



# FINAL REPORT

## United Nations Development Programme

### Republic of Moldova

### Strengthening Technical Capacities of the National Institutions for the Human Rights Protection and Promotion

March 2019

Reporting Period	January 2015 – March 2019	
Donor	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, UNDP	
Country	Republic of Moldova	
Project Title	Strengthening Technical Capacities of the National Institutions for the Human Rights Protection and Promotion	
Project ID (Atlas Award ID)	00085117	
Outputs (Atlas Project ID and Description)	00092867	
Implementing Partner(s)	National Institute of Justice, Ombudsperson's Office, Equality Council	
Project Start Date	January 2015	
Project End Date	March 2019	
Total resources required	USD 2,204,465	
Revenue received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular <span style="float: right;">USD 12,405</span></li> <li>• Other               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MFA of Denmark <span style="float: right;">USD 2,192,060</span></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Total <span style="float: right;">USD 2,204,465</span></li> </ul>	
Unfunded budget	N/A	
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## I. Background

The public institutions in Moldova face challenges in the implementation of their responsibilities in the area of protection and promotion of human rights. Among those are the absence of an embedded “human rights culture” and prevalence of discriminatory perceptions in the society. It is generally recognized that these institutions remain weak and in need of strengthening both institutionally (in terms of mandates, infrastructure and resources) and among their staff (in terms of professional capacity, especially when it comes to undertaking the specialized functions of these institutions).

The **Strengthening Technical Capacities of the National Institutions for the Human Rights Protection and Promotion Project** sought to support the implementation of the relevant human rights reforms, plans and commitments, in order to ensure that the capacities of the national human rights institutions are strengthened, so that they are able to perform their key functions on the human rights monitoring, reporting, promotion and protection. The **overall objective** of the project was to improve human rights protection and rule of law through strengthening institutional capacities of key actors in relation to justice and vulnerable groups.

The project sought to strengthen the capacities of public institutions, which have a mandate in areas related to human rights, criminal justice, governance and anti-corruption, in performing their key functions. These institutions include the Ombudsperson’s Office, the Equality Council, the National Anti-Corruption Centre, the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission, the National Legal Aid Council, the National Institute of Justice, and the Constitutional Court. In addition to these, key ministries (Health, Social Protection, Justice and Education) are involved in Project activities to strengthen the “governance” and “human rights” components.

The Project Document identified the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) as a key player in the implementation of the programme, as this specialised training institution is uniquely positioned to bridge programme’s components in terms of involvement of the target groups. Besides strengthening institutional capacities of the NIJ itself for providing professional training to the target groups, NIJ served as a platform for the Project’s capacity building activities, as well as anchored the programme to ensure its sustainability during and beyond the programme duration.

## II. Achieved results

### Project component 1:

#### **Strengthening capacities of the human rights, equality, governance and anti-corruption public institutions in performing their key functions**

Output 1	Institutional capacity developed in monitoring and implementation of human rights standards in key national institutions
Output indicator 1	Number of staff members in participating institutions completing training programme in key national institutions’ functions, in line with identified training needs and capacity assessment and agreed with their respective institutions, hereby capacitated to act as focal points for further training within the group of institutions.  Individual institutional support for participating institutions provided, following completion of staff training and in proportion to number of staff trained, aimed at enhancing the institutional consolidation and sustainability in terms of utilising the

		training of staff.	
Baseline	Year	2014	Staff members in participating institutions have no specific systematic training in NI-functions.  Nis in Moldova receive very limited government funding for carrying out their functions, and only few institutions receive minor external/donor funding to support their core activities.
Target	Year	2018	45 persons completed training programme.  Institutions participating in the training will have obtained funding for various forms of institutional support, enabling them to benefit fully and sustainably from the training of their staff.
Achieved	Year	2018	55 public officials (44 women, 11 men) completed the training programme  14 human rights projects/initiatives, initiated by the participating institutions, successfully completed with Project's support

### **1.1 Training needs and capacity assessment**

The Project's first and major activity consisted in designing and implementing a complex training/coaching programme for the staff of targeted national institutions (NIs), aiming at enhancing their capacity to perform effectively in relation to their core functions and mandates. The training needs assessment conducted by the Project identified the specific needs for strengthening the professional capacities of national institutions' staff, contributing to the improvement of their human rights performance. 149 professionals (62% men and 38% women), representing the targeted NIs, were engaged in the assessment exercise.

The identified training needs were grouped in several modules with a focus on improving human rights and management skills of NIs staff members, which included but not limited to topics concerning the application of Human Rights Based Approach in developing public policies and legislation, results-based management, strategic planning, gender-sensitive issues, advocacy, effective communication, strategic litigation, etc. These topics were supplemented by training-of-trainer skills (ToT) and project development and management skills.

