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COVID-19 Response and Recovery Window of the Moldova 2030 SDGs Partnership Fund

**REPORTING PERIOD: October 1st – December 31, 2020**

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| Programme Title & Project Number | |  | Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results | |
| *Programme Title*: COVID-19 Response and Recovery Window of the Moldova 2030 SDGs Partnership Fund (SDGPF)  *Programme Number:*  ADA-No.2852-00/2020/GenPro/1-L7R/2020  *MPTF Office Project Reference Number:* **00124723** | | *Country/Region:*  Districts of Moldova - Cahul, Rezina, Edinet, Balti, Soroca, Ungheni, Anenii Noi, Calarasi, Orhei, Basarabeasca, Comrat, Causeni, Cantemir, Stefan Voda as well as, in several communities from the left bank of the Dniester. | |
| *Priority area/ strategic results:*  Improved well - being of people of Moldova, in particular of the most vulnerable, in a just and equitable society, in line with international human rights standards and Vision 2030. | |
| Participating Organization(s) | |  | Implementing Partners | |
| * UN Women in Moldova in partnership with OHCHR * International Labour Organization | | * National and Local Employment Offices (NEA) and local-level public and private institutions (i.e producers’ associations, micro-finance institutions, NGOs, LPA (II and I levels), training institutions, etc) * NGO Task Force Covid-19 and Human rights | |
| Programme/Project Cost (US$) | |  | Programme Duration | |
| Total approved budget as per project document:  MPTF /JP Contribution: ADA: | 347,966 USD |  | Overall Duration *(months)* | 12 months |
| Agency Contribution:  UN Women:  ILO: | 30.000 USD - in-kind UN Women  180,000 USD (as ILO funded complementary support)[[1]](#footnote-2), 20,000 USD - in-kind contribution of local implementing partners |  | The duration of the Moldova 2030 SDGs Partnership Fund is 15 February 2019 - 31 December 2022. |  |
| Government Contribution  *(if applicable)* | n/a |  | Original End Date | 31 August 2021 |
| Other Contributions (donors)  *(if applicable)* | n/a |  | Current End date | 31 August 2021 |
| TOTAL: |  |  |  |  |
| Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval. | |  | Report Submitted By | |
| Assessment/Review - if applicable *please attach*  Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*  Mid-Term Evaluation Report *– if applicable please attach*  Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy* | | * Name: Nighina Azizov/Violeta Vrabie * Title: UNW Program Analyst/ ILO Project Coordonator * Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women and ILO * Email address: [nighina.azizov@unwomen.org](mailto:nighina.azizov@unwomen.org); [vrabie@ilo.org](mailto:vrabie@ilo.org) | |

# List of the main abbreviations and acronyms that are used in the report:

ALMPs – Active Labour Market Programmes

EOs – Employers' Organizations

ILO - International Labour Organization

LPA – Local Public Authorities

MPTF - Multi-Partner Trust Fund

NEA - National Employment Agency

NGO – Non-governmental organization

OHCHR - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

PPE - Personal Protection Equipment

RM- UN PFSD - Republic of Moldova United Nation Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

SDGPF - SDGs Partnership Fund

SMEs - Small and Medium Enterprises

TOC – Theory of Change

TUs – Trade Unions

UN - United Nations

UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

# NARRATIVE REPORT

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# 

The report covers the inception phase of the Programme (October - December 2020), during which all preparatory steps for the achievement of the expected results have been undertaken. A number of coordination meetings took place with the participation of representatives of the NGO Task Force *Covid-19 and Human rights* which was joined by 54 NGOs from across Moldova, including from the Transnistria region and Gagauzia.

Following the project theory of change which is constructed around the emergency response to the acute needs in personal protective equipment (PPE), food packages and hygienic products, as well as access to employment opportunities to the most vulnerable groups of population, the implementing agencies initiated the preparatory work of mapping the needs of most affected and determining the type of support required.

Mapping of specific needs from the selected district level was initiated by UN Women, in partnership with OHCHR and in close cooperation with NGO Task Force. The mapping exercise was built on the good practices and lessons learned from the previous MPTF COVID-19 response, when more than 7000 direct beneficiaries (7125 women and 377 men, including their children) from most vulnerable and marginalized groups living in both banks of Dniester river have received support in form of food/hygienic packages and PPE items. The preparatory work with National Employment Agency (NEA), NGOs and service providers was centered around the relevance of rapid and efficient provision of necessary institutional tools, materials, supplies and capacity assistance to target groups and beneficiaries. This support was aimed at reducing considerably the infection rate with COVID-19 whilst enhancing the income and livelihood opportunities of the most affected.

