making. Therefore, programme partners have focused on targeting directly the key levers of power, most recently the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations. Efforts are also ongoing to activate more the Women's Caucus in Parliament and get buy-in from the Heads of Political parties. The programme has also focused on the further development of pieces of legislation (in particular in the area of sexist advertising) that are part of the package but that need to be developed more and can be pursued through an alternative legislative initiative.

The current political stalemate may bring the country to early Parliamentary Elections that could be announced in February and held in April 2016. If this happens, it is unlikely that the quota will be adopted. Under such circumstances, there is a need to increase pressure on MPs to adopt the bill in the beginning of the winter session.

A serious challenge for the WiP Programme has been to work with political parties that generally show strong resistance toward gender equality. The position of women within political parties' hierarchy is generally much lower than that of men, with few exceptions. Despite the existence of male champions and individual pledges by men in positions of power (such as the Speaker of Parliament), overall bringing men politicians in key roles on board for TSMs has been a challenge. In some cases, initial resistance to TSMs has demonstrated lack of understanding of the very concept and nature of TSMs. Moreover, another difficulty is a context where men MPs are still perceiving the gender quota as a threat to meritocracy of men and as a favour to women, not as a human right or a set of obligations assumed by the state. The insufficient commitment to gender equality by political parties is evidenced by the fact that women on candidate lists for the local elections faced last-minute unfavorable changes in placement.

Overall, this makes it difficult for committed women and men politicians to promote gender equality objectives within their own party's agendas and advocate women's human rights with their party leaders and colleagues. The Programme has provided extensive support to women politicians at all levels in order to support and encourage them to serve as women's rights champions externally and internally, including through peer-to-peer learning and networking across party lines. The low morale in all political parties due to the prolonged political crisis and political uncertainty have also presented challenges. It is very hard to build institutional capacities and foster a long-term view

under ambiguity. That is why some of the planned capacity development initiatives were implemented partially and with delays.

Another challenge observed in working with women to encourage them to serve as candidates for office or when showcasing their success through media has been the overall reticence of women to be promoted in the public eye and to be seen as role models. Through individual support and coaching, the Programme has contributed to changing some of these women's self-perceptions as successful and inspiring, including for Roma women. However, this points to a bigger issue of how women (and men) perceive and value their contribution to society and the need for overall change of mentalities and mind-sets.

Lessons learned

The key lessons learned in this period are structured around key areas, as follows:

- **Legal amendments:** There have been difficulties and delays in the Legislative Package 180 on quota and other gender equality related legal provisions moving to the 2nd hearing in Parliament following the first one (on July 17th, 2014). The delays point to inadequate *genuine* political will to reform legislation in order to enhance gender equality in areas such as decision making and child-care. Due to the above, future legislative initiatives in the area of gender equality should consider alternative strategies, i.e. instead of putting together different pieces of legislation in an overall package, taking them up separately, one-by-one or only closely related provisions. This would avoid the risk that has been experienced with the Law 180, whereas the overall package has become hostage to particular pieces of legislative change, which have been most controversial and for which consensus has been difficult to reach. The programme has already started building on this lesson and utilizing this approach with developing specific amendments to legalize sexism in advertising, which has been pursued separately and in parallel to advocacy to the Law 180. The lesson will be also taken into account in other future legislative initiatives (to be pursued in future programmes).
- **Advocacy:** Consistent advocacy efforts encompassing a variety of strategies are critical in maintaining the momentum and keeping gender equality legislation on the agenda of the Parliament. The following in particular are needed approaches to further influence Parliament's decision on final adoption of Legislative Package no. 180:
 - To consolidate the skills, network and influence of women MPs who support the Law and are united under the Women's Caucus, in order to be heard as a unified voice in the Parliament and to obtain independence from their political leaders;
 - To continue identifying allies among men MPs interested in showcasing their support to ensure gender equality in politics and decision making;
 - To utilize society's supportive opinion on TSMs (as seen through citizens' surveys) as a further argument to encourage and push MPs to respond to the electorate's demands;
 - To continue presenting in the Parliament strong arguments in support of TSMs adoption, including international good practices.
- **Focus on local level:** Capacity building and dialogue efforts need to be multiplied both at national, but more essentially, at the local level. This is where both the needs of women, particularly those from excluded groups, are most pronounced and where tangible changes can be made through local level policy making. At the level of territorial political organizations, the knowledge and information received via trainings has to be shared with other members at local level, thus aiming at achieving a greater result.
- **Women as citizens:** While it is important to engage with the duty bearers - both women and men, currently in power to raise their capacities and sensitivity to gender issues, it is also very important to continue working with the rights holders, women leaders and "ordinary" citizens, particularly at the local level – in order to demand action and accountability for their priorities. Increasing women's civic and political engagement as citizens (not only during the voting process, but also after elections have passed as supported by the programme via the regional parliamentary forums) is critical in order to keep the issues and priorities of women on the public agenda. It also gives extra "ammunition" to women (or men) in decision-making committed to take them further.
- **Capacity building of women:**
 - Investment in women's leadership capacities and building self-confidence is a prerequisite for having more women in leadership positions, including for political participation. This should be a long-term

goal, towards which the promotion of women in public roles among the general public, through various forms of media, plays a key role.

