



PROJECT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Strengthen Social Cohesion Through Inclusive Participation and Empowered Citizens

Project Number: 01000754

Implementing Partner: UNDP Moldova

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Brief Description

Over the past three decades, migration has gradually become an intrinsic factor influencing Moldova’s social and economic development. Striving to maximize the benefits of human mobility and to mitigate any negative consequences, UNDP works with the Moldovan Government to balance short-term responses to addressing the impacts of emigration with long-term sustainable development solutions.

The Strengthen Social Cohesion Through Inclusive Participation and Empowered Citizens (STRONG) project is set to establish, through multi-dimensional partnerships and interventions, a model of efficient cooperation and strengthened social cohesion through empowered diaspora members, returning migrants and other citizens and responsive local governance.

Building upon the meaningful community cooperation and diaspora engagement framework established in previous SDC-UNDP interventions, the project will invest resources and efforts at local and national levels in supporting local communities to advance democratic practices and improving public participation in development outcomes. At the same time, the Project includes components for advancing policy and institutional frameworks and to create an environment more conducive for resilient and democratic communities.

To complement the results already achieved, the STRONG project will also work on empowering local public authorities, community organizations (e.g. hometown associations) and local action groups (LAGs) to engage in community development and social cohesion initiatives.

The project stems from UNDP’s 2023-2027 Country Programme Document and support the attainment of SDC local governance related objectives in Moldova.

The proposal is part of the third phase of the SDC Programme “Moldova Making Most of Migration”, in partnership with the Diaspora Relations Bureau of the State Chancellery and UNFPA. It will complement and synergize with several ongoing initiatives (implemented with the support of the UN and/or financial support of SDC) focused on local development, governance, and productive employment (e.g. Swiss-UNDP project “Resilient and Inclusive Markets in Moldova” / PRIM).

The Project’s direct beneficiaries will include relevant local public authorities, democratic- or governance-oriented community organizations, as well as individual communities (including diaspora members, returnees, and refugees).

The project will contribute to speeding up the progress on several SDGs and associated national targets, mainly 5.5, 10.2, 11.b, 16.6 and 16.7.

Contributing to UNDP CPD: Outcomes 2 and 3
 Indicative Outputs with gender marker:
 Output 2.1 (marker: GEN2).
 Output 2.2 (marker: GEN2).

Total resources required:	1,473,684 USD	
Total resources allocated:	UNDP CPD:	35,760,000 USD
	Donor:	1,473,684 USD
	Other sources:	34,286,316 USD
	In-kind:	N/A
Unfunded:	N/A	

Agreed by (signatures):

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List of abbreviations

BRD – Diaspora Relations Bureau/ State Chancellery
CALM – Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova
CPAs – Central Public Authorities
CPD – Country Programme Document
CSO – Civil Society Organization
DMD – Diaspora, Migration & Development
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
GoM – Government of the Republic of Moldova
HDI – Human Development Index
HRBA – Human Right Based Approach
HTA – Hometown Association
HTA Alliance – Alliance of Hometown Associations
LAG – Local Action Group
LED – Local Economic Development
LPAs – Local Public Authorities
MiDL – Swiss-UNDP “Migration and local development” project
MLSP – Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
NBS – National Bureau of Statistics
NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training
NIM – National Implementing Partner
PIM – Project Implementation Team
PRIM – Swiss-UNDP “Resilient and inclusive markets in Moldova” project
PSC – Project Steering Committee
RBMC – Results-based Management Cycle
SC – State Chancellery
SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
SKATE – Skills, Knowledge, Attitude, Training and Experience
SSC/TrC – South-South Cooperation/ Triangular Cooperation
UNCT – United Nations Country Team
UNDAF – United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNDS – United Nations Development System
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
UNSDCF – United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USD – United States dollars

1. Development Challenge

Since achieving its state independence in 1991, the Republic of Moldova has been constantly struggling to accomplish democratic and market-oriented political and economic reforms and to attain sustainable development goals. The underlying political and geopolitical context has been tumultuous, and various external and domestic shocks (droughts, financial crises, trade barriers, COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine) have eroded the growth of income and undermined the wellbeing of Moldova's people and communities.

Truly, the country has managed to put in place virtually all institutions required by a modern society relying on democratic governance and market economy. Moldova is home to diverse political and development views. There is true political pluralism underpinning a multiparty system, and elections are highly competitive and generally assessed by external observers as fair and correct¹. The freedoms of assembly, speech, and religion are largely protected. Per capita GDP has grown steadily, from 1960 USD in the year 2010 up to 5556 USD in 2022². Following this growth in income, the country has graduated from the group of low-income countries into the low-middle income ones. Growing income has prompted the improvement of Human Development Index (HDI) from 0.7 (112th place in the global rank) in 2017 to 0.75 in 2019 (90th place). Nowadays Moldova is placed firmly in the group of high human development countries. A reform-minded governance has been installed in 2020-21 and the country embarked on implementation of long-awaited structural and institutional reforms, such as pre-vetting and vetting of judges and prosecutors or the reform of the state-owned enterprises governance etc. As a landmark evolution, in 2022 Moldova became candidate-country for EU accession. This is expected to anchor the country on a long-term path of modernization, democratization, and growth.

Despite appreciable progresses, challenges abound. Many of the democratic institutions, while formally in place, do not yet meet all functional requirements and need to get solidified. Economy remains highly exposed and vulnerable to many exogeneous shocks, such as those related to climate change, breakup of the regional supply chains caused by war in Ukraine, global energy prices and trade barriers. Minority groups are sometimes relegated to the margin of the society and discrimination still happens in various forms and places. Inequality, manifested as gender gaps and as rural-urban divide, albeit not exorbitant by international comparisons, continues to erode the human development and to keep the country far below its true potential. While discounting the HDI for gender inequality, Moldova falls from the level of 0.75 back to 0.672. This 10.4% loss in HDI is fully attributable to the unequal distribution of human achievements among women and men, an inequality represented, inter alia, by a 15% wage gap. The country struggles to eliminate corruption from the judicial sector and break the links between political life and economic interests. Deficient rule of law continues to hamper democratic governance and business climate.

Demographic developments became of increasing concern in the recent decade. Due to a combination of low fertility, high emigration, and relatively high mortality rate among men, the country losses rapidly its population, especially in the youngest cohorts. The population has gone from 2.87 million persons in early 2014 to 2.60 million in early 2022, i.e., it had declined at an astonishing rate of 9% in yearly average³. Over the same period, the share of population of retirement age in total population has gone from 18.6% to 21.5%. The recent increase in the retirement age is going to provide only a temporary relief. With a very low rate of labor employment and high share of youth of NEET status, the bleak demographic situation and perspectives put high pressures on Moldovan firms, employees, and public budget.

Migration has brought multiple economic and social benefits, but at the same time it has been a key factor behind the decline of the working age population. The average rate of net emigration (defined as the difference between emigration and immigration flows and divided by average population) has been 1.2% in the period 2014-2020, significantly slowing down during the COVID-19 pandemic. The net migration figure hides a more complex two-way phenomenon, with many persons alternating periods of domestic labor activity with time spent working abroad. In the year 2015, when emigration likely reached its apex of 158 thousand people, there was also a reverse flow of 108 thousand persons coming back to Moldova. More recently, in 2020, the two flows converged significantly, with emigration involving 72 thousand

¹ Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2023. Moldova". <https://freedomhouse.org/country/moldova/freedom-world/2023>.