Capacity building services were initiated to ensure that local NGO staff and volunteers from both banks of Dniester river receive awareness raising and sessions on how to properly use personal protective equipment (PPEs), to better respond to the needs of people in vulnerable situations. Furthermore, a set of prevention related materials are being contextualized to the local situation on the proper use of PPEs (in two languages Romanian and Russian) based on the lessons learned and best practices.

National Employment Agency (NEA) received tools and capacity building sessions for segmentation of unemployed people and effiecient modalities of referral to Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMPs). The activities contributed towards achieving the projected theory of change assuming that: if the National Employment Agency has adequate capacity and tools for unemployed people segmentation and referral to ALMPs, then unemployed people directly affected by COVID-19 (young seasonal workers, women returnees due to the COVID-19 crisis, etc.) will enhance their income opportunities and livelihoods because the access to jobs and entrepreneurial activities was improved.

Local-level tripartite social dialogue has been used as a catalyst to mobilize local partnerships, and to drive the formulation of specific employment generation measures to mitigate effects of the Covid-19 crisis and generate decent jobs for vulnerable workers. Thus, through in-depth consultations with the national social partners (Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, National Confederation of Trade Unions and National Confederation of Employers’ Organization), Causeni and Cantemir districts have been selected as target regions for decent work and productive employment initiatives.

The activities initiated in the reporting period, laid the foundation for the achievement of results planned for 2021. The procurement risks identified in the project document will be continuously monitored during 2021 to ensure a successful outcome.

# Purpose

The proposed solution for this project is to strengthen resilience against COVID-19 and improve the well-being of people of Moldova in a just and equitable society, in line with international human rights standards and vision of Agenda 2030. This can be achieved by equipping those from underrepresented groups from selected communities with essential products and protective equipment, including access to enhanced livelihood opportunities, decent work and productive employment.

The Moldova SDGs Partnership Fund (SDGPF) complements other resources available and is established to support the activities agreed by the Government and the UN as outlined in the 2018- 2022 RM- UN PFSD and the UN Joint Annual Workplans contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. The SDGPF has four thematic pillars: 1) Governance, human rights and gender equality; 2) Sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth; 3) Environmental sustainability and resilience; 4) Inclusive and equitable social development.

This programme is constructed as an emergency response to the acute needs in PPEs, food packages and hygienic products, as well as access to employment opportunities for the most vulnerable groups of population. People from underrepresented groups are more vulnerable to the risk of infection and more prone to be affected by the negative socio-economic impact of the pandemic. More than 50% of households with persons with disabilities are economically and socially affected, with more than 85% of the households reporting already in May 2020 being deprived of the necessary resources should the state of emergency continue.[[2]](#footnote-3) The absolute majority of Roma women did not have access to protective equipment – 95% (in the case of men – 80%). More women than men lost their jobs or were sent on unpaid or partially paid leave during the pandemic crisis[[3]](#footnote-4).

An important component of the programme is capacity building and provision of the necessary working tools during the COVID-19 outbreak for NGOs and the most vulnerable. It is based on the main assumption that rapid and efficient provision of the necessary materials, supplies and capacity assistance to target groups and beneficiaries will enhance the income and livelihood opportunities and slow down considerably the infection rate with COVID-19 in the country. The programme facilitates the entering in the job market of people directly affected by COVID-19 through improved employment services and programmes, better access to jobs and entrepreneurial activities.

The project is implemented through the SDGPF being framed around two inter-linked components/outcomes -i) improved resilience against COVID-19 of people in vulnerable situations, including elderly persons, persons with disabilities and their families, Roma, families in vulnerable situation and children left behind from both banks of Dniester, service providers (local NGOs) and ii) enhanced self- employment and income opportunities of unemployed persons (young seasonal workers and returned women migrants due to the COVID-19 crisis), which are led by ILO and UN Women in partnership with OHCHR.

# Results

1. **Narrative reporting on results:**

The Programme commenced activities in November of 2020. Despite the short period of implementation, several actions were achieved.

The procurement process has been initiated to provide the training sessions for NGOs working in the field of Human Rights in order to receive informative sessions and increase their awareness and knowledge on the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPEs), including through prevention related materials, contextualised to the local situation and drafted in two different languages (Romanian and Russian).

It is expected that at least 50 staff and volunteers of NGOs from both banks of Dniester working at the national and local level, who are members of the NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights, will be better enabled to provide direct social support services in response to the immediate needs of people in vulnerable situations, in context of COVID-19.