- The identification and training of women candidates has to start long before elections. In this respect, trainings, seminars and public events aimed at fostering political participation of women have to be planned well in advance the official launch of the campaign. This will address not only the fact that while campaigning, the time candidates can dedicate to such activities is limited and the skills gained cannot be necessarily applied, but can also allow for more diversified and comprehensive capacity building programme.
- Individual coaching/mentoring tailored to their specific needs is necessary for fostering the capacities of elected women, particularly in the Parliament, who do not always have the time or willingness to participate in training sessions and some of whom require very specific type of support.
- Platforms: Organizing platforms that gather women from different groups, including vulnerable ones, has provided an opportunity for them to define common issues and raise them with decision-makers in a consolidated and unified manner. The platforms supported under the programme generated rich exchange of ideas and experience. At the same time, ensuring the sustainability of each platform requires further deliberation, as strategies need to differ based on their interest, level of formalization, and specific characteristics. Action planning is an important process that can help Platforms become more sustainable.
- Engaging men:
 - It is important to work on capacity building both with women and men, in order for men to have the knowledge and be encouraged to support women candidates. Men sensitized on gender equality are potential sympathizers and electors of women candidates. Moreover, the Political Clubs are able and will consider working more with men, representatives of local governments, different institutions, NGOs and business. Another lesson of working with men is that it is needed to move beyond nominal proclamation of support to women's empowerment and gender equality and into concrete and measurable actions. All too often, even men willing to speak publicly in favour of gender equality fall short of taking active tangible steps in this direction. This is particularly relevant when it comes to men holding positions of power (such as those heading political parties) who are instrumental in ensuring key reforms, as is the case with temporary special measures.
- Innovation and knowledge sharing:
 - Emerging good practices – such as around the mentoring program for newly elected women councilors, the work of the political clubs, or raising awareness and training on gender equality through innovations such as arts need to be further analyzed and documented, multiplied and shared.
 - Developed methodologies, training materials and guides within the programme have to be multiplied and disseminated throughout the country.
- Flexibility: Due to the complex political background in which the WiP Programme operates, the level of flexibility practiced in the course of programme implementation is very much needed in order to respond to the beneficiaries' needs and to mitigate the emerging external risks.

Indicator Based Performance Assessment

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>Outcome 1 Legal frameworks and policies to advance women’s right to participate in decision making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and/or implemented</p> <p>Indicator: Adoption and implementation of appropriate Temporary Special Measures (TSMs)</p>			Political party lists submitted to CEC
<p>Output 1.1 Capacity at national and sub-national levels to develop and implement legal frameworks and policies to advance women’s right to participate in decision making enhanced</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.1 Legislative amendments on promoting women in decision making drafted and submitted to the Parliament</p> <p>Baseline: Relevant draft amendments to Electoral Code, Party Code, Parliament Law, the Law on Government and Gender Equality Law are developed to promote women in politics and decision making. No initiatives undertaken to develop the secondary legislation to ensure alignment with all other relevant law</p> <p>Planned Target: Amendments to Law on Government, and relevant other laws and by-laws drafted in a participatory and transparent manner</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2 Political parties receive information/methods to nominate more women</p> <p>Baseline: None</p> <p>Planned Target: At least all Parliamentary parties receive information on the nomination of more women</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When it comes to the Legislative Package 180, the target was achieved already in 2014. The Programme has worked to ensure that Legislative Package 180 moves forward in the legislative process. In 2015, the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations has reviewed the Law 180 and given the go ahead to some of its provisions and proposed changes to others. 2nd hearing in Parliament is pending. In addition, legal amendments in the area of sexist advertising have been prepared. 2. Target reached. During 2015, all political parties received information/methods to nominate more women on electoral lists, as well as to promote more women in decision-making positions. In particular, they received 2 resolutions voicing the needs of different groups of women representing different social and professional groups and 7 position papers submitted by CSOs promoting gender equality. 	<p>The Legislative package 180 is still pending for review at 2nd hearing in the Parliament. (Nb. There have to be two positive hearings in the Parliament for any legislative act to be adopted.)</p>	<p>Parliament website – Report from session of Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations Resolutions prepared by women from different groups CSO (CPD and EEF) websites and quarterly reports</p>