² National Bureau of Statistics of Republic of Moldova, "Dynamics of the main macroeconomic indicators", accessed 29 of April 2023.

³ National Bureau of Statistics of Republic of Moldova, the Statistical Databank, Population Database, accessed 29 of April 2023.

persons, while immigration – 65 thousand⁴. With the COVID-19 crisis alleviating, the two flows may diverge again.

The labor migration is usually associated with inflows of migrants' remittances. In 2022, the net inflow of remittances was 1.4 billion USD, which may look impressive at first glance⁵. In fact, the role of remittances is declining, with their net share in GDP going from 14.8% in 2016 to 9.9% in 2022 (the net share of remittances accounts for an outward flow of remittances sent home by foreign workers present in Moldova).

At the same time, the role of social remittances (including specific skills, attitudes, and knowledge) that returning migrants bring home, while largely neglected, may become increasingly more important and impactful. Social remittances manifest in two forms. Firstly, returning migrants themselves exert direct influence on social and democratic outcomes, through participation in elections, direct political activities, by launching and leading community initiatives. These effects are well documented empirically in the case of Moldova⁶. Secondly, migrants may "infect" other members of their communities and in some cases even trigger local "epidemics" of community activism. This channel may not be that well studied academically but has been amply documented in previous SDC-UNDP projects on diaspora-migration-development nexus.

Field research conducted recently in Moldova has clearly shown that the impact of social remittances depends on the characteristics of the local micro-contexts⁷. In communities featured by adequate local infrastructures and institutions, the economic and social remittances of migrants play a complementary role in accelerating socioeconomic transformation processes.

For the transformative potential of the social and financial remittances to manifest, among the most important preconditions are openness, transparency, and integrity of public institutions, especially at the local level which in geographic and social distance terms are the closest to the people. In fact, open, transparent, and clean institutions make possible fully-fledged involvement in the decision-making process of all citizens, be they migrants or not. Independent reports done in 2021 and 2022 reviewing transparency of public institutions in the Republic of Moldova bring forward significant gaps in the legislation and even less positive news about the law's practical applications⁸. The limited level of transparency may be among the main causes of the chronically low levels of trust of people in state institutions in the recent two decades: despite cyclical ups and downs, on average only around 20% of people have at least some levels of trust in Government, Parliament and President⁹.

Contrary to the complicated case of central public institutions, the trust in local public administration has been significantly higher and more stable. According to the latest Barometer of Public Opinion of November 2022, around 56% of the surveyed people have trust in the mayor of their community. This more trustful public-civic relationship at local level is the key contextual element that the proposed Project aims to exploit for a more meaningful involvement of the people in their communities' development.

⁴ Idem.

⁵ National Bank of Moldova, "Balance of Payments for the year 2022", www.bnm.md.

⁶ Toman Barsbai et al, "The Effect of Labor Migration on the Diffusion of Democracy: Evidence from a Former Soviet Republic", *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2017, 9(3):36-69.

⁷ Pietro Cingolani and Francesco Vietti, "Social remittances and local development in Republic of Moldova. A critical analysis of migrants as agents of change", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Volume 19, 2019, issue 4.

⁸ Freedom House, "Freedom of Information Index: Measuring Transparency of Public Institutions in Moldova", edition 2022, https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/fh-Moldova_Access-to-Info-Report-2022_Eng-v5_0.pdf.

⁹ Institute for Public Policy, Barometer of Public Opinion, November 2022, <https://ipp.md/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Anexele-sondajului-BOP-noiembrie-2022.pdf>.

2. Strategy

2.1. Context

As in all UN-led projects, the proposed intervention conceptually and operationally is fully aligned to the principles of results-based management cycle (RBMC). The RBMC-based approach to development builds on three underlying principles: 1) awareness of the local context, 2) reliance on thorough situational analysis, and 3) strategic prioritization of interventions and project resources. The proposed Project has been carefully assessed and calibrated against each of the three criteria.

The Project aims to consolidate and scale up the results of previous efforts of engaging migrants, diaspora, and local communities in Moldova's development at local level. Previous SDC-funded interventions (1st phase in 2015-2018 and 2nd phase in 2019-2022) have supported the emergence of hometown associations (HTAs) across the entire country and a spectacular proliferation of related community-development initiatives, ideas, and projects.

While continuing to support the creation of new hometown associations and consolidation of existing ones, the Project will also take several steps further to achieve even more systemic changes. These steps include: a) enhancing Governmental mechanisms and programmes to support community development via active participation of civil society and diaspora representatives; b) supporting institutional consolidation of the HTA Alliance as knowledge center and as regional enabler for emerging HTAs and diaspora associations; and 3) testing new practical mechanisms and tools and for supporting social cohesion initiatives and for empowering local stakeholders, including LPA, HTAs, and diaspora to engage meaningfully in community development, migrants' return and their successful social and economic reintegration.

Considering the overall political, economic and security context shaped by COVID-19 pandemic and the fallout from the war in Ukraine, there is no preselected list of beneficiary communities for this Project. As in previous SDC-supported interventions, the level of maturity of local initiatives and credible commitment from the part of the local stakeholders are going to be important preconditions for selection of beneficiary communities. At the same time, the Project is conceived to retain a reasonable degree of flexibility in selection of the communities and to adapt to potentially changing conditions, as described in the Risk Analysis Matrix.

This Project maintains an integrated approach to community development. This approach promotes an inclusive and sustainable character of the local development. It considers multiple social, environmental, cultural, political, and economic features of the local communities. Moreover, under this approach, the development outcomes are just as important as the participatory process itself.

The Project emphasizes the consideration of human, humanitarian, demographic and migration aspects in local and national policies so that to ensure that interests and concerns of the vulnerable groups are respected and reflected in the local policy and local initiatives. Those vulnerable groups have traditionally included women, youth, elderly, people with disabilities, but the war in Ukraine has also added the Ukrainian refugees, with about 70 thousand refugees present permanently in Moldova, mainly women and children.

UNDP Moldova and the Project partners aim to further advance the successful community-development interventions and extend the interventions' focus from supporting individual HTAs and communities to supporting the capacities for related policies and programmes and to institutional development of a coalition of HTAs.

Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine and uncertain post-conflict perspectives, the regional security environment is expected to remain turbulent even in the most optimistic scenarios, so the Project is intended to bring a valuable contribution to the triple humanitarian-development-peace nexus at the local/regional level.

The Project will enhance sustainability of the results from the previous two stages supported by the SDC but will also adapt them to new political and socio-economic conditions, by adopting and fostering both policy-level and community-level innovations. By engaging all relevant stakeholders in identifying, designing, validating, and implementing local solutions and ideas, the Project will contribute to building more responsive institutions, more inclusive society, and more resilient communities.

Based on the integrated approach to the local development and on the key role of diaspora/migrants in this process, the overall Theory of Change of the Project is that:

if

- central and local authorities are supported to apply inclusive engagement models and duly consider demographic realities and projections in planning and implementing policies and budgets; and
- Moldovan population, including migrants, vulnerable and excluded groups from the communities, are empowered to meaningfully engage in the development of their communities and in holding the public authorities accountable.

then

- communities will become more resilient; quality and accessibility of public services will improve, enhancing the living standards of the population.

because

- central and local authorities will adopt evidence-based inclusive, accountable, and responsive policies, based on actual needs of the population.

