



PROJECT DOCUMENT

Republic of Moldova

Project Title: Enhancing democracy in Moldova through inclusive and transparent elections (phase II)

Project Outcome: Increase targeted citizen's in-depth awareness of electoral principles and procedures as well as increase the access to electoral process of persons with disabilities

UNDAF Outcome:

1. The people of Moldova, especially most vulnerable, demand and benefit from democratic, transparent and accountable governance, gender-sensitive, human rights- and evidence based public policies, equitable services, and efficient, effective and responsive public institutions

Expected CP Outputs:

1.2. Responsive, evidence-based, human rights and gender-mainstreamed policies and transparent, high integrity institutions;

1.4. Women and men, including from minority and marginalized groups, are enjoying rule of law and protection of human rights ensured by inclusive institutions

Implementing Partner: United Nations Development Programme

Management Arrangements: Direct Implementation Modality (DIM)

Project Number: Award 00094503, Output 00123086

Start Date: October 2021

End Date: March 2024

PAC Meeting date: N/A (project extension)

Brief Description

The overall objective of the project is to promote the democratic electoral culture, develop civic skills that will lead to competent and responsible participation of all social groups in elections.

Promotion of the democratic culture will be done through the increase the competence of voters and future voters on electoral rights and democratic processes so that the former is seen not as possibility but as a necessity in a democratic society.

The development of the civic skills will be done through the enrichment of electoral culture of various groups. The impact of the project will be measured sociological tools such as surveys, focus groups and tracking of case studies. It will also look at the ways of measuring behaviour change especially through the analysis of various aspects of the outcome of the local elections to take place in 2023.

As the project will bear a significant emphasis on electoral rights of underrepresented groups¹ amongst which persons with disabilities. It also intends to contribute to the development of a comprehensive report on the level of accessibility of polling station that would set the baseline for the work of public local authorities in reasonably accommodating the polling stations so that persons with various types of disabilities to increasingly engage in electoral processes. The assessment of the physical accessibility will be done on 1200 polling stations that remained unassessed after the similar process done in 2019². The assessment of the accessibility will also look

¹ In the context of the present project document the following societal groups will be considered as underrepresented: NEET Youth, rural inhabitants, Roma persons and other ethnic minorities, persons with different types of disabilities.

² In 2018 and 2019, 612 polling stations were assessed. Another cca 200 were evaluated by the NGOs Motivatie and Alianta INFONET

at the accessibility of the electoral information and other aspects of the electoral processes for persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities as well as for the persons with sensorial disabilities (hearing and vision impairments).

In the same stream of activities, the project will develop a guide on inclusion in electoral processes of persons with all types of disabilities. The guide will encompass a roadmap on the actions needed from various stakeholders starting from CEC and finishing with public local authorities on how through using human rights-based approach to various administrative processes mainstream inclusion in the electoral processes. Based on the assessment and the guide, a range of capacity building activities will take place.

In order to support the local public authorities in being able to plan and efficiently implement activities of reasonable accommodation of the polling stations, a range of capacity building activities will be implemented. The project will contribute to preparing people to become active and competent voters through building the capacities of the change agents to promote the idea of democratic culture. The change agents that the project will work with will be the university students and women and youth members of political parties as well as local public authorities.

CEC will be supported to engage in efficient communication activities targeting the public and contributing to the increase of level of knowledge and awareness about electoral process.

As one of the main actors in promoting the concept of democratic culture is the mass media the project will support the development of targeted mass media products oriented at analysing the topics related broadly to electoral processes and more narrowly to the participation of underrepresented groups at different stages of the electoral processes.

The intervention will also focus at developing and implementing the informative and outreach campaigns that will use inventive approaches such as organization of discussions and consultations with the electoral candidates for the upcoming local elections to mainstream rights of vulnerable groups (elderly people, persons with disabilities, ethnic groups), extracurricular activities for youth such as youth camps to contribute to increase in civic engagement amongst the target groups.

It will also target persons residing in rural areas and the youth that reside abroad persons of 18-35 years of age. Youth that reside abroad form an important part of the diaspora. Targeting them through the informative and awareness rising campaigns will contribute to a more active and responsible engagement of the diaspora in the processes that take place in the country, besides going to polling stations when the general Parliamentary elections take place. The youth will get more engaged in the democratic processes at the local level and participate in the public matters between the general elections cycles. Also, constantly informing them will help to a smoother social reintegration when they decide to return to the country.

Contributing Outcome:

UNDAF 2018-2022 Outcome 1
CPD 2018-2022 Output 1.2 and 1.4

Indicative Output(s) with gender marker: GEN2

Total resources required:	USD 1,711,709	
Total resources allocated:	UNDP TRAC:	N/A
	Donor:	USD 217,535
	UK GGF	USD 217,535 (equivalent of GBP 161,846)
	Government:	N/A
	In-Kind:	N/A
Unfunded:	USD 1,494,174	

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I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Supporting electoral integrity is part of UNDP's democratic governance assistance worldwide, aiding nations to build democratic frameworks to improve representation, accountability, and transparency for the benefit of citizens.

The Electoral Integrity is defined as "any election that is based on the democratic principles of universal suffrage and political equality as reflected in international standards and agreements, and is professional, impartial, and transparent in its preparation and administration throughout the electoral cycle"³.

It rests on a complex set of laws, regulations, perceptions and behaviour. Without electoral integrity, leaders and officials lack accountability to the public, confidence in the election results is weak, and the government lacks necessary legitimacy.

It is not enough to reform institutions; citizens need to be convinced that changes are real and deserve their confidence.

To ensure that elections have integrity, a credible electoral administration as well as other factors outside of the electoral institutions need to be considered and strengthened. And even though electoral integrity alone will not bring about democratic transition, it is a key building block of any democratic system.

UNDP has a long-standing partnership with the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) aiming at advancing the democratic electoral processes in Moldova by consolidating the transparency and efficiency of elections' management, modernization of electoral IT solutions and enhancing the inclusiveness and participation of voters.

This partnership, which spans over 10 years, resulted in the establishment of strong professional institutions, development of a modern State Automated Information System "Elections" (SAISE), the enhancement of the State Register of Voters' accuracy and the design and implementation of effective long-term civic and voter education instruments.

Throughout the last electoral cycles, CEC and CCET demonstrated a high level of capacity implementing unplanned 2016 Presidential Elections and adjusting the electoral system to a mixed one for the 2019 Parliamentary Elections in a very short period of time.

During the 2020 Presidential Election and the 2021 ad hoc Parliamentary Election CEC and CCET have also operated efficiently and ensured the roll out of mostly fair elections.