The purpose of the intended professional development programme was to train members of the targeted public institutions and integrate human rights-based approaches (HRBA) and other associated concepts into their daily activities. The individuals who would have undergone the programme were expected to become more knowledgeable and sensitive to the human rights mandate of their own institutions. During the programme they would also obtain teaching/training skills that would help them transfer the knowledge acquired during the training sessions to other public officials.

The results of the training needs assessment were used as the basis for developing the training programme which was delivered by the Project to the representatives of the targeted institutions.

### **1.2 Strengthening capacities of the targeted institutions through training course programme and application of the knowledge received**

Building on the training needs assessment results and recommendations, the Project strengthened the human rights competences of 55 public officials (44 women, 11 men) from the targeted institutions, engaged in a tailored professional development programme. The programme was based on a 'Learn-See-Act' approach, (i) providing the participants with knowledge and skills through a complex training programme (**Learn**), (ii) facilitating the expertise exchange, knowledge sharing and networking on human rights issues with peer institutions from European countries (**See**) and (iii) supporting the implementation of institutional human rights projects/initiatives (**Act**) (see Activity 1.4 below).

### 1.2.1. Human rights training programme

The training programme delivered by the Project has contributed to enhancing the institutional performance of targeted national authorities by strengthening the professional competences of their staff from the human rights perspective. The participants who have completed the training programme have deeper human rights knowledge, improved capacities to mainstream human rights in public policies and legislation, are knowledgeable of HRBA principles and became a valuable human rights resource for their institutions. They are equipped with knowledge and skills required to identify and address a human right problem in a results-oriented manner, while the acquired project management skills are valuable assets for their further professional development. The training activities have also produced several side effects, contributing to improved interinstitutional connections and better communication, and professional networking, and unlocked the trainers' potential of five training participants.

By embedding a participatory approach with interventions at knowledge, skills and attitude levels, the training programme succeeded to cover a complex range of topics, addressing institutional, professional and personal development needs of trainees, as follows:

- Basic human rights concepts. Human Rights Based Approach – centered around the HRBA topic (concept, principles, responsibilities, practical use, etc.) and its integration into the activity of public institutions and services through the lens of various UN and European human rights instruments. The understanding of HRBA application was further deepened through exploring three case studies focused on: (a) access to justice for people with disabilities, (b) the right to private life in health, and (c) freedom of religion in education;
- Organizational management from the human rights perspective – combined basic concepts of management with the human rights-based approach. During this module the participants developed skills of elaborating strategic plans and documents based on HRBA and preparing strategic and operational plans for their institutions with the concepts of human rights integrated into them;
- Promotion of human rights, prevention of and protection against human rights violations: Concepts – provided the participants with insights into the concepts of human rights protection, promotion and prevention in the activity of national institutions and developed public policy designing skills by formulating the problems of certain target-groups, analysing problem trees, doing stakeholder analysis, defining solutions, planning objectives and activities, etc;
- Protection and promotion of human rights – the participants learned the elements of the system of promotion and protection of human rights, were trained to identify and resort to the national mechanisms of protection of human rights, learned how to use the instruments of promotion of human rights and how to carry out their professional activities through the human rights perspective;

- Prevention of human rights violations – focused on the concepts of prevention of human rights violations, development of necessary skills for evaluating the impact on human rights when developing/reviewing public policies. The participants also studied the instruments of monitoring the situation with the implementation of public policies. The module was very useful for the participants who had an opportunity to realize the importance of state’s obligations to protect and respect human rights and of their specific component – prevention of human rights violations;
- Leadership and personal development – the participants learned various concepts and types of professional, personal and relational leadership, and also considered leadership through the perspective of human rights. During the exercises performed they developed the skills in various types of leadership by strengthening their abilities in managing emotions, conflicts, developing relations on personal and professional levels;
- Development of trainer’s skills (ToT) – focused, *inter alia*, on how to make best use of various adult learning instruments and techniques (role play, case studies, simulations, etc.), apply experiential learning models, identify training needs and conduct training assessments;
- Change management and the theory of change – engaged the participants in understanding the meaning of change from personal, social, and organizational points of view, analyzing various models of planning and implementation of change at personal and organizational levels, understanding how the changes should be managed to achieve the planned results and what factors influence the change. They also learned the main theoretical and practical concepts of the Theory of Change and exercised in developing such theory on specific practical cases that included human rights issues;
- Project development and management – building on the knowledge about the Theory of Change, the participants learned about the project cycle management, developing knowledge and skills required for initiating, planning, implementing, monitoring, controlling and closing a project, risk management, budget planning, etc.

Overall, the training programme was completed by 55 participants (44 women and 11 men). Out of this number, 32 occupied managerial positions of various levels within their institutions.