2.2. Lessons learnt

Since the year 2015, in the framework of the Swiss-funded “Migration and Local Development” (MiDL) Project, UNDP Moldova has succeeded to conceptualize, pilot, and expand innovative models of proactive engagement of migrants in the development of their native communities, thus contributing to a meaningful socio-economic development of the Republic of Moldova, as well as to the post-COVID recovery.

In the MiDL project’s first phase (2015-2018), an authentic and tailor-made Diaspora, Migration and Development (DMD) model has been elaborated and piloted in 38 Moldovan communities. The results of this intervention and of its spill-over effects underline the crucial importance of pro-active partnerships in designing, driving, and implementing sustainable community initiatives. An important lesson is that most successful local development initiatives can emerge bottom-up, driven by synergy and efforts of local stakeholders in a context of mutual trust and cooperation.

In the MiDL’s 2nd phase (2019 – 2022), the Project pursued, among other goals, the strengthening of the national labor migration policy framework. Implemented amid more difficult social and economic conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemics, the results of the second phase have underlined the high priority that local communities give to sustainable economic interventions rather to one-off or short-living gains. During the MiDL’s second phase, the local economic development interventions have amounted to USD 5 million, of which 70% were co-financing. As a result, the local business environment in 25 localities has been enhanced and additional revenue opportunities have been created for local communities with a total population exceeding 175 thousand people.

The MiDL project’s interventions have thus succeeded in encouraging the dialogue and cooperation in various engagement models between migrants / diaspora and LPAs in over 117 communities from Moldova, thus inherently supporting local democratic processes. An important lesson of the previous projects is that interventions to synergize communities in the diaspora engagement model require systemic support from both the Government of Moldova and from development partners. This is an underlying precondition to continue adopting and replicating more inclusive, accountable, and responsive policies and democracy models, as well as to ensure their sustainability. In addition, there is clearly a need of more coherent articulation of HTAs strategies across the country, as well as a need of continuous learning and mutual exchange of good practices among HTAs from all parts of Moldova. Even though Moldova is a small country, the evidence from previous two phases demonstrate an astonishing diversity of successful practices and positive factors that should be shared among the entire network of Moldovan HTAs.

Building on the achievements of the phases I & II of the MiDL project, the proposed Project intends to upscale and promote innovative approaches of pro-active community engagement (including of LPAs, private sector representatives, civil society, migrants, refugees) for local development and thus, to continue contributing to resilience of local communities and to an enhanced sense of social cohesion in the Republic of Moldova.

2.3. Implementation approaches

All UNDP projects are carefully designed on the basis of strategic and operational approaches conceived to contribute to the systemic changes promoted by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Several defining principles are at the core of the Project implementation strategy and of its operational arrangements:

- Applying the **Human Rights Based** approach as key normative and conceptual basis. The Project will meaningfully involve beneficiaries and will address challenges of those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, enhancing participation, and building social cohesion.
- The **“Leave No One Behind”** principle. It will be applied to ensure that the choices and opportunities provided by the Project are available to a larger target group, including local community, migrants, refugees, women, youth, people with special needs and other vulnerable groups, in order to participate in and benefit from development progress.
- **Mainstreaming gender** in the development processes. This principle is key for ensuring a meaningful and equal participation of women and men in all Project’s activities and by securing an equitable gender distribution of Project’s results.
- Building and enhancing **systemic resilience** by strengthening local institutions and individuals’ capacity to prevent, mitigate and respond to socio-economic shocks and crises, including to climate change, epidemics, and other unforeseeable risks.
- Further testing and implementing **innovative approaches and tools** for community development and people involvement, where all local stakeholders convene in planning local development, and are empowered to provide expertise, skills and know-how and contribute financially, including through crowdfunding/ co-financing platforms, and other similar instruments.

2.4. Project Outcomes

The strategic goal of the proposed Project is to improve the living standards of people in Moldova via a more inclusive, accountable, responsive, and evidence-based model of governance, and through an increased level of participation of migrants/ diaspora in Moldova’s sustainable development.

With this strategic goal the Project pursues two development Outcomes, which are significantly interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

Outcome 1: Central and Local Public Authorities plan and implement more inclusive, accountable, and responsive policies based on population projections and demographic realities, duly considering migration trends and different models of diaspora engagement.

Outcome 2: Community members, including migrants / diaspora and vulnerable / excluded groups, meaningfully engage in developing democratic and resilient communities.

For the first Outcome, the Project will concentrate on establishing and enhancing Governmental mechanisms and programs to support community development via active participation of civil society and diaspora representatives. This includes provision of support to the Diaspora Relations Bureau in the enhancement of the Diaspora Engagement for Development framework, particularly in the areas of public participation, governance, policy, and community development. Also, the Outcome 1 targets a policy component by providing technical assistance to the Government of Moldova in the institutionalization of successful best practices, previously piloted by Swiss-UNDP interventions.

In case of the second Outcome, the Project will enhance the institutional capacities of the HTA Alliance as knowledge center and as regional enabler for emerging HTAs and diaspora associations. This way, the local stakeholders, including LPAs and HTAs, and diaspora will be better positioned to engage in community development, return/reintegration, and promotion of social cohesion initiatives.

2.5. Policy advocacy

The policy advocacy element of the Project encompasses mechanisms and tools for fostering diaspora involvement in national policy frameworks. They are expected to manifest through institutional support

and social dialogue between national authorities, Local Public Authorities (LPAs), and civil society organizations.

The Diaspora Relations Bureau (BRD) of the State Chancellery will be helped to implement a strategic approach emphasizing the institutional strength and the policy frameworks. More adequate policy and institutional environment will energize the national and local development processes through democratic values and diaspora engagement. In particular, the State Chancellery will be supported to institutionalize the successfully tested practices for diaspora and migrants' engagement, thus supporting the GoM in fostering diaspora involvement in national policy frameworks and local development.

3. Results and Partnerships

3.1. Expected results

The Project is expected to further expand conceptually and scale-up territorially the results from the previous phases of the SDC-supported MIDL projects by:

- Enhancing institutional capacities of the BRD as key executive agency in diaspora and migration policy.
- Continuing supporting the process of HTAs creation and their territorial diffusion.
- Providing the support for institutional development of the HTA Alliance as resource and knowledge center for HTAs.
- Improving skills, knowledge, attitude, training, and experience of relevant local stakeholders on integrated inclusive governance, local cooperation and outreach, and community development.

Direct beneficiaries of the proposed Project's include BRD, existing and newly created HTAs, HTAs Alliance, local public authorities, community associations, diaspora and migrants, as well as Ukrainian refugees. The proposed Project targets multiple SDS, but it is expected to significantly accelerate the national progress of SDGs 5.5, 10.2, 11.b, 16.6 and 16.7 and of their related targets.

As with the previous project phases, this Project stems from the UNDP Moldova's Country Programme Document (CPD) for the period 2023-2027. It also directly supports the strategic goals defined by the SDC country strategy for Moldova¹⁰. The Project is part of the wider UN-programmatic approach to local development. The UNDP partnership with UNFPA will bring a sound demographic component and thus contribute to the fulfilment of the UNSDCF for the period 2023-2027 and support the announced UNDS Reform. The Project complements several initiatives already going on (including other local development projects led by UN and/or SDC-funded, such as PRIM project) and that are focused on local governance, economic development, productive employment, and civic education.