Despite the challenges and persistent financial limitations faced by the institutions, including due to the continuous UNDP's support the CEC and the CCET delivered "well administered elections" as attested by OSCE/ODIHR Observation Missions last in the 2021 Parliamentary Election. According to the preliminary findings of the International Election Observation Mission after the snap elections of 11 July 2021⁴ "The technical preparations for the[se] early elections were managed efficiently, respecting the legal deadlines. Despite the concern that the budget requested by the Central Election Commission (CEC) for these elections was only partly granted by the government, this did not appear to affect the overall operation of the election administration. The election administration enjoyed trust of the election stakeholders in their technical abilities.

The data from the Post electoral Opinion Survey after the Presidential elections in 2020⁵ has shown that the spontaneous awareness of the CEC has improved by 15% since the previous surveys and reached 69%. The spontaneous awareness was higher among respondents with a high level of education (88%),

³ See: https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/ei/explore_topic_new

⁴ See: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/4/0/492601.pdf>

⁵ Available in English at: https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/library/effective_governance/alegerile-prezideniale-2020--sondaj-de-opinie-post-electoral.html

those with a medium level of income (68%), urban residents (74%), residents of Chisinau (79%), those who have been exposed to the civic education campaign (74% as opposed to 43% of the respondents not exposed to the campaign) and those who voted (71% as opposed to 53% of those who did not vote).

The level of confidence in the professionalism of the CEC staff was higher among women (58%), representatives of the ethnic majority (56%), residents of all regions (58% - excepting Chisinau with 48%), and those who voted in the elections (56% as opposed to 45% who did not vote). The exposure to the civic education campaign has influenced positively the level of confidence in the professionalism (58% vs. 41%) and transparency of the CEC activities (55% vs. 37%).⁶

The figures point out that those persons who have access to the information about the elections such as representatives of the ethnic majority, persons living in urban areas, persons with higher education, those who were exposed to information campaigns are more satisfied with the electoral process and have more trust in the institutions that organize the suffrage and therefore have more trust in democratic processes.

In the same manner as the civic education campaign has changed the perceptions of the population over the elections administrative bodies, the information/education campaigns envisaged in the present project will change the perceptions over the electoral processes, its importance and will contribute to a more conscious and responsible voting.

During previous electoral cycles accusations of fraud became loud during various stages of the electoral process, like the updating of the voter register or the critical reporting on and oversight over political party and campaign financing.

Additionally, the overall low trust of men and women in Moldova in public institutions spills over to the CEC with a detrimental impact on the credibility of the electoral administration and the integrity of the electoral process⁷, whereby not the performance of the CEC is the challenge. The challenge lies deeper at how the CEC is embedded within the democratic structures and how it is perceived and understood by society and electoral stakeholders.

The first pillar of electoral integrity, a credible electoral administration, resting on governance processes, such as openness and transparency as well as engagement with political stakeholders and a demonstrated level of procedural independence of the electoral bodies with respect to personnel, budget and decision-making processes has been developed in the last decade and became, despite remaining areas for improvement, like outward communication and transparency, a well-functioning administrative body, attested by international observers.

While Moldova has achieved a good electoral administration capacity, as attested by the OSCE in several mission reports⁸, a broad understanding of electoral issues and processes among voters remains a challenge.

The public confidence in the process, which constitutes the second pillar of electoral integrity, still needs to build up within a constantly changing and very challenging electoral environment, especially following the changes in electoral campaign behaviour due to the pandemic situation.

According to the Public Opinion Barometer data from February 2021, 75,1% of the respondents consider that Moldova is not Governed by the will of its people. On the other hand, the same opinion Barometer has shown that 61,7% of the respondents the elections in the country are not free and fair.⁹ In a similar survey undertaken in June 2021, 58,2% of the respondents declared that they have no or little trust in the

⁶ Ibid

⁷ The last Public Opinion Barometer that has data on CEC is the one from October 2020. The one from February 2021 has no data on the CEC. The data shows that 42,4% of the respondents had no trust at all in the CEC.

⁸ The reports available in English, Russian and Romanian at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/488497>

⁹ SEE the Public Opinion Barometer available in Romanian at: <http://bop.ipp.md/>

fact that people like them can influence the important decisions that are being taken at the community level. 65,7% declared that they believe they can have a limited influence or no influence at all in the decision - making process at the national level.¹⁰

The lack of trust in democratic processes may be several causes, but one of them is the fact that citizens worldwide, in addition to the lack of information, are facing the challenge of media manipulation through a variety of techniques, such as fake news, populist assertions, propaganda, etc.

These pervasive problems are also present in Moldova, where the electoral processes are prone to misinformation in the interest of different political players that often leads to a lack of trust in the electoral process.

As addressing the practice of misinformation and disinformation around electoral processes is still in its infant stages and the digital environment is changing at a speed that is very difficult to be met by public institutions to counter developments it is important to prepare the addressee of such fraudulent behaviour, the citizen/voter.

While it will not be possible to train citizens on determining if information is misleading or even fake, it is vitally important to support citizens' ability to assess information enabling the men and women to have an informed opinion.

Being fully aware of the electoral and democratic processes as well as the mechanisms will help the citizens to individually form an opinion as well as to establish a public knowledge base in support of critical public discussion for example around electoral reform.

To archive this objective and ultimately electoral integrity it is important to enhance the inclusivity of the process to allow all citizens to become part of the public knowledge base irrespective of their background. It is important that citizens of all ages, sex, social and disability background have the possibility to access information and form an opinion.

Only when all citizens are well informed, enabled to have an informed opinion and hold institutions accountable, public confidence in the electoral administration can be nurtured.

The currently overall low capacity of a large group of citizens to understand the electoral process is strong hindrances for public trust in elections a key ingredient for electoral integrity.

The hypothesis is that persons from rural areas, persons with low level of education among which NEET youth, persons belonging to minority ethnic groups (Roma persons and persons of Gagauz, Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian ethnicity), persons with disabilities (especially those with intellectual disabilities) have more limited access to information and are more prone to manipulation and miss information. Therefore, they need to be exposed to the right information in an accessible manner.

Building public confidence is a long road starting from raising awareness around electoral issues, training young adults as well as pupils to inform marginalized and disadvantages groups as the EDMITE project continuously did in the last electoral cycles.

Based on the analysis of the lessons learned through previous interventions in elections area, as well as on the recommendations supplied through independent evaluations, the following area has been identified as a critical intervention point to advance in ensuring the integrity, of the electoral process:

Continue an upscaled civic and voter education to enhance citizens' knowledge of electoral and wider democratic processes and to strengthen their ability to hold the responsible institutions to account.

¹⁰ See full report at: https://ipp.md/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Raport-BOP-2021_.pdf

The project will, building on the effective methods during 2017-2019, continue civic and voter education. This final phase will support the consolidation of the CCET towards becoming a self-sustainable institution delivering targeted civic education programmes.