<p>Output 1.2 Capacities at all levels to promote women’s participation in electoral processes both as candidates and voters enhanced</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.1 Number of Organizations supporting women candidates and demanding women’s equal participation within political party nominations received capacity development support</p> <p>Baseline: None</p> <p>Planned Target: At least 10 organizations at the central and local level</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.3 Percentage of women candidates nominated and running</p> <p>Baseline: Parliament = 27%, Mayors = 17%, Councils = 32%</p> <p>Planned Target: increase of 10 pp.</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.4 Average rank of women candidates decreasedⁱ in party lists for parliamentary election</p> <p>Baseline: 60%</p> <p>Planned Target: Decrease by 10pp</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Target exceeded. Over 10 organizations supporting women candidates and demanding women’s equal participation within political party nominations have been receiving capacity development support (5 political clubs established in 5 districts, 3 women’s organizations of 3 political parties, Romani Women and Girls Network, Gender Equality Platform consisting of 17 organizations). 2. Target reached. Total of 949 women received knowledge and tools to be nominated and run for the elections in the framework of the Programme. 3. Slight progress toward target: % of women candidates in Parliament (2014 elections) – 30.30; Mayor (2015 elections) - 19.3 ; Local Councils (2015 elections) – 34.9. 4. Increase in the placement of women in top 20% of party lists as follows: Parliamentary elections: 2010 - top 20 – 17.4% (places 1-10 – 14.8%; places 11-20 – 20.0%ⁱ); 2014 - top 20 – 21.15% (places 1-10 - 24%; places 11-20 – 18.3%ⁱⁱⁱ); Election of local councils: 2011 - top 20 – 5.85% (places 1-10 – 3.7%; places 11-20 - 8%^{iv}), 2015 - top 20 - 23% (places 1-10 – 18.3%^v places 11 -20 – 27.7%^v). 	<p>The delay in the program implementation hindered the performance of close work with political parties to advocate for increasing the women’s representation on the electoral lists. The TSM and legislative amendments have been not been reviewed in the second reading.</p>	<p>Reports of partnering and target organizations</p> <p>Report of CSOs and public opinion studies</p> <p>CPD analysis of political party lists and ranking (Political party Monitoring report)</p> <p>CEC gender analysis of elections (to come shortly)</p>
<p>Output 1.3 Capacities of the Election Management Bodies on gender responsive electoral management enhanced</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.1 Percentage of women members of the CEC and of rayon and precinct level electoral commissions</p> <p>Baseline: 1 woman CEC member, 36% women Heads of electoral commissions at rayon level</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On track. A representation of women in the senior management (chair, deputy chairs and secretaries) of lower level Electoral Management Bodies increased - 53% senior management positions in Level II District DEC (51% in 2011). 2. Target achieved. 3 comprehensive voter education campaigns conducted in 27 localities in 12 districts prior to local elections reached a total of 10,816 people, 		<p>CEC Annual Report</p> <p>Voter education materials</p> <p>Voter turnout sex disaggregated data</p>

<p>Planned Target: At least 1 person increase in the number of women among CEC members and 10 % increase among the Heads of electoral commissions at rayon level</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.2 CEC voter registration and education campaign has a particular focus on women, youth, and on vulnerable groups</p> <p>Baseline: No particular focus on women, youth and vulnerable groups in the previous voter registration and education campaigns</p> <p>Planned Target: CEC voter registration and education campaign with a particular focus on women, youth, and on vulnerable groups designed and implemented in the general and local elections</p>	<p>out of which the majority (9,915) were women, including from vulnerable groups such as Roma women, other ethnic minority women and women with disabilities - have been encouraged and informed to cast meaningful votes</p>		
<p>Outcome 2 Gender equality advocates influence legal frameworks and policies to increase women's leadership and political participation</p> <p>Indicator: Agreed women's agenda/manifesto on joint platforms amongst Women from communities, community groups, CSOs, think tank organizations and political parties calling for women's increased participation in politics</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>Planned Target:</p>			<p>Public Opinion survey, Organization's reports, Media reports</p>
<p>Output 2.1 Capacities of the media on gender responsive coverage of political issues enhanced</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.1. Number of media organizations undertaking internal monitoring of gender sensitivity of their product on regular basis before, during and after elections</p> <p>Baseline: 17 print and online media organizations</p> <p>Planned Target: At least another 20 print, online, audio-visual media</p>	<p>1. On track. Total of 30 media outlets are undertaking internal monitoring of the gender sensitivity of their products on a regular basis</p>		<p>Media monitoring results, Media Association surveys/reports</p>