The specific operational results for direct beneficiaries of the Project encompass the following:

- 50,000 additional community members (of which 51% women, 49% men, and 10% vulnerable) will benefit from more democratic institutions, improved public services, increased social cohesion, better living conditions and human rights.
- 20 local initiatives dedicated to democratic and resilient communities will be implemented jointly by LPAs and HTAs, with participation of community members, civil society organizations, diaspora/migrants.
- 20 communities from the Republic of Moldova will improve their local democratic practices and increase public participation in development outcomes via a sustainable dialogue among citizens, the civil society and local public administration.
- 1,000 community members (of which 52% women, 48% men and 15% vulnerable) and 150 diaspora representatives/migrants (of which 51% women and 49% men) will have participated in and influenced public service provision, decision-making, and budgeting in their localities.
- Local stakeholders' contribution (including diaspora) will amount to at least 25% of the total budget of the community development initiatives, implemented in partnership with the HTA Alliance and with the Project's technical and financial support.
- One additional institutional mechanism enabling diaspora engagement for community development will be institutionalized based on previous Swiss-UNDP best practices (mentorship program for emerging HTAs).
- The capacities and program portfolio of the HTA Alliance will be consolidated to ensure the organization's sustainability and capacities to further support Moldovan hometown associations in line with good governance and democratic participation principles.
- The HTA Alliance's Strategy for 2023 - 2026 (guiding document of the organization, set to define its activity, portfolio of support mechanisms, approaches to community development and local governance support) will be implemented with project support.
- The HTA Alliance's management team will benefit from training and technical assistance to improve their skills, knowledge, attitude, training, and experience on institutional governance and development.

¹⁰ 2018-2021-cooperation-strategy-moldova_EN.pdf (admin.ch)

- 40 LPA representatives from 20 localities will benefit from improved skills, knowledge, attitude, training, and experience on integrated inclusive governance, local cooperation and outreach, and community development.
- 60 hometown associations and/or initiative groups (of which 20 new/emerging HTAs) will benefit from the assistance of the HTA Alliance to improve their skills, knowledge, attitude, training, and experience on fundraising, democratic governance, and integration of public participation, LNOB and HRBA approach in community development.

3.2. Project Outputs and indicative activities

Learning from the previous interventions, from the analysis of the new realities created by COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine and considering the international commitments of Moldova and its international development partners, the Project aims two Outcomes of high priority.

Below, for reasons of consistency each Outcome is further decomposed in relevant outputs and activities.

OUTCOME 1: Central and Local Public Authorities plan and implement more inclusive, accountable, and responsive policies based on population projections and demographic realities, duly considering migration trends and different models of diaspora engagement.

Output 1.1: Governmental mechanisms and programs are established and enhanced to support community development via active participation of civil society and diaspora representatives.

Complementing its community-level interventions, the Project will also work at a strategic level on fostering diaspora involvement in national policy frameworks through institutional support and encouraging social dialogue between national authorities, Local Public Authorities (LPAs), and civil society organizations.

The Project will collaborate with the State Chancellery's Diaspora Relations Bureau and implement a strategic approach that emphasizes the strengthening of institutional and policy frameworks to enhance the national and local development environment through democratic values and diaspora engagement.

Designed to complement and ensure thematic synergies with the BRD project of the Programme, the UNDP activities will have the role of transposing and institutionalizing the best practices of the Swiss-UNDP Migration and Development portfolio, thus supporting the GoM in fostering diaspora involvement in national policy frameworks and local development.

Under this outcome, the Project will target additional number of local initiatives, based on demographic data, and dedicated to democratic and resilient communities, implemented jointly by LPAs and HTAs, with participation of community members, civil society organizations, diaspora/migrants.

Interventions:

- Provide technical assistance to the Government of Moldova in the institutionalization of successful best practices, previously piloted by Swiss-UNDP interventions.
As part of this intervention, the Government will benefit from improved internal mechanisms supporting the institutionalization of the best practice previously piloted in engaging migrants, diaspora and individual as well as institutional community-members in the decision-making process.
- Provide support to the Diaspora Relations Bureau in the enhancement of the Diaspora Engagement for Development framework, with a focus on areas such as public participation, governance, policy, and community development.
Thanks to the Project support, the BRD will have improved capacities related to monitoring and evaluation, provision of counselling & advisory support to diaspora associations, Central Public Authorities (CPAs) and LPAs on building partnerships, as well as on counselling migrants about return and reintegration. With the BRD guidance, LPAs will provide skilled, safe, and operational return/ reintegration assistance.

OUTCOME 2: Community members, including migrants / diaspora and vulnerable / excluded groups, meaningfully engage in developing democratic and resilient communities.

Output 2.1: Institutional capacities of the HTA Alliance as knowledge center and regional enabler for emerging HTAs and diaspora associations are enhanced.

For the purpose of promoting democratic values at the local level, including with the participation of the diaspora, the project will support the mandate of the HTA Alliance in enhancing the capacities of hometown associations to strengthen social cohesion, replicate democratic models of civic engagement, and facilitate the resilience of local communities.

At the same time, the project will encourage the HTA Alliance in its endeavor to become the main dialogue partner in connecting hometown associations and diaspora associations with LAGs and local authorities in identifying and meeting local needs in terms of know-how and in-kind contributions to the development of localities in the country.

Local democracy models envisioned to be efficiently scaled up at the national level via the HTA Alliance refer to ways in which individuals and groups can come together and participate in decision-making processes at the local level, particularly through the involvement of civil society organizations (HTAs in particular).

Among others, the Alliance will be supported to implement (via its members and future local partners) the following thematic interventions:

- **Community-driven development:** this model involves communities identifying their own development priorities and then working together to implement solutions. HTAs and the Alliance can facilitate community- and diaspora-driven development processes by providing technical assistance, resources, and support to communities.
- **Participatory planning:** this model involves engaging community members in the planning and decision-making process for local development projects. HTAs can facilitate participatory planning processes by organizing public consultations, providing information, and ensuring that community and diaspora/migrant inputs are considered.
- **Participatory budgeting:** this model involves community members coming together to discuss and prioritize local needs and then allocating a portion of the local budget to address the agreed upon needs. HTAs can organize and facilitate participatory budgeting processes to ensure that the voices of diaspora/migrants and marginalized groups are heard, and that the allocation of resources is equitable.
- **Citizens' assemblies:** this model involves a randomly selected group of citizens coming together to deliberate on a specific issue or set of issues. HTAs can organize citizens' assemblies (for local residents and diaspora) to provide a platform for diverse perspectives to be heard and to provide input into local decision-making processes.

By engaging in these models via its portfolio of interventions, the HTA Alliance can help to strengthen local democracy, social cohesion and ensure that local communities are able to shape their own futures and citizens are empowered to do so.