The mapping of the needs of people from the selected district level initiated by UN Women in partnership with OHCHR, in relation to PPEs and food packages was done in close partnership with NGO Task Force Covid-19 and Human Rights, consisted of 54 NGOs from across Moldova, including from the Transnistria region and Gagauzia. The final results of the mapping is expected to be ready by mid-January 2021. According to the the project initial estimation about 2700 people in vulnerable situations, including elderly persons, persons with disabilities and their families, left behind children, Roma people from vulnerable families and Roma single mothers from both banks of Dniester, will improve their resilience against COVID-19. For the above, a national consultant was selected to ensure the facilitation between implementing team and NGO Task Force for the mappping exercise.

The NEA has been equipped with the skills and knowledge on unemployed people segmentation through the revision of the registration form of the beneficiaries in the emerging context, so that they can be better referred to Active Labour Market Programmes. Moreover, as result of one training, suported by ILO, the NEA staff is able to better detect the unemployed status, before the registration process, and therefore respond more efficiently to the needs of unemployed so they can match them with jobs.

Through methodological and financial support, NEA will roll-out two new employment programmes from the Law on Employment Promotion, agreed with the Ministry of Labour. These programs include: (i) self-employment schemes, addressed to unemployed, and (ii) local initiatives‘ projects, addressed to employers who are willing to expand their business and as consequence, create new jobs.

A cooperation was established with the social partners (LPA, local TUs and Employers' Organizations) from Causeni and Cantemir districts and other actors (producers’ associations, training institutions, micro-finance institutions, etc.) active in the regions. The main goal of this cooperation is to devise viable solutions for quick post-crisis recovery and drive job creation efforts in rural communities. ILO provided support to the LPAs and other involved actors from Causeni and Cantemir to collect the general information on the main economic activities of the district, income generation sectors, problems faced and potential areas where the ILO support could be offered to tackle these problems and generate new employment opportunities for vulnerable people.

Local stakeholders and several economic sectors (light industry, agriculture, and manufacturing) for job creation and formalization were identified as result of a round of capacity-building sessions. Local-level partners will be further supported to implement local employment projects designed to accelerate the launch of start-ups in income generation sectors and subsidized employment through support to SMEs. The capacity-building component is provided by the ILO as part of a broader support services within the ‘Reactivating social dialogue for an effective Covid-19 response in Moldova, and applying it to local job creation through Local Employment Partnerships’ project, within the commited contribution of the ILO to the SDGPF. As result, 100 young seasonal workers, women returnees due to the Covid-19 crisis, informal workers and other groups of people affected by the crisis, will enhance their income opportunities and livelihoods.

As the project has a short period of realization by December 2020, no programmatic revisions have been undertaken or risks identified during this inception phase. To ensure synergies during the project activities implementation and taking into consideration the COVID-19 restrictions and other external risks, UN Women has developed an Action Plan (both programmatic and operational) in close coordination with OHCHR team. UN Women and OHCHR organized weekly coordination meetings to prepare the inception phase of the project implementation by establishing the team roles, modalities of work, respective deadlines, and further efficient communication with the NGO Task Force. Bi-weekly communication on coordination issues were maintained between UN Women and ILO teams involved in the realization of their output components.

**ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

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|  | **Achieved Indicator Targets** | **Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)** | **Source of Verification** |
| **Outcome 1**  The people of Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable, have access to enhanced livelihood opportunities, decent work and productive employment, generated by sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth | | | |
| **Outcome Indicators:** | | | |
| **#** of vulnerable people who received support  (and indirect beneficiaries)  **Baseline: 0**  **Planned Target: UNW 2700** | n/a | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | IP reports/ List of distributions |
| # of beneficiaries who get employed  Baseline: 0  **Planned Target ILO: 50** | n/a | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | Number of employment contracts;  Number of newly registered start-ups |
| # of beneficiaries who launch start-up  Baseline: 0  **Planned Target ILO: 50** | n/a | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period |
| **Output 1.1** People in vulnerable situation are better enhanced to protect against pandemic situation | | | |
| **Indicator 1.1.1** # vulnerable women and men, girls and boys, including their dependents receiving immediate and preventive supplies (food, sanitizers, etc.), by group of vulnerability  **Baseline: 250**  **Planned Target: 2700** | n/a | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | IP reports,  UNW reports, delivery reports |
| **Output 1.2** NGOs at local level have capacities and skills to offer social support to the people in vulnerable situations | | | |
| **Indicator 1.1.2: #** of members of the NGO’s equipped with relevant knowledge on PPE’s use  **Baseline: 0**  **Planned Target: 50** | n/a | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | IP reports, UNW reports |
| **Indicator 1.1.2:** # informative/training sessions for CSO’s staff  **Baseline:** 0  **Planned Target**: up to 5 | n/a | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | IP reports, UNW reports |
| **Output 2.1** The National Employment Agency enhance capacity and knowledge to provide segmentation and referral to Active Labour Market Programmes of unemployed directly affected by COVID-19 | | | |
| **Indicator 2.1.1** # of capacity building events provided to the National Employment Agency  **Baseline: 0**  **Planned Target: up to 10** | 1 |  | NEA report |
| **Indicator 2.1.2** # of young seasonal workers and returned women migrants due to the Covid-19 crisis, enrolled in the subsidy scheme  **Baseline: 0**  **Planned Target: 50** | 0 | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | n/a |
| **Indicator .2.1.3** # of beneficiaries of entrepreneurship and technical training, mentoring support, small grants and legal support to business registration.  **Baseline:0**  **Planned Target: 50** | 0 | The activity was not rolled out during the reporting period | n/a |