The project will use three avenues to consolidate the gains of previous phases expanding and consolidating the work with networks of teachers from 80 schools and hundreds of librarians building on the MoU that the CCET has with the Ministry of Education and Research and will pilot the institutionalization of the civic education programmes in the University curriculum to and build up an in country academic base around democratic and electoral issues. This intervention will further foster public debate as well as lead on new ideas around electoral process and procedures in Moldova through the enhancement of knowledge of women and youth as the agents of change in spurring the conscious and responsible engagement of other is electoral processes.

Institutionalizing civic and voter education as well as supplying information throughout the electoral cycle in various forms will allow citizens to understand the electoral and democratic process gradually and continuously and incrementally use their new knowledge enhancing public trust in the electoral process in Moldova fostering long term electoral integrity.

The project will develop targeted information and awareness raising campaigns, stimulate mass – media discussions on electoral issues and support CEC in enhancing its communication. As the level of competences gained by pupils in schools is lower than the average in the region with considerable discrepancies in competences between urban and rural inhabitants¹¹. And because not all citizens attend University (NEET youth, poor persons) or have a limited access to information (marginalized, vulnerable, and underrepresented (women) groups), it is important to maintain a variety of channels for information. Nationwide information campaigns will be implemented to target specifically those groups that are less likely to possess the necessary information to engage in responsible and conscious way in the electoral processes.

Finally, the project will support the process of ensuring the inclusiveness of the electoral processes through generating data on accessibility and building capacities of state authorities especially the local public authorities to mainstream accessibility into their decision-making process.

The Project outcome will be the development of in-depth understanding and awareness of the citizens on electoral principles and procedures. In terms of the impact, the project will lead to building competent and responsible participation of all the existing social groups in elections.

The project will focus on:

- a) Enhancing the knowledge and raise awareness about the electoral processes of “agents of change” within society such as University students and women and youth members of political parties. The University students will be targeted through piloting the institutionalization of the civic and electoral education programmes and University curriculum. This will spur the academic knowledge base and foster public debate on democratic processes as well as specifically electoral processes. The women and youth “wings” of political parties will be trained on electoral processes as part of consolidated training programmes.
- b) Designing and implementing targeted communication and outreach campaigns focused on those representing the most vulnerable groups, since for achieving electoral integrity and inclusiveness it is important that citizens with voting rights of all ages, sex, social and educational background have the possibility to cast their vote more consciously.

¹¹ See the PISA study of 2018 available at: https://ance.gov.md/sites/default/files/raport_pisa2018.pdf

- c) Supporting the CEC in enhancing its communication strategies during and between elections so that the inward and outward communication of the CEC contributes to the improvement in the transparency of the decision making in the institution.
- d) Contributing to the enhancement of the inclusiveness of the electoral process through the building of the informational and knowledge base triggers for LPAs to undertake measures and make polling stations accessible for persons with all types of disabilities.

II. STRATEGY

Targeting key groups to lead public discussions and enhancing the inclusivity of the process - foster democratic thinking and behaviour

UNDP has longstanding collaboration with the CEC and the CCET in designing and delivering capacity building programmes and information campaigns in the field of electoral process. For the current stage of the process, in order to upscale the interventions the capacity building activities as well as the outreach and communication campaigns will have a strong focus on key influential groups, like students and the participation of persons belonging to the most vulnerable groups in the democratic processes.

After building up a basic knowledge base among society groups through previous interventions the project will now expand this knowledge base through target civic education programs and foster the next step in building democratic process in Moldova – stimulating and initiating dialogue among citizens and between citizens and institutions using intermediate agents of change like University students, women and youth members of political parties, public local authorities as multipliers.

Also, this next step will put an emphasis on active participation of vulnerable groups. Building on the first phase of presenting and distribution basic information to vulnerable citizens and creating stable networks the next step in this project will be to include the citizens of those groups to actively design information to close knowledge gaps and improve the presentation of information. Therefore, the social factors for behaviour change are enabled among person belonging to vulnerable groups but also the general population.

The messages presented through all channels will have a strong civil and human rights-based approach component and will be oriented at empowering the rights holders to claim and exercise their civil and political rights. This intervention will influence the beliefs of the rights holders, will improve their knowledge, and build their skills to allow personal factors to lead to behaviour change.

The activities oriented at supporting the needs of persons with various types of disabilities as well as the assessment of the accessibility of the informational landscape will contribute to the change in the environmental factors that will lead to further behaviour change in what concerns the inclusiveness of the electoral processes in the country.

The Theory of Change of the project is that

if the general population and persons from vulnerable groups have a strengthened knowledge on human rights, democratic processes, civic engagement (with a special focus on inclusion and participation of those most vulnerable)

and

and the communication and outreach campaigns are targeted on specific groups and are built on the collaboration with the potential agents of change

and if the environment for the voting process becomes more inclusive

then

the rights holders, including those from most vulnerable groups, will be better prepared to engage in democratic processes and will hold accountable authorities.

because

the rights holders will have a right understanding of the potential for changing their lives of the engagement in electoral processes and participation in general. And the environment for the exercise of the civil and political rights, in particular the right to vote will allow for inclusive electoral process.

III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Expected results

- Broadened the public knowledge base on democratic and electoral issues by building on existing achievements upscaling civic education efforts and utilizing intermediate agents of change like University students, women and youth members of political parties, public local authorities.
- Enhanced public awareness around democratic and electoral processes by bringing electoral issues on the agenda for ongoing public discussions and improving the Communication Strategy of the CEC. The awareness rising and information campaigns having a special focus on the inclusion in the electoral processes of the underrepresented groups.
- Enhanced electoral inclusivity by actively engaging vulnerable groups in developing and delivering information creating a new public understanding and human right oriented behaviour towards these groups.

All three results will support electoral integrity within the electoral environment complimenting the already well functioning Election Administration side.

The above results will be achieved through the following outputs and activities:

Output 1. Agents of change such as University students, youth¹² and women members of political parties have their knowledge broadened on democratic and electoral processes.

The ability of the citizens to engage in electoral process depend consciously and responsibly to a great extent on the level of knowledge and expertise of the so called “agents of change” in this matter. Therefore, youth and women members of political parties are the ones that participate in electoral campaigns and they might play an important role in contributing to enhance the knowledge of the voters on electoral processes.

Also, as youth form more than 31% of the electorate in the country and the ones that are socially active are also University students, they have also the potential to bring the change and contribute to the broadening of the knowledge and raising awareness of the society.

The electoral education is meant to prepare the voters on electoral matters, which are appropriate for the new socio-political processes aiming at:

- ✓ enhance voters’ democratic culture;
- ✓ ensure their active and informed participation in electoral campaigns;

¹²The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

- ✓ increase their confidence in the electoral system and in elections;
- ✓ use the available opportunities to engage them in the electoral process as electoral officials or as electoral candidates.

The nature, course and outcomes of electoral events depend on the voters' electoral culture, which builds the frame and preliminary conditions in order to shape and develop the institutions of elective democracy.