Interventions:

- Provide technical support and expertise for the development, consultation, and implementation of the HTA Alliance's Strategy.
The HTA Alliance is a project stakeholder and the development of its Strategy for 2023-2027 is critical for defining its activity, portfolio of support mechanisms, and approaches to community development and local governance support. The technical support and expertise will help in mainstreaming local democracy and social cohesion across all strategic interventions.
- Co-design and implement a dedicated mentorship program for emerging HTAs, under the aegis of the HTA Alliance.
The mentorship program will be based on Swiss-UNDP best practices in the area of migration and development and will provide emerging HTAs with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement community development and local governance support activities.
- Capacitate the HTA Alliance to actively participate in the promotion of good governance principles among the network of HTAs active at the national level.

The HTA Alliance will be capacitated to actively participate in the promotion of good governance principles among the network of HTAs active at the national level. The HTA School programme will provide training to the HTA Alliance to enhance their knowledge and skills in promoting good governance principles.

- Collaboratively develop and co-finance a thematic portfolio of the HTA Alliance to enhance local participative governance and inclusive democracy.
The portfolio will consist of community development support programs designed to enhance local participative governance and inclusive democracy. This intervention will develop the HTA Alliance's project management skills and will offer opportunities to support its institutional sustainability (via fundraising and co-opting of additional donors) as a phasing out mechanism.
- Provide support for the HTA Alliance's policy advocacy and facilitate the establishment of partnerships between the Alliance and national and diaspora organizations.
The policy advocacy support will help the HTA Alliance in promoting good governance principles and ensuring that local democracy is mainstreamed in policymaking. The partnerships will help the HTA Alliance in expanding its reach and diversify its portfolio by engaging with diaspora associations and local public authorities, among others.

Output 2.2: Local stakeholders, including LPAs and HTAs, and diaspora are empowered to engage in community development, return/reintegration, and social cohesion initiatives

The improvement of public participation in local decision-making processes is mandatory for promoting a more effective and inclusive local governance. The project will work, in partnership with LPAs, HTAs and LAGs, to address the specific needs and challenges of rural communities and ensure their effective engagement in development processes.

Interventions:

- Support local democratic practices in the partner communities by encouraging dialogue and cooperation between various engagement models and LPAs.
The support for local democratic practices in partner communities includes encouraging the participation of citizens and civil society organizations in decision-making processes related to local development.
- Assist partner LPAs in evaluating and addressing local development and resilience opportunities in a participatory and inclusive manner.
The assistance to partner LPAs (corresponding to the localities that have an HTA member of the HTA Alliance) includes providing technical expertise in areas such as participatory planning, project management, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Initiate and facilitate partnerships among partner LPAs, HTAs and LAGs in the areas of diaspora and community engagement in local development processes.
The partnerships among LPAs, HTAs, and LAGs aim to leverage the strengths and resources of each organization to enhance diaspora engagement and community development. This may involve joint projects, sharing of knowledge and expertise, and advocating for policy changes that support inclusive and participatory local governance.

3.3. Resources required

The specific scope of the Project and its affinity with the ongoing PRIM project allows an implementation arrangement based on shared management structure of the two projects. This will ensure the most efficient use of financial resources, while at the same time providing sufficient human and technical resources to handle operational delivery. Considering the characteristics of the proposed Project, however, additional national and local experts and specific contractual services will be mobilized to achieve the expected results.

UNDP will thus insure efficient use of institutional and management structures already in place (Moldova Country Office, PRIM premises and support team) for the implementation of the Project.

The total funding required for activities proposed under this Project amounts to 1.473,684 USD.

3.4. Risks and assumptions

Key external risks that might alter the implementation of the Project include the following:

1. Overall deteriorating socio-economic environment, especially because of the escalation of the military conflict in Ukraine.
2. Further territorial extension and intensification of the war in Ukraine, leading to an inflow of refugees beyond the management capacities of the Moldovan local and national authorities.
3. Rapid changes in the environmental context and in the national priorities due to the COVID-19 pandemic which is still highly unpredictable.
4. Potential diversion or delays of funding sources due to other emerging priorities (Ukraine crisis, COVID-19 response).
5. Change of local administrations and divergent views concerning local development priorities amid the political circumstances determined by the General Local Elections in 2023.
6. Increased emigration and weaker return intentions of Moldovan migrants.
7. The local stakeholders' burnout induced by survival challenges amid more complicated economic conditions and their lower motivation for additional engagement in community development and capacity building programs.
8. Insufficient political will to advance the improvements of existing Migration and Development mechanisms / facilities.
9. Moldova's national context (economic, social, and conflict-related) making the country an unfavorable return destination for migrants.
10. Insufficient administrative capacities of local and central counterparts to review and approve the proposed evidence-based policy/ regulatory amendments.

As general Risk Management Strategy, the proposed Project will further build on current local initiatives and lessons learnt, will carefully consider the specific political context existing at the moment of implementation, and will plan the activities with caution, including timing, feasibility, and local political and cultural sensibilities.

The Project will conduct activities dedicated to building the resilience of local authorities and civil society to effectively respond to a potential new refugee crisis.

In addition, the Project efforts will be complemented by other UNDP ongoing efforts of strengthening local governance to effectively manage and respond to emerging conditions.

In case of a new spike in the COVID-19 pandemic, the project team will revise activities and timelines, will discuss, and agree new priorities and reviewed results with the Project Board. Virtual and remote methods and safeguarding procedures for monitoring, stakeholder engagement, online capacity building events, etc. will be used if required. Weekly risk monitoring and assessment of changing context will be performed by the Project Team, as well as by-weekly updates to the donors in case the COVID pandemic rebounds.

The Project will also include a dedicated set of capacity building activities for newly elected officials (if required) according to previous UNDP best practices at local level which in the past proved to be an effective risk-management tool.

The Project Risk Log shall be maintained throughout the Project implementation to foresee and capture potential risks to the Project and associated mitigation measures. The detailed Project Risk Matrix is included in Annex 3.

[Assumptions underpinning the current Project](#) are to some extent like those of previous SDC-supported projects hinged upon, but some assumptions have been corrected by the new economic and security circumstances. The most important Project assumptions are the following:

1. The Government of Moldova will succeed to maintain macroeconomic, political, and local administrative stability and the policy processes triggered by EU candidate country will be highly beneficial in this regard.
2. Diaspora engagement remains an important priority for the Government, pursuing the modernization/ creation of institutions/ policies/ programs/ services integrating migrants' needs.
3. The new regional development context will create additional opportunities for collaboration between the local authorities, community organizations and residents, as well as diaspora/migrants.
4. Political and economic context is stable in Moldova and enables Project's interventions throughout the entire Project cycle.
5. The national and local commitment to help and sustain Ukrainian refugees demonstrated in the initial stage of war remains unabated.
6. The national legal framework encouraging local governments to engage migrants in local development (based on SDC tested local model) remains favorable.

7. Central public authorities develop and maintain a constructive and transparent cooperation with CALM and LPAs.
8. LPAs are open and fully engaged in Project implementation and committed to improve their institutional and service provision capacity and to create a favorable environment for migrants' engagement in local development (based on previous SDC interventions).
9. Engagement of diaspora in community development initiatives remains strong despite more difficult economic conditions in the host countries.
10. The level of public trust in local public authorities remains high, including from the part of migrants and diaspora members.
11. Previous SDC funded interventions at local level provide positive practices of migrants' engagement in local development, determining Diaspora and LPAs to further test the model and implement joint local development initiatives.