**iii) A Specific Story (Optional)**

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| **Problem / Challenge faced:** Describe the specific problem or challenge faced by the subject of your story (this could be a problem experienced by an individual, community or government).  **Programme Interventions:** How was the problem or challenged addressed through the Programme interventions?  **Result (if applicable):** Describe the observable ***change*** that occurred so far as a result of the Programme interventions. For example, how did community lives change or how was the government better able to deal with the initial problem?  **Lessons Learned:** What did you (and/or other partners) learn from this situation that has helped inform and/or improve Programme (or other) interventions? |

**III. Other Assessments or Evaluations (if applicable) -** N/A

**IV. Programmatic Revisions (if applicable) -** N/A

**V. Resources (Optional) -** N/A

Annex

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**CALENDAR OF TRAININGS**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Group 1**  **Ro** | **Group 2**  **Ro** | **Group 3**  **Ru** |
| **Day 1** | **31 March**  Wednesday | **1 April**  Thursday | **2 April**  Friday |
| **Day 2** | **7 April**  Wednesday | **8 April**  Thursday | **9 April**  Friday |

ON-LINE TRAININGS ON ZOOM - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84587536037>

**ON-LINE TRAINING DAY 1**

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| **Time** | **Topic** | **Trainer** |
| 13:00 –  13:30 | Opening remarks   * **Lina Acalugaritei** – Programme Manager, ADA * **Dominika Stojanoska** – Country Representative, UN Women Moldova * **Bea Ferenci** - International Adviser on Human Rights/Head of OHCHR Moldova | Andrei Esanu, FFUPLM |
| 13:30 –  14:30 | * Introduction and Pre-test * Common misconceptions and myths about COVID-19 * What the COVID- 19 Virus is and how it spreads. | Andrei Esanu, FFUPLM  Jana Chihai, FFUPLM |
| 14:30 –  16:00 | * What are the symptoms of COVID-19 * Which steps should be taken in case of COVID-19 symptoms * Recommendations for compliance with the isolation regime * How COVID-19 affects health of vulnerable groups (older persons, people with disabilities etc.) * Relationship between the individual and public health | Andrei Esanu, FFUPLM  Jana Chihai, FFUPLM |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | * Efficient protection measures during COVID-19 pandemic for NGO Staff in the process of providing services to beneficiaries. * The correct way to put on and remove PPE and other rules related to the use of mask, including related to type of masks; * The correct way to perform hand hygiene according to the WHO-recommended method. * Social distancing/physical distancing. | Andrei Esanu, FFUPLM  Jana Chihai, FFUPLM |

**ONLINE TRAINING DAY 2**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Topic** | **Trainer** |
| 13:00 – 13:45 | * Impact of COVID – 19 on the health and social protection * Human rights during the COVID-19 pandemic – limitations and possible violations * Stigmatization and Discrimination of people with COVID-19 | OHCHR team |
| 13:45 – 15:15 | * Building resilience of beneficiaries to cope with the stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic * Recommendations for recovery after COVID-19 (memory, concentration, healthy thinking, food intake, voice and respiration) | Andrei Esanu, FFUPLM  Jana Chihai, FFUPLM |
| 15:15 – 16:15 | * Mental health and psycho-social support in covid 19 pandemic Anxiety and Depression * Burn-out syndrome, prevention | Andrei Esanu, FFUPLM  Jana Chihai, FFUPLM |
| 16:15 – 17:00 | * Vaccination questions and answers * Conclusions and post-test | WHO and UNICEF |

*The training sessions are organized by the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in Moldova, through the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund, in cooperation with UN Women Moldova and OHCHR Moldova, funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) with funds of Austrian Development Cooperation.*

1. ILO is launching a new project titled “Reactivating social dialogue for an effective Covid-19 response in Moldova and applying it to local job creation through Local Employment Partnerships”. One of the objectives of this project is synergetic and aligned to this initiative. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Impactul pandemiei Covid-19 asupra persoanelor cu dizabilități, Chișinău, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Efectele crizei provocate de pandemia Covid-19 asupra populației de etnie romă din republica moldova, Chișinău, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)