It is necessary to distinguish amongst "*Voter Awareness Raising*", "*Electoral Education/Voter Education*" and "*Civic Education*". Certainly, each term has its place in a continuous range of educational activities to support elections and democracy, having supplemented one another. Awareness raising is an exercise limited to an event, a process or a phenomenon. Awareness-raising campaigns are recognised as efficient and effective means of communicating information especially to the general public. Awareness raising activities being limited in time, tools and subjects tackled have to be replicated for long period of time to bring sustainable results. As per the Voters' Awareness Raising, it is even more limited in tools and timeframe. First, it needs to correspond to the limitations established by the Electoral Code in terms of subjects that implement those campaigns. Second, they are usually implemented before rounds of elections. Therefore, there is a strict timeframe in which they have to happen.

Civic Education is a large notion that encompasses education programmes that aim at forming **committed and responsible** citizens, who can undertake the general human values that are important for a democratic society, having known, appraised and promoted their cultural identity, are **active, aware and committed citizens**, who contribute efficiently to the society development and prosperity.

Civic Education develops civic culture in pupils, and this culture has been founded on values and principles of democracy, having the power to unite people in a society that is driven by civic duties, commitment and, likewise, to make the Government accountable for the ideals of democracy.

Civic Education is an ongoing process, which is carried out independently from the electoral cycle. Nonetheless, awareness raising and electoral education of voters may be part of larger civic education endeavours, which are carried out through the school and university systems, civil society organisations and, possible, Government agencies, although not necessarily through the electoral authority.

Electoral education/Voter Education is a narrower term that *in the broad sense*, means an array of systemic actions concerning the dissemination of information, materials and programmes in order to raise awareness and develop, in a conscientious manner, the voters, having emphasized the role, importance and specificity of the voting process. This type of education shows the advantages and impact of a certain electoral system and is often made by comparison. Concurrently, it approaches the motivation, preparation of voters to fully participate in elections. It also covers the sharing of "elections related experience, electoral culture, systemic and conscious influence of intellectual and moral development concerning elections, a range of measures applied regularly in order to shape a conscious electoral behaviour."¹³

In this component of the project, the focus will be put on the "*Electoral Education/Voter Education*" of youth, including those that are University students and youth and women members of the political parties.

As the elections are a complex, multi-stakeholder process, the communication, awareness raising as well as the capacity building activities should target the "influential elements" of the society.

Academia and political parties must have a deep understanding of the electoral process so that they can contribute to the improvement of the trust in democratic processes and the informed and conscious

¹³ Central Electoral Commission. *Study to analyse the needs for raising electoral awareness and education of voters appropriate for the target group*. Chisinau, 2014, p. 5.

http://old.cec.md/files/files/studii_analiza/studiu%20ed%20electorala%20final.pdf (Accessed on: 12.05.21)

electoral behaviour. Elections are often understood as a stand-alone event and not as the key democratic activity in a country. The matters of representation, inclusiveness, human rights are not seen as part of the elections processes or as important factors for democratic processes.

Through the capacity building of the “agents of change” it is expected to reach a greater understanding of those processes of the population with particular focus on inclusiveness of electoral process.

Activities:

1.1. Assess the current University educational programmes in three Universities on the incorporation of Electoral Education curricula or mainstreaming of the elements of the Electoral Education in existing University educational programmes. Design and pilot a university curriculum/revise the existing programmes in three universities/faculties located in the South, Centre and North of the country;

1.2. Deliver training and awareness raising activities to enhance the knowledge on electoral processes of political parties’ youth and women’s wings on civil and political rights of the most vulnerable especially persons with disabilities, Roma people, youth and women especially residing in rural areas (e.g. “National Youth Forum on Inclusive Elections” and “Women for Inclusive Elections” Programmes);

Output 2. The level of knowledge and awareness of the public is enhanced around democratic and electoral processes by bringing electoral issues on the agenda for ongoing public discussions and improving the Communication Strategy of the CEC.

In order to be able to consciously and responsibly engage in electoral processes the public has to be continuously exposed to the right information about those processes. In the era of technology, when the information flow is practically uncontrollable and when manipulation and misinformation are part of the daily life, the most realistic way of fighting that phenomenon is to expose people to alternative information. To build the critical mass of information that will reach the public and educate them the information and outreach campaigns have to follow the same path as the miss information and manipulation. The campaigns must be targeted at the specific public, have to follow the consumer and be spread through the appropriate information channels in a language that the consumer speaks.

Inequalities affect each society and its manifesting itself including at the level of access to information. Therefore, communication targeted at each of the underrepresented groups is needed so that the discrepancy in accessing the information is removed. The inequalities in having access to the information can be determined by several factors. First, the limited outreach of “agents of change” of influential groups to the groups left aside from the information stream. Second, limited access to IT technologies, gadgets or even internet bandwidth. Third, special needs in accessing and understanding specific groups.

The awareness rising activities should be focused on critical aspects for achieving inclusive democratic processes. They need to involve a variety of actors and have the mass-media involved. The development of the information campaigns has to be preceded by collection of data to understand the level of knowledge and the existing gaps in the awareness and knowledge of the public.

Another important aspect is to make sure the voices of those most vulnerable are being heard. Therefore, the project will be aiming at organizing local consultation at the level of rayons of the electoral contestants with the representatives of the vulnerable groups. This leading to a greater incorporation of the needs of vulnerable groups in the local political agendas.

The state authorities’ communication should be an intrinsic part of the overall communication and awareness rising campaigns. As the trust in the state authorities has a direct impact on the level of conscious engagement in democratic processes, the way CEC is communicating within and between the electoral cycles is of paramount importance.

Activities:

- 2.1. Conduct, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, and local authorities a nationwide outreach campaign targeting vulnerable and marginalized groups of Moldovan citizens through social engagement mechanisms (e.g. local level consultations on vulnerable groups in the context of local elections, awareness raising campaigns, Inclusive Camps for youth from vulnerable groups, etc.);
- 2.2. Conduct, in partnership with the CEC, CCET and public local authorities, a nationwide outreach campaign targeting remote and small rural areas (e.g. “Elections on Road” campaign);
- 2.3. Design and conduct, in partnership with the Diaspora Relations Bureau, a dedicated civic engagement campaign targeting pro-active youth currently residing abroad;
- 2.4. Conduct, in partnership with independent media, a national TV show/ media project on electoral and democratic processes, with topic-based discussions by national and international experts/ influencers.
- 2.5. Provide international expertise, conduct an institutional assessment, and develop a roadmap for the enhancement of the CEC’s communication and public relations during and between elections.
- 2.6. Provide expertise and support for the implementation of the CEC Communication Strategy 2020 – 2023, with a particular focus on the transparency of the decision-making process.