<p>Output 2.2 Capacity of gender equality advocates to promote women’s leadership and political participation strengthened</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1 Number of initiatives undertaken by women and women’s groups, NGOs and media to demand inclusion of women’s needs and priorities in the political party agenda at central and local level</p> <p>Baseline: none</p> <p>Planned Target: at least 30 initiatives in communities and rayon levels undertaken to identify women’s common needs and interest and demand political parties’ response in their agenda before and after election. The identified needs of women are brought to the central level for the attention of political leaders</p>	<p>1. On track. Diverse range of initiatives have been undertaken to demand inclusion of women’s needs at both national and local levels. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality Platform • 5 Platforms of women representing women from different groups • 5 women’s political clubs • Power mapping and needs assessment in 8 localities with predominant Roma population – • GirlsGoIT (Programme contribution to other partners’ initiative) • Forum “Partnership for an Inclusive and Prosperous Moldova” • 3 regional workshops for business women • 5 NGOs conducted women’s empowerment campaigns at local level 		<p>CSO reports; Media report</p>
<p>Output 2.3. Capacities of elected women parliamentarians and councillors to perform the elected official’s duties developed and strengthened</p> <p>Indicator 2.3.1 Number of meetings between MPs and women from rural and urban areas organized</p> <p>Baseline: no separate meetings of MPs with women and their organizations. Meetings between MPs and women are held as part of usual routine community meetings that are rarely organized</p> <p>Planned Target: 15 rayons will be visited and meetings will be held by MPs with women</p> <p>Indicator 2.3.2 Number of newly elected women MPs received initial training</p> <p>Baseline: None</p> <p>Planned Target: All newly elected Women MPs trained</p> <p>Indicator 2.3.3 Number of Women Councillors trained</p> <p>Baseline: None</p> <p>Planned Target: Women councillors in 10 target rayons trained</p>	<p>1. On track. In 2015, 5 regional forums facilitating dialogue between MPs and women constituents have been organized, in partnership with Parliament Constituents and Information Offices</p> <p>2. Exceeded. All women MPs (those in their first term but also in consecutive terms) have received both training and individual coaching. Other Parliamentary structures and women local councillors received training as well</p>	<p>Since programme actual start coincided with the midst of the pre-parliamentary election campaign, there was a high risk that the regional forums could have served as platform for campaigning of MPs. This led to some delays in the initiation of the forums. However, progress is currently on track.</p>	<p>Media reporting; annual program report; annual report of parliament (women’s caucus)</p>

Conclusions

Since the Fund was only established in mid-2014, the 2015 reporting period saw a surge in activities and results of the programmes implemented by the PUNOs, as evidenced by the narratives and indicator based reports above. As integral parts of the wider UNPF, the programmes currently implemented under the Fund make significant contributions to the development priorities of Moldova, in particular in relation to governance and human rights. UN Moldova will continue its work in this area through the Fund programmes, while at the same time efforts will be made to increase diversification so as to better reflect the social and environment pillars of the UNPF. In this context, a joint UNDP-UNICEF-WHO programme was launched under the Fund in early 2016 with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation as the donor. The title of the programme is “Contribution to the Confidence Building Measures Program in Transnistria - Health Sector (Phase 2)”, and its overarching objective is to ensure that the population of Moldova, including in the Transnistrian region, has improved health status, financial protection, equitable access to and satisfaction with health services. The programme covers a period of 3 years and 5 months, with an overall budget of about 2.3 million CHF (approximately equivalent to 2.4 million USD in March 2016).

The Fund is one of the key elements of the Delivering as One approach, and as such it has contributed to strengthening the cooperation and coherence of the UN agencies in Moldova. It has been recognized that the Delivering as One concept can have a synergetic effect and thus contribute to a more effective and efficient response to development challenges by the UN system. Moreover, improved UN coordination and coherence can leverage economies of scale and lower the transaction costs for partners, including donors and the Government of Moldova. A critical factor for enhanced and more effective UN cooperation is a transparent and coordinated approach to resource mobilization. In order to facilitate this, UN Moldova has developed and approved a Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy, which will streamline the resource mobilization process, ensure improved information sharing across the UN agencies, and reduce internal competition for resources.

ⁱ Candidate rank is measured from the top of the list, such at a lower-rank the candidate is more likely to be elected than a higher-rank one.

ⁱⁱ Şanse Egale în Procesul Electoral. Studiu de caz: Alegerile parlamentare anticipate din 28 noiembrie 2010, CPD, 2010, Chisinau

ⁱⁱⁱ Studiu de caz: Alegerile parlamentare din 30 noiembrie 2014”, CPD, 2014, p. 20, figure 7,
http://progen.md/files/6842_raport_final_alegeri_2014.pdf

^{iv} Studiu de caz: Şanse Egale în Procesul Electoral: Cazul Alegerilor Locale 2011, CPD, 2011, p. 20, figure 15,
http://progen.md/files/8720_raport.pdf

^v Şanse egale în procesul electoral. Studiu de caz: alegerile locale generale din 14 și 28 iunie 2015”, CPD, 2015, p. 20, figure 10,
http://progen.md/files/7091_sanse_egale_in_procesul_electoral.pdf