3.5. Stakeholder engagement

State Chancellery (SC) is the main national public stakeholder, mandated with strategic, policy and inter-institutional coordination and coherence, having a strong influence on all Project activities. Expected to chair the Project Steering Committee, the SC has provided strong support towards all SDC interventions in the field of migration, data governance and development at the national and local level.

One of the Project Outcomes, the support provided to the Diaspora Relations Bureau of the SC in terms of policy and institutional frameworks that create an empowering environment for resilient and democratic communities will directly sustain the UNDP – SC cooperation.

The State Chancellery will be an important stakeholder on data governance supporting the institutionalization and regulation of population projections in the legal framework. SC will play an active role in advocating and increasing awareness regarding the data use for better public policies at national and local level.

Diaspora Relations Bureau (BRD) is a Project implementing Partner and stakeholder overseeing the diaspora, migration, and development policy coordination in the country. The BRD's relevance for the Project outputs stems from its institutional mandate, as well as from the fact that many of the Swiss-UNDP models previously piloted still require further methodological guidance and support. The previous Swiss-funded interventions benefited of good cooperation with BRD, ensuring and contributing to a strong synergy at both local and national levels. The relationship is expected to continue and strengthen as part of the current Project, considering BRD expectations concerning the National Program for (re)integration of the migrants, in which it plays a central implementing role. BRD will also support the Project with available data on diaspora and migration that will be used for better understand the demographic trends/demographic profiles and potential ways of reintegration of migrants.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA Moldova) is a Project implementing Partner, with which close coordination and communication has been established. Coordination with the UNFPA in terms of local stakeholders' engagement will ensure the required co-benefits and synergy of expertise/ scope within the broader Governance Programme.

One of the Governance Programme Outcomes, focused on strengthening data governance by institutionalizing population projections and producing of accurate and qualitative demographic data, including migration profiles in order to support local public authorities in budgetary planning and implementation of more inclusive, accountable, and responsive policies that will directly support the cooperation between UNFPA, UNDP and BRD.

The **Alliance of Hometown Associations (HTA Alliance)** is a civil society organization with 40 active members and over 160 hometown associations (HTAs) at the national level. Since 2022, it has become a key stakeholder in supporting the Swiss-UNDP Migration and Development model and scaling up diaspora engagement initiatives in local socio-economic development. The HTA Alliance represents and advocates for the interests of HTAs at the local, national, and international levels, promoting democracy and good governance values. It facilitates effective dialogue between diaspora and local communities and is a trusted partner of public authorities and donors in developing and implementing migration and sustainable development policies and programs based on democratic principles.

Through collaboration with the State Chancellery's Diaspora Relations Bureau, UNFPA, and CALM, the HTA Alliance will take a programmatic approach to promote local democracy and inclusive governance. The

primary beneficiaries of this collaboration will be relevant local public authorities, HTAs, democratic or governance-oriented community organizations, as well as individual communities, including diaspora members, returnees, and refugees.

As part of the proposed Project, the HTA Alliance (in its role of UNDP Responsible Party / institutional beneficiary) will coordinate and take a leadership role in identifying and strengthening local capacities of emerging and established HTAs in advancing socio-economic cohesion, democratic models of civic engagement, and enhance the resilience of local communities. The HTA Alliance will also become the main dialogue partner in connecting diaspora associations with Local Action Groups (LAGs) and local authorities to identify and address local needs through know-how and in-kind contributions for the development of localities in the country.

Hometown Associations (HTAs) will have an important role in the current Project where they will be indirectly capacitated to implement local projects focused on social cohesion and democratic participation, access new funding options and hence, support LPAs in their local initiatives.

As part of the Project, the established and emerging HTAs Alliance will receive technical support (via the HTA Alliance) for advancing socio-economic cohesion, democratic models of civic engagement, and enhance the resilience of local communities.

Local Public Authorities (LPAs) have been the most essential local institutional stakeholders in previous SDC-supported initiatives in the field of Migration and Development. LPAs will continue to have a significant impact on the Project activities. Due to their resources and local influence, partner LPAs will play a leading role in inspiring other local stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of all local interventions in areas such as social cohesion, democratic participation, and active engagement of diaspora and migrants. LPAs will also play a key role in implementing data governance by learning and using demographic data in policymaking and budgetary planning.

Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM) is an organization that represents Moldovan local public authorities, including its thematic networks. CALM will continue to play an important role as a stakeholder in supporting the UNDP project and the overall Governance Programme. CALM's mandate and liaison role between local governments, national authorities, and international organizations provide it with significant capacity to partner with the HTA Alliance in the efforts of influencing, representing, and advocating for the common interests of local communities.

Community members (including women, youth, and elderly people) are expected to benefit from the proposed activities of the UNDP project, which include local development interventions, capacity building, and awareness raising initiatives. The Project aims at promoting more inclusive, accountable, responsive, and evidence-based governance, and the community members will be active stakeholders and beneficiaries of these efforts. Throughout the Project implementation, the community members will be consulted, and their opinions heard. In general, they are supportive of the proposed interventions and welcome the initiative.

Moldovan diaspora and migrants are important stakeholders of the Project, playing both a role in effecting change and benefiting from interventions at the local level. They will be able to access better public services due to the Project's efforts towards inclusive, accountable, responsive, and evidence-based governance. Additionally, they will be consulted during the development of interventions implemented by the HTA Alliance. Previous Swiss-funded projects have shown that the diaspora and migrants possess the ability to bring about consistent contributions to local development and democratic processes, which the UNDP and BRD projects will aim to enhance sustainably and meaningfully.

Local academia (Institute of Public Administration of the State University) is an important stakeholder that will support the institutionalization of population projections and population analysis for policy development and contribute to knowledge sustainability among public authorities. A revised curriculum on public policy development by integrating data component will be conducted under the UNFPA project that will ensure knowledge sharing and increased awareness of public authorities about data use for better policies.

3.6. South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Considering the specific features of the proposed Project, the SSC/TrC is expected to manifest mainly through the transfer of best available knowledge and experience to relevant recipients and by communicating about and inspire other interested countries/entities to take over the Moldovan

experience gained as part of this Project. In this regard, the HTAs and their Alliance are particularly successful models that can be boasted as part of the continuous SSC/TrC. Various international fora, conferences, seminars and other events and opportunities that are likely to emerge over Project implementation period will be used to spread knowledge and information about the flagship examples and practices of the Project.

3.7. Knowledge

The Project will generate several products that implicitly will serve for knowledge storing and further dissemination at national and local level. These products include methodological guides for diaspora and migrants' engagement, the institutional development strategy of the HTA Alliance, the mentorship program to be developed for the use of newly emerging and existing HTAs, the thematic portfolio for national engagement of the HTAs and other organizations, local action plans, curriculum on public policy development including the population projections and demographic evidence.

3.8. Sustainability and scaling up

The Project has been conceived to further foster the sustainability of the results achieved under previous engagements and to scale up the geographic reach of those results. In particular, the HTAs Alliance institutional strategy that is going to be developed as part of the proposed Project, will be one of the key components ensuring sustainable coordination, methodological and advocacy support to existing and new HTAs. This way, the processes initiated by previous projects and continued by the proposed Project are expected to generate significant implications at national regional and local levels, including through policy, legislation, coordination, and institutional channels.