Output 3. The physical and informational accessibility of the electoral process is enhanced

In the Republic of Moldova, it is estimated that 177 thousand persons have different types of disabilities. This means that 6,7% of the population of the Republic of Moldova are persons having one or more types of disabilities. More women have disabilities than men (51,7%) and the majority of persons with disabilities reside in the rural areas (57%)¹⁴.

Persons with disabilities face a range of barriers most of them linked to the accessibility of physical spaces and information. Persons with limited mobility, amongst whom are not only persons with disabilities, but also older persons should make effort to be able to move from one locality to another and even within the place they live. The limited mobility and the inaccessible information about democratic processes in general are jeopardising the inclusiveness of those processes

The issue of inclusion in political and electoral processes, especially of persons with different types of disabilities was a matter of concern for the Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities when it revised the record of the implementation of CRPD by the Republic of Moldova. In its Concluding Observations, the Committee has underscored that it is particularly concerned the fact that electoral processes, facilities and materials are not accessible. Also, the Committee noted that the rates of representation and participation of persons with disabilities in political life and public decision –making are extremely low.¹⁵

This situation goes against the principles of the democratic state. In a democracy in true spirit of universal adult suffrage, every vote matter, every vote count and all citizens should be able to participate in the general political process for which insufficient access to buildings is often the first hurdle.

The CEC already passed a Regulation on the accessibility of the electoral process (2016) and offers a variety of specified access points by providing braille ballots and sign language in all activities. The access

¹⁴ <https://statistica.gov.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=6827&parent=0>

¹⁵ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Concluding observations on the initial report of the Republic of Moldova (2017), available at:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fMDA%2fCO%2f1&Lang=en

to the polling sites though remains a serious issue, as last seen during the Presidential Elections in November 2020. The access to polling stations still needs to be addressed further during the upcoming electoral cycles.

At the same time, the physical accessibility of the polling stations is not the only aspect related to the needs of persons with disabilities. The aspects related to the needs of persons with visual impairments, hearing impairments and intellectual and psychosocial disabilities are also important.

Not only voting process is a matter of concern in securing the inclusiveness of the electoral processes. Political debates and discussions important to influence a situation and form an opinion, often taken place in public buildings, where access of persons with disabilities is limited. The focus on the election process is important yet needs to be expanded to provide full access also to the political debates.

The access to public buildings is a symptomatic sign on the issues around the implementation of accessibility principles and human rights. Citizens as well as authorities need to be made aware of these principles to foster human rights based political and electoral inclusion and therefore the integrity of the electoral process in Moldova.

Despite the apparent self-evident character of the lack of accessibility of polling stations the awareness about the issues, among public local authorities is low. For instance, before participating in the user safari of the polling station form his town Leova, the mayor was not aware that this can be a problematic aspect of public administration¹⁶. Local public authorities have preconceptions about what accessibility means and believe that if there is a ramp at the entrance of the building, the building is already accessible. In this context, the assessment of the accessibility of the polling stations with the direct involvement of the representatives of the public local authorities is a powerful advocacy tool to initiate the process of making accessibility a priority at the local level.

At the same time, the assessment of the accessibility of the polling stations is not a standalone process it is only the initial part of the advocacy endeavours to make sure the accessibility becomes part of the local public agenda. Therefore, after the issuance of the report on the level of accessibility of the polling stations in the given locality, the contracted NGO is to provide recommendations to the LPAs as per the accessibilities of the premises. The process serves as well as a local awareness rising tool as the exercise of assessing the accessibility is not made in an isolated way but with the involvement of persons with disabilities form the respective locality.

Based on the assessment of the accessibility of polling stations, CSOs will initiate consultations and capacity building activities at the local level on ways and means to ensure the accessibility.

The capacity building process will then be continued at more central level, through the involvement of experts and CICDE in the field of public budgeting responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities.

As the premises for polling stations are not under the jurisdiction of the CEC, it is important to engage with the relevant authorities to further foster the inclusiveness of the electoral and generally the political process as an integral part to achieve electoral integrity.

Aiming at building the capacities of the local public authorities on how to mainstream rights of persons with disabilities in their decision making including in decisions related to support the electoral processes a Guide on inclusive decision making on local level as well as human rights based local budgeting will be developed.

Activities:

¹⁶ See the video material at: <https://www.facebook.com/PNUDMoldova/posts/4110321472370963>

3.1. Assess the accessibility of public buildings that host polling stations during elections, (1200 additional venues, as a follow-up to the 2019 National Accessibility Study of Polling Stations and related awareness raising campaigns);

3.2. Support the development of the Guide for Social Inclusion of people with all types of disabilities in public processes, including in the electoral process (for LPAs and central public authorities), in the context of the electoral and human rights-based processes.

3.3. Support the cooperation between selected LPAs and local CSOs in applying a human rights-based approach to budgeting and consultation processes at the local level;

Partnerships

UNDP will partner with NGO Motivație and NGO Alianța INFONET to implement the activities under output 3 related to the enhancement of the physical and informational accessibility of the electoral process. The partnership will be formalised through the Responsible Party¹⁷ modality. UNDP will sign Standard responsible Party Agreements¹⁸ with Motivație and Alianța INFONET, where UNDP will act as implementing partner under this project and Motivație and INFONET will act as responsible parties to carry out substantive development activities assigned under the output 3 of the project. Resources will be transferred to the responsible Parties using the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT)¹⁹.

Alianța INFONET NGO is a well-known organisation that has extensive experience in assessing the accessibility of various locations, including the polling stations. The assessment of the accessibility of the polling stations done over the years was done by INFONET based on a unified methodology and reports on the accessibility were issued by the organisation.

Motivație NGO is the organisation best positioned to undertake advocacy related actions to promote the accessibility of the electoral processes including through drafting and using the guide on accessibility for local authorities that will be developed as part of the output 3 of the project.

Risks and Assumptions

- Required financial and human resources are in place.
- Beneficiary institutions remain open to capacity building initiatives and willing/available to participate in the project initiatives.
- The new composition of the CEC is keen to collaborate and engage in the implementation process.
- CCET has the capacities and resources to engage in the implementation process.
- Public local authorities are interested in consolidating their capacities in fulfilling the rights of persons with disabilities and contribute to the inclusiveness of electoral process.

¹⁷ As per UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POP) on selecting Responsible Parties and Grantees, https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PPM_Design_Select%20Responsible%20Party%20and%20Grantees.docx&action=default

¹⁸

[https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Innovation_CSO%20engagement%20and%20E-tendering_CSO%20Responsible%20Party%20Agreement%20\(LSO%2020150714\).docx&action=default](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Innovation_CSO%20engagement%20and%20E-tendering_CSO%20Responsible%20Party%20Agreement%20(LSO%2020150714).docx&action=default)

¹⁹

[https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/FRM_Financial%20Management%20and%20Implementation%20Modalities%20_Harmonized%20Approach%20to%20Cash%20Transfers%20\(HACT\).docx&action=default](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/FRM_Financial%20Management%20and%20Implementation%20Modalities%20_Harmonized%20Approach%20to%20Cash%20Transfers%20(HACT).docx&action=default)

- Citizens are open to learning about the election process and their role as voters.
- Women and youth wings of political parties are ready to engage in capacity building activities.
- The universities are open to collaborate with the project and adapt their educational curricula.
- The mass media is interested to work on innovative approaches in delivering communication and education campaigns on electoral issues.

The main risks are:

- Delays in delegating the new competence of the CEC.
- Resistance of the universities in making changes in their educational programmes.
- Reluctance of the target groups towards awareness-raising and electoral education activities.

The detailed **Risk Register** is in the Annex 3.

Stakeholder Engagement

The project was developed through direct consultations with the donor. The draft of the project document will be consulted with the relevant staff of the CEC and the CCET. Consultations will also take place with the new leadership of the CEC, representatives of civil society and CSOs working in the field of rights of persons with disabilities. Consultations will take place with the academia on the curricula for civic education and democratic and electoral processes. As well as with the Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Labor and Social Protection before developing the concepts of the communication campaigns.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC)

The project will promote the exchange of experience and good practices between the academia, mass media and political parties and similar stakeholders in the region and beyond. Thematic seminars and capacity building workshops organized by the project will facilitate the presentation of international experiences, good practices and lessons learned.

Knowledge

The project will support the development of the institutionalized University curricula on Electoral/Voters education. Before starting to work on the curricula, an assessment of the current educational programmes in the selected Universities will be undertaken to inform the decision on the way the curricula shall be incorporated in the broader educational programmes. Both these products will be shared with the Ministry of Education and Research and University boards. The products will also be consulted with the relevant CSOs.

Also, as part of the project a training curriculum for women and youth members of political parties will be developed and used during the trainings. The products form the other two components of the project, related to the information and awareness raising campaigns and the ones on ensuring accessibility will also be used as models for other interventions of UNDP, CEC and CCET. The knowledge materials will be shared with other UN agencies to inform their interventions in the field of inclusion, equality and local government human rights decision making.

Sustainability and Scaling Up

The sustainability of all project interventions will be ensured through the close collaboration with relevant state authorities. The University curricula on Electoral/Voters education after being piloted in three Universities is expected to become integral part of the educational programme in those Universities and potentially other institutions. The training programmes for women and youth will be institutionalized by the CCET. Information and awareness rising campaigns targeting the underrepresented groups as they will be designed in an informed manner will be possible to be replicated by the CEC in future election cycles and between elections as well. Finally, the interventions related to the accessibility of the electoral process will have a strong capacity building component for the local public authorities to be able to undertake decisions including the budgeting at the local level in a human rights-based approach compliant manner. Those capacities will not be only beneficial for the fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities but also for other underrepresented groups.

Human rights and gender equality

The intervention will follow the **Human Rights Based Approach**. Guided by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/141 that is promoting the protection of all human rights for all, the project will have a strong human rights mainstreaming. The action will emphasize the responsibility of the duty bearers to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and cooperate with international human rights mechanisms. An equally important consideration will be given to ensuring that rights-holders are capacitated to know and claim their rights. It would also seek to advance **gender equality**, by mainstreaming gender concerns within the project, targeting specifically women beneficiaries, collecting and monitoring sex-disaggregated data. Women will be proportionally represented in the activities of the project while the monitoring and evaluation of the project will also look at the results and impact of the project on women.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

The project aims to be cost-effective and achieve maximum results with available resources by building synergies with other projects implemented by UN agencies and development partners. The project will deliver sustainable results that will be possible to be replicated in subsequent similar interventions. The project will use regional and global expertise in project development and implementation; using global tools and other knowledge products developed by the Executing UN Agencies and accessing information on the implementation of similar projects to achieve a greater impact.

Value for Money

Besides UNDP's project management principles based on the delivery of results and support change in a cost-effective manner, UNDP will use its positioning and neutrality to leverage important development change with relatively modest resources.

The project team will be guided by the principles of Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity in ensuring Value for Money of the implementation process.

To contribute to the Economy of the interventions the project will look for opportunities to build on the results achieved in the previous phase of the project. It will also look at using the cost-saving Long-Term Agreements with certain categories of service/goods providers available for UNDP and UN Country Team agencies due to existing arrangements within the UNDP Moldova Country Office.

The Efficiency will be ensured through the maximum possible mobilisation of beneficiaries so that the impact of the interventions is sizable.

The Effectiveness will be ensured through following the exact path of actions that was planned initially within the project without major reallocations.

The Equity principle will be ensured through giving consideration to the intersectionality for the parts of the project that involve the underrepresented groups.

Project Management

Execution of the Project

UNDP, as the Project Lead Agency, shall be responsible for the overall management and administration of the Project, primarily regarding the responsibility for the achievement of the outputs and the stated outcome. The Project activities will be implemented by the Project Team. UNDP will be accountable to the Project Steering Committee for the use of Project resources. UNDP will ensure that communication, consultations and review discussions with stakeholders are held on an ongoing basis. During the Project implementation, synergies and linkages with other ongoing projects, in the areas of democratic governance, gender and human rights implemented by UN agencies will be maintained and strengthened.

The Project Team will monitor the progress towards the Project's objectives and will report to UNDP and to the Donor accordingly. UNDP will delegate the managerial duties for the day-to-day running of the Project to the Project Manager, selected through a competitive and transparent selection process by a selection panel composed by representatives UNDP. The Project Manager has the authority to run the Project on a day-to-day basis on behalf and within the constraints laid down by the Project Steering Committee. The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the Project. The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the Project produces the results specified in the Project Document within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager will be in charge for preparing progress and final reports to be submitted to the Steering Committee and to the Donor. The Project Manager is responsible for the implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation framework. The Project Manager will report directly to the UNDP Effective Governance Cluster Lead.

Organizational, administrative, procurement, financial and other related issues will be provided by UNDP Moldova through Project Associate, as well as by the relevant Units (Operations, Human Resources, Procurement, IT, Finance) at the UNDP Country Office.

Detailed descriptions of duties of the Project Manager and the Project Associate shall be reflected in their Terms of References.

Learning management

The Project team will make sure the lessons learned from the implementation process are acknowledged, recorded and brought to the attention of the Country Office team.

The Project implementation team will have quarterly meeting with the supervisor operating in the Country office to discuss the ad hoc risks, mitigation measures as well as the lessons learned in the last period of time.

The quarterly and annual reports will contain a separate section on lessons learned in the implementation process.

Project Quality Assurance

The Project quality assurance is provided by UNDP Effective Governance Cluster Lead and the Programme Associate. Quality assurance on implementing a Project is conducted to achieve Project outputs as defined in the Project Document/Annual Work Plan through implementation and monitoring. The Project Team will support the Cluster Lead and the Programme Associate by carrying out objective and independent Project oversight and monitoring functions. The Project Team ensures appropriate Project management milestones are managed and completed. The Project Team conducts meetings with stakeholders and targeted institutions to ensure the Project is on track, in line with strategic priorities and takes in to account emerging needs.