With the local public authorities, HTAs, other diaspora and migrants' organizations, CSOs, community leaders and members expected to be directly and fully involved in the activities and in the development of the program and be main beneficiaries of the training and other capacity building activities, local ownership over the Project Outputs will be secured and maintained throughout the entire implementation period. In addition, the local beneficiaries will further develop the transferable skills, knowledge, attitudes, training and experience which are essential for a credible and sustained engagement in local development.

4. Project Management

4.1. Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

The Project design and implementation arrangement is expected to deliver maximum results while making the best use of available resources. In particular, the Project will ensure synergy with other projects (such as PRIM project) for cost-sharing of the activities and for achieving highest possible value for money. In addition, the project team will seek to involve cost-saving Long-Term Agreements with certain categories of service/goods providers available to the UN Moldova Country Team Agencies.

The Project will be implemented under the **Support Services to National Implementation modality** in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations. The State Chancellery, namely the Secretary General, will ensure the overall coordination of the Project. Working together and in partnership with national implementing partners is a fundamental starting point for *all UN* priorities in Moldova, as drawn up in the United Nations Partnership Framework for Moldova. UNDP Country Office will provide support services to the Project at the request of the National Implementing Partner. In addition, UNDP CO will ensure Project accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency in implementation. UNDP will provide support in administrative and financial matters as described below:

Support Services	Schedule for the provision of the Support Services	Cost to UNDP of providing such Support Services	Amount and method of reimbursement of UNDP
Payments, disbursement, and other financial transactions, including direct payments, budget revisions, etc.	As agreed in the Annual Workplan (AWP) from the inception to closure of the Project	Cost-recovery based on UNDP Universal Price List and Local Price List	Periodic billing based on actual staff costs and agreed percentage
Recruitment of staff, Project personnel and consultants, including creation of vendors, selection and recruitment of expertise, personnel management services and banking administration, etc.			
Procurement of services and goods, including evaluation, proceeding through CAP, contracting, disposal and/or transfer of equipment and assets, customs clearance, etc.			
Travel support, including travel arrangements and authorization, ticket, visa and booking requests, F10 settlement, etc.			
Organization of conferences, workshops, and trainings, etc.			
Communication support, etc.			

4.2. Project Management

The implementation and monitoring of the Project activities will be carried out by UNDP in accordance with its applicable regulations, rules, directives, and procedures. Operationally, the project will be implemented by the team who is already involved in the PRIM project implementation, thus ensuring synergy and costs-saving. To ensure ownership and sustainability of the Project, UNDP will work in close partnership with the UNFPA, SC, BRD, LPAs, HTAs, CALM, CSOs (at the national and local levels), and other relevant actors.

5. Results Framework

The Results Framework is developed in full compliance with the information described in this Project Document and is *attached separately* to this document (Annex 1).

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1. Applicable rules and standards

The implementation and monitoring of the Project activities will be carried out by UNDP in accordance with its applicable regulations, rules, directives, and procedures. The regular monitoring of the Project will be undertaken based on the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework developed for this specific Project, in line with UNDP and SDC requirements.

Its main goal would be to ensure regular feedback on implementation, early identification of potential problems to facilitate timely adjustments to on-going activities. This framework will include M&E arrangements at different stages of implementation and different levels of intervention, aimed at ensuring more comprehensive evidence of activities planned and results delivered, based on specific qualitative and quantitative data.

Also, the monitoring efforts, with emphasis on systematic assessment at the Project level, will provide the basis for making decisions and taking actions, and shall provide indispensable information and data for evaluations. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected in order to track implementation progress. The data shall elaborate on people's perception of access to services, information, and participation in local governance. Such data will be extracted from Project reports, surveys, in-depth interviews with Project stakeholders and beneficiaries, training assessment results, central and local governments' records, and other.

The MEL framework shall disaggregate data for gender, youth, unemployed, people with disabilities, diaspora, labor migrants and returnees, geographic areas (in line with the specifics of each Project component) to assess the impact of the Project. This information shall be used to enhance focus on vulnerable groups and ensure that each of them are contributing to and benefiting from the Project interventions.

A final Project Evaluation shall be performed at the end of the Project by an independent team of evaluators to be contracted by SDC to measure results against targets set, positive changes embraced by the Project stakeholders, and evaluate the prospects of durability of results and formulate support exit strategies.

The MEL framework shall be complemented by a Learning monitoring compartment. The Project will use it to analyze evidence from program implementation and act on learnt lessons to inform program management.

The Project strategy involves creating learning opportunities for all its beneficiaries, as part of all Project Outcomes, through:

- organization of regular thematic meetings, networking events and exchange of best practices, throughout the implementation cycle.
- engagement of private and public stakeholders with a tangible record of achievements in mentoring and coaching their peers.
- dissemination of knowledge and learning materials; and
- assessment of learning progress achieved by beneficiaries of all capacity building activities.

The MEL will fall under the direct responsibility of the Project Manager, who will be responsible for the overall data collection and verification process, establishing templates and procedures for accurate documentation and data collection process. The Component Manager shall be responsible for component related data sub-sets on Project activities.

At the same time, the Quality Assurance (through regular and thorough monitoring of Project progress) shall be performed by UNDP Moldova's Inclusive Growth Programme Specialist (Cluster Lead), Officer and Associate.

Audit: The Project will be audited in compliance with the UN internal policy on audit.

6.2. Monitoring Plan

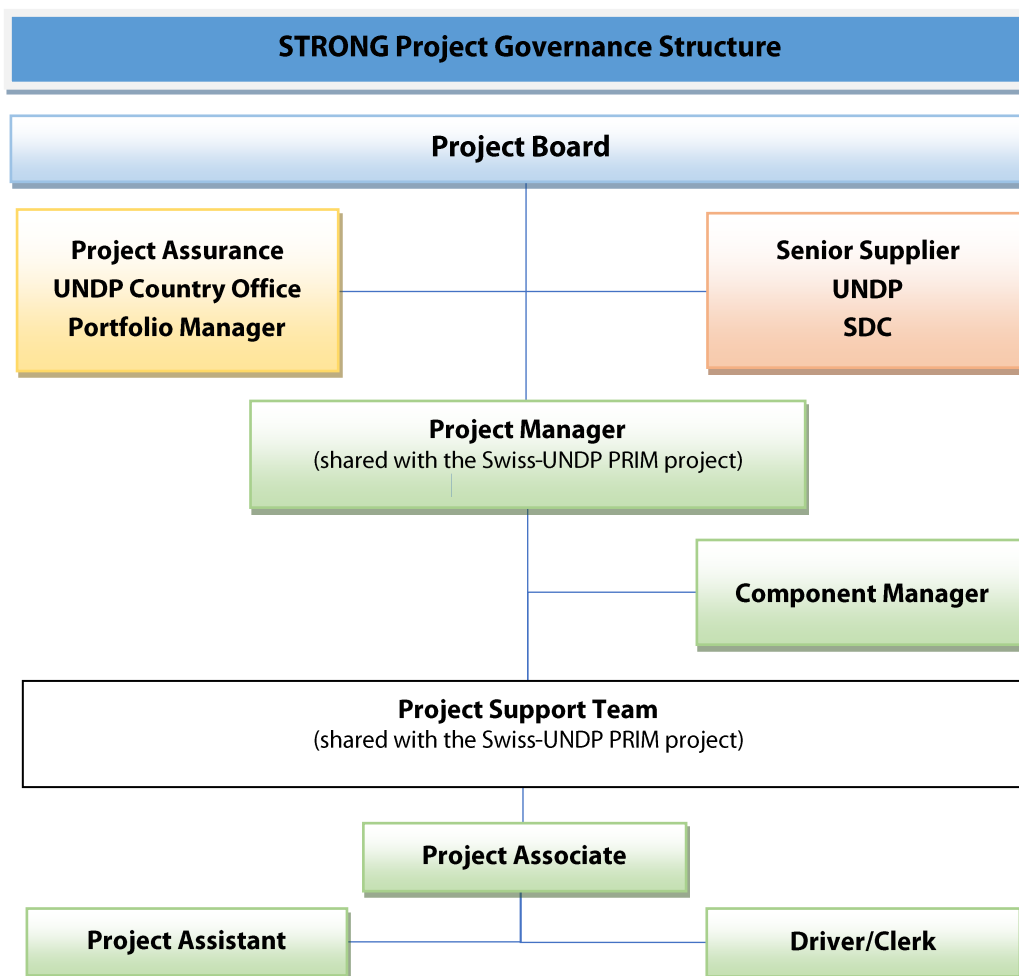
Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the Results Framework will be collected and analyzed to assess the progress of the Project in achieving the agreed Outputs.	Quarterly	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by Project management.
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.
Learn	Knowledge, good practices, and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the Project.	Annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the Project team and used to inform management decisions.
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.
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	Annually	Performance data, risks, lessons, and quality will be discussed by the Project Board and used to make course corrections.
Project Report	A Progress Report will be presented to the 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.	Annually, and at the end of the Project (Final Report)	

<p>Project Review (Project Board)</p>	<p>The Project’s governance mechanism (i.e., Project Board) will hold regular Project reviews to assess the performance of the Project and review the Multi-Year Work 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>At least annually</p>	<p>Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the Project Board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.</p>
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7. Governance and Management Arrangements

The Project will be carried out under a Support Services to National Implementation modality. The UNDP Country Office will provide support services to the Project at the request of the National Implementing Partner.

In addition, UNDP CO will ensure Project accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency in implementation. The support services provided by the Project may include: (i) Identification and/or recruitment of Project personnel; (ii) procurement of goods and services; (iii) financial services.



National Implementing Partner (NIP): the State Chancellery will oversee all aspects of Project implementation and is accountable for ensuring:

- the substantive quality of the Project.
- the effective use of both national and UNDP resources allocated to it.
- the availability and timeliness of national contributions to support Project implementation; and
- the proper coordination among all Project stakeholders.

Project Steering Committee (PSC): will be responsible for making consensus-based decisions, in particular when guidance is required by the Project Manager (PM) and/or Component Manager (CM).

The PSC will be responsible for providing strategic guidance to the Project, overseeing progress, reviewing, and approving of the Annual Reports, Work Plans, as well as the final Report.

The PSC will be convened at least once per year and will be comprised of the representatives of the State Chancellery, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UNDP, Diaspora Relations Bureau, UNFPA, National Bureau of Statistics, and of the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova – as Board Members.

The effective and efficient implementation of all activities will be ensured through a **Project Implementation Team (PIM)** that will be staffed in line with the UNDP rules and regulations.

The Project Implementation Team will include:

- One Project Manager, who (for cost-efficiency purposes) will cumulate the function of Project Manager for the Swiss-UNDP project “Resilient and inclusive markets in Moldova” (PRIM).
- One dedicated Component Manager (100% time).
- The Project Support Team (PST) comprised of one Project Associate, one Project Assistant and one Driver/Clerk. The PST will provide financial, administrative, and technical support to the whole implementation team and will cumulate (for cost-efficiency purposes) the function of PST for the Swiss-UNDP PRIM project.

The PIM will ensure close coordination of the activities implemented by both the STRONG and PRIM project, as well as with other relevant programmes, projects, and initiatives to avoid possible duplication. The PIM will ensure results-based Project management and successful implementation of the Project, close monitoring and evaluation of Project progress, observance of procedures, transparency and efficient use of funds, quality of works, and the involvement of national and local stakeholders in the decision-making processes.

Each member of the Project Implementation Team will be subject to the UNDP mandatory on-line training courses on standards, rules, and procedures, which will strengthen the awareness and willingness to work proactively to prevent, detect and deal with corruption, and on addressing the issues of staff integrity and conflict of interest.

The detailed Terms of References of the core staff will be developed and annexed to the Implementation Plan. The Quality Assurance role for the Project, on behalf of UNDP, will be played by the UNDP Country Office through the Programme Specialist, Programme Associate, and Programme Officer, ensuring that risks and implementation-related issues are properly managed and monitored, and progress/financial Reports are prepared and submitted on time, and according to standards in terms of format and content quality, and submitted to the Project Board and the Donor.

Short-term national and local experts will be involved by the PIM with the overall purpose to provide technical advisory support to the whole Project team for ensuring effective and efficient implementation of Project results in line with international best practices as well as relevant high-level policy guides. The short-term national and local specialists will have the responsibility of specialized technical support to the Project areas required by the Project. Should other specific issues arise the UNDP will contract additional expertise.

8. Multi-Year Work Plan

The Multi-Year Work Plan is developed in full compliance with the information described in this Project Document and is attached separately to this document (Annex 2).

9. 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 (country) and UNDP, signed on October 2, 1992. All references in the SBAA to “Executing Agency” shall be deemed to refer to “Implementing Partner” as such term is defined and used in this document.

This Project will be implemented by the State Chancellery (“Implementing Partner”) in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices, and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP.

Any designations on maps or other references employed in this Project document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNDP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

10. Risk Management

1. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA, the responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in the Implementing Partner's custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. To this end, the Implementing Partner shall:
 - a) 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;
 - b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Implementing Partner's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
2. 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 Implementing Partner's obligations under this Project Document.
3. The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document 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
4. 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>).
5. The Implementing Partner shall:
 - 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.
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. The Implementing Partner will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud, or corruption, by its officials, consultants, responsible parties, subcontractors, and sub-recipients in implementing the Project or using UNDP funds. The Implementing Partner 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.
8. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to the Implementing Partner:
 - a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and
 - b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines.

The Implementing Partner 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.

9. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP has the obligation to conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP Projects and programmes. The Implementing Partner shall provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to the Implementing Partner's (and its consultants', responsible parties', 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 the Implementing Partner to find a solution.
10. The signatories to this Project Document will promptly inform one another in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality. Where the Implementing Partner becomes aware that a UNDP Project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, the Implementing Partner will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). The Implementing Partner shall provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.
11. The Implementing Partner agrees that, where applicable, donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities which are the subject of this Project Document, may seek recourse to the Implementing Partner 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. Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the Implementing Partner 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 the Implementing Partner 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.
12. Each contract issued by the Implementing Partner 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 the Implementing Partner shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.
13. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the Project, 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.
14. The Implementing Partner shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to each responsible party, subcontractor, and sub-recipient and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are included, mutatis mutandis, in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

11. Annexes

- 1. Results Framework**
- 2. Multi-Year Work Plan**
- 3. Project Risk Matrix**
- 4. Project Quality Assurance Report template**
- 5. Terms of Reference for the Project Board**
- 6. Social and Environmental Screening template**