Audit arrangements

The Project is subject to the standard UNDP audit arrangements. Being a subsidiary organ of the UN General Assembly and fully a part of the United Nations, UNDP enjoys a special status deriving from the UN Charter, the general legal framework of the UN, including the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the organization pursuant to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the UN adopted by the General Assembly in 1946. In accordance with this status, audits of UNDP are guided by the 'single audit' principle. Under that principle, any review by any external authority, including any governmental authority, is precluded under regulation 7.6 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, which provides that "the Board of Auditors shall be completely independent and solely responsible for the conduct of audit." This principle was reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/272: "The General Assembly [...] 11. Reaffirms the role of the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit as external oversight bodies, and, in this regard, affirms that any external review, audit, inspection, monitoring, evaluation or investigation of the Office can be undertaken only by such bodies or those mandated to do so by the General Assembly".

Financial management

Financial management of the project will be conducted under UNDP Financial Regulation and Rules (FRR). FRR are regulations that govern the financial management of the United Nations Development Programme and shall apply to all resources administered by UNDP and to all the Funds and Programmes administered by the Administrator. They ensure acceptable levels of controls, as well as separation of duties. The new FRR are issued effective 1 January 2012 and govern the broad financial management of UNDP and the funds administered by UNDP, including the budgeting and accounting of resources. They have been updated to reflect the adoption of IPSAS and its terminology; and the revised harmonized cost classifications of the Joint report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF on the road map to an integrated budget. Financial reporting mechanisms for the Project will follow UNDP rules and procedures and will comply with the reporting requirements of the Donor.

Anti-corruption

UNDP applies the UN Convention against Corruption and strictly follows the UNDP Policy of Fraud and Other Corrupt Practices at the country level. UNDP will provide mandatory capacity building for project staff and personnel to ensure compliance with the UNDP M&E Rules and Regulations, including on anti-corruption. The last internal audit of UNDP Country Office in Moldova (2018), has been satisfactory and there were no corruption cases identified at UNDP Moldova.

All Project staff will undertake the UNDP mandatory training courses on anti-corruption and on ethics during the project inception phase.

Accountability of managers at the country level is prescribed in UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP) and the Internal Control Framework (ICF).

Intellectual property rights and use of logo

Project materials, publications, print or digital deliverables will be branded by the relevant partner agencies logo and typography (subject to corporate brand-book) and donors logo. All intellectual products produced under the Project will be equipped with a standard UN intellectual property right disclaimer and, at discretion and agreement with donors may be placed into creative commons.

V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

See attached as Annex 5.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans:

Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Cost (if any)
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Quarterly, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.	Project Management and Quality Assurance costs
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Quarterly	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.	Project Management and Quality Assurance costs
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.	Project Management and Quality Assurance costs

	partners and integrated back into the project.			Assurance costs
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.	Project Management and Quality Assurance costs
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.	Project Management and Quality Assurance costs Project Management and Quality Assurance costs
Project Report	A progress reports will be presented to the GGF, Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	Quarterly for GGF at output level. Annually for Project Board and at the end of the project (final report)	The Reports will present the analysis of the progress achieved against the agreed indicators and any deviations from the agreed Work Plans.	Project Management and Quality Assurance costs
Project Review (Project Board)	The project's governance mechanism (project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work	Annually, or more frequently if deemed necessary	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management	Project Management and Quality

	<p>Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.</p>		<p>actions agreed to address the issues identified.</p>	<p>Assurance costs</p>
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VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN

See attached as Annex 4.

VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Implementation Modality

The Project will be implemented under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). This means that UNDP will take on the role of Implementing Partner and will assume the responsibility for mobilizing and effectively applying the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs and outcomes. UNDP Moldova will assume the overall management responsibility and accountability for Project administration, including organizing implementation of Project activities, procurement of goods and services, recruitment of Project personnel and national and international consultants, connecting to national and international expertise and knowledge networks, and quality assurance, ensuring timely and expedient implementation of Project activities, including the provision of continuous feedback and information sharing among stakeholders.

UNDP will be accountable to the Project Steering Committee for the use of Project resources. UNDP will ensure that communication, consultations and review discussions are held on an on-going basis. During the Project implementation, synergies and linkages with other on-going Projects, in the areas of democratic governance gender and human rights implemented by UN agencies will be maintained and strengthened.

Project Steering Committee

The **Project Steering Committee** has the function to oversee transparency, accountability and efficiency of the Project operations as well as to assess opportunities, risks and political challenges and link to other relevant Government and development partners' initiatives. Most importantly, the Steering Committee approves the Annual Work Plans, the Progress and Final Reports prepared by the Project and takes decisions on changes in the Project activities or financial allocations, if any.

The Steering Committee shall include representatives of the senior beneficiaries (Central Electoral Commission and Centre for Continuous Electoral Training), civil society organizations, UNDP, Project Donor (USAID, British Embassy in Chisinau), and other multilateral or bilateral partners. Thus, the Steering Committee's structure, besides the voting members (CEC, CCET, UNDP, USAID, British Embassy in Chisinau, Promo-LEX Association, Gender Centru Association) shall be complemented with observers representing development partners, organisations and institutions working in the area of elections.

The proposed observers shall include, but will be not limited to:

- **international partners** (Embassy of Sweden in Moldova, the Swiss Development Cooperation, the Delegation of the European Union, the Council of Europe, OSCE, UN Women, etc.);
- **national partners and CSOs** (Public Services Agency, Electronic Governance Agency, Coalition for Free and Fair Elections, etc.).

Any other relevant institutions and partners may be proposed and added.

The updated composition of the Steering Committee will be agreed during its first meeting in the new framework and should be participatory and include as many relevant stakeholders as possible.

The Project Steering Committee will meet at least once per year. More frequent meetings of the Project Steering Committee may be organized if deemed necessary. The Committee will monitor the Project progress, will decide on strategic decisions to ensure continued coherence between the implementation goals and objectives, will decide on the annual work plans and budgets, will revise and adjust the annual plans and budgets, as necessary. Amendments to the budget will be subject to the approval of the Project Steering Committee. All other matters will be decided by the UNDP Project Team on a daily basis.

The Project Steering Committee will have the following responsibilities:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the Project;
- Address Project issues as raised by the Project Manager;
- Provide guidance and agree on possible countermeasures/ management actions to address specific risks and ensure continued coherence between the implementation and the goals/ objectives of the Project;
- Conduct regular meetings four times per year or to be convened upon necessity;
- Approve the Annual Work Plans, Annual Budgets and Project Progress Reports, prepared by the Project Support Team;
- Assess and decide on Project changes through revisions;
- Propose and approve representatives of other stakeholders to the Steering Committee, if appropriate;
- Sign Project Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, developed by the Project Support, Team within two (2) weeks from the meetings;
- Ensure that all Project deliverables have been produced satisfactorily;
- Review and approve the Final Project Review Report, including recommendations and lessons learned.

The presence of majority of the Steering Committee members with voting rights (quorum) shall be required for any decision to be taken. The Project Steering Committee decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the members present at the meeting. The Project Manager is responsible for the organization of the Steering Committee Meetings, with the support of the Project Team.

As UNDP will implement the Project in line with UNDP project management rules and regulations. UNDP Moldova will be responsible for the Project administration, including: organizing implementation of Project activities, procurement of goods and services, recruitment of Project personnel and national and international consultants, connecting to national and international expertise and knowledge networks, and the quality assurance, ensuring the timely and expedient implementation of Project activities, including the provision of continuous feedback and information sharing among stakeholders.

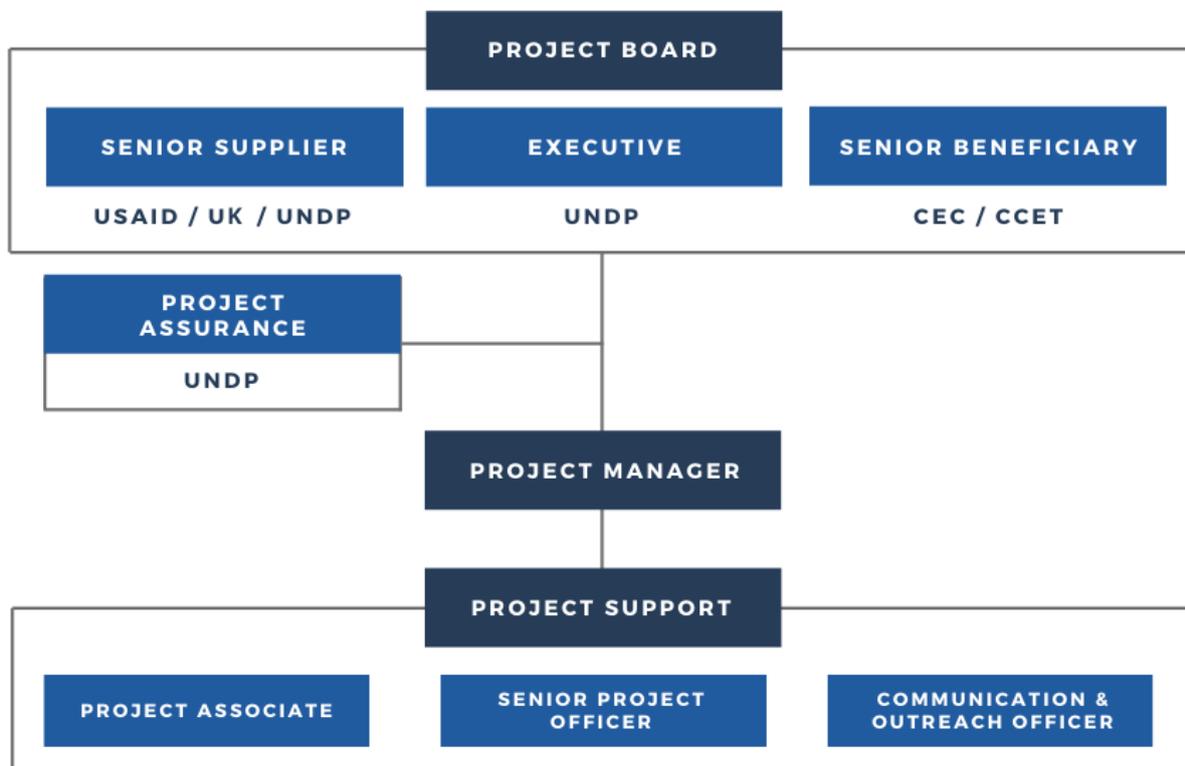
A Steering Committee shall be set up and function as an overall management structure for the Project to oversee transparency, accountability and efficiency of the Project operations as well as assess opportunities, risks and political challenges and link the project to other relevant Parliament's and development partners' initiatives. Most importantly, the Steering Committee will approve the Annual Work Plans, the Progress and the Final Reports prepared by the Project and will take decisions on mid-year changes in Project activities or financial allocations, if any.

Project Team

UNDP will delegate the managerial duties for the day-to-day running of the Project to the Project Manager, selected by UNDP through a competitive and transparent selection process. The Project Manager has the authority to run the Project on a day-to-day basis on behalf and within the constraints laid down by the Project Steering Committee. The Project Manager's main responsibility is to ensure that the Project produces the planned outcomes within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager will be in charge of preparing Progress and Final Reports to be submitted to the Donor(s). The Project Manager is responsible for the implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework. The Project Manager will report directly to the UNDP Effective Governance Cluster Lead. The Project Manager will be supported by the Project Team in the implementation of Project activities.

ENHANCING DEMOCRACY THROUGH TRANSPARENT AND INCLUSIVE ELECTIONS

PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of Moldova and UNDP, signed on 2nd of October 1992. All references in the SBAA to “Executing Agency” shall be deemed to refer to “Implementing Partner.”

This project will be implemented by UNDP in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures.

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

Option b. UNDP (DIM)

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS.)
2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the project funds are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this Project Document.
3. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).
4. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.
5. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse (“SEA”) and sexual harassment (“SH”) allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures.
6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.
7. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient:
 - a. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA [*for the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document*], the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP’s property in such responsible party’s, subcontractor’s and sub-recipient’s custody, rests with such responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient. To this end, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall:

- i. put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
 - ii. assume all risks and liabilities related to such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
- b. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.
- c. In the performance of the activities under this Project, UNDP as the Implementing Partner shall ensure, with respect to the activities of any of its responsible parties, sub-recipients and other entities engaged under the Project, either as contractors or subcontractors, their personnel and any individuals performing services for them, that those entities have in place adequate and proper procedures, processes and policies to prevent and/or address SEA and SH.
- d. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or programme or using the UNDP funds. It will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.
- e. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.
- f. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.
- g. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will promptly inform UNDP as the Implementing Partner in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

Where it becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). It will provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

- h. UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement.

Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to such responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

- i. Each contract issued by the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from it shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.
- j. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or programme, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.
- k. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to its subcontractors and sub-recipients and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are adequately reflected, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

XI. ANNEXES

- 1. Project Quality Assurance Report – in UNDP online QA system**
- 2. Social and Environmental Screening Template**
- 3. Risk Register**
- 4. Multi Year Work Plan**
- 5. Log Frame/Results Framework**
- 6. Capacity Assessment**
- 7. Project Board Terms of Reference and TORs of key management positions**