To strengthen the results obtained and ensure greater sustainability of the training programme, 18 trainees were selected on a competitive basis and engaged in an advanced training on HRBA. Applying a ToT methodology, it developed deeper knowledge and skills on HRBA. Starting from differences between HRBA and approaches based on economic growth or on charity principles, the participants were provided with practical tools and techniques for developing public policies based on human rights supported by relevant indicators and learned how to apply these tools at each programming stage: analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The training was based on practical exercises and on the principle of knowledge transfer enabling the participants to share this knowledge with other persons in training activities in the future in their quality as trainers.

“During the entire training, I had the possibility to use practical instruments and apply the knowledge acquired”.

“The trainers were real professionals in the field, with deep knowledge on HRBA and practical experience with HRBA implementation”.

HRBA Training participants

### **1.2.2. Exchange visits and networking on human rights issues with peer institutions from European countries**

As part of the training programme (see above) the participants also had the possibility to meet and exchange knowledge and practices in mainstreaming human rights and/or applying HRBA in the activity of public institutions with colleagues from peer institutions from Croatia (2016), Czech Republic (2016), Estonia (2017), Slovenia (2017) and Slovakia (2018). The choice of these countries had been determined, on the one hand, by the similar background with Moldova (including transition from communist to democratic government), common challenges relating to human rights faced during the transition period, as well as similarities in terms of public service organization and operation. On the other hand, these countries succeeded in achieving important results in advancing human rights and becoming EU member states.

During the meetings, the Moldovan delegations learned from the experience of visited institutions on addressing human rights issues and challenges, best practices in mainstreaming human rights and developing public policies based on human rights, cooperation with civil society organization as policy development partners and service providers, cooperation with international human rights bodies, etc. Most common issues raised during the visits and take-aways for the participants were focused on the rights of ethnic and linguistic minorities, the rights of people with disabilities, domestic violence, development of public policies from the human rights perspective, and functioning of the specialized human rights institutions.

The final visit of the exchange programme was organized in 2018 to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva (Switzerland), involving the most active participants of the training programme. During the visit they met with representatives of various OHCHR departments, got valuable knowledge and insights on the human rights development at the global level and discussed the Moldova's human rights record. The most important take-aways from this visit referred to the need to advocate for establishing the national mechanism for reporting and follow-up to ensure and effective state engagement with international human rights mechanisms, and the pledge for more intense cooperation with the UN Special Procedures on human rights.

Overall, 59 public officials (45 women, 14 men) participated in the exchange programme.

### ***1.3 Institutionalization of the on-line training courses and broadening their impact***

To make the training programme on human rights and management in public institutions (see Activity 1.2 above), sustainable and scalable, the Project sought to transpose the paper-based training modules to on-line/e-learning instruments.

The Project engaged specialized expertise to transpose the training materials and handouts in e-learning content, following the best practices in the industry. However, considering the substantial Project budget losses due to USD-DKK exchange rate fluctuations, a less complex technical solution than initially planned was used to create e-learning content.

Nine online courses have been developed, including eight e-courses centered around public management methods and human rights and one e-course on Human Rights-Based Approach. The content of the e-courses is predominantly based on the materials developed and provided during the training programme. It introduces the trainees into the main concepts of HRBA, presents the basic aspects of human rights, and demonstrates

how human rights shall be integrated into the activity of public institutions. Besides the general information on human rights in the activity of public institutions, the e-courses have a number of practical exercises and examples in order to enable public servants to use the knowledge obtained in their actual activities.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying an e-course page. The URL is [https://ilias.inj.md/ilias.php?baseClass=iISAHSPresentationGUI&ref\\_id=6024](https://ilias.inj.md/ilias.php?baseClass=iISAHSPresentationGUI&ref_id=6024). The page title is "Formarea formatorilor în domeniul drepturilor omului". The main content area features a blue header with the text "eCurs: Metode și instrumente manageriale publice - Abordarea Bazată pe Drepturile Omului (ABADO)". Below this, a dark blue bar indicates the module: "Modul: Formarea formatorilor în domeniul drepturilor omului". The page lists the facilitators as "Valentina Bodrug-Lungu, Silvia Bicenco" and the competencies as "Dobândirea competențelor pentru elaborarea de cursuri și sesiuni de formare dezvoltate pe baza principiilor de instruire a adulților, în domenii care implică prevenirea, protecția și promovarea drepturilor omului." Specific objectives include: "Dobândirea unor noi metode și tehnici de instruire și tipuri de evaluare a activității cursanților.", "Obiective atitudinale", and "Conștientizare personală a importanței drepturilor omului în activitatea funcționarilor publici, fundamente psiho-emoționale de relaționare publică și etica formatorului." Logos for DANIDA, International Consulting Expertise, EWC EAST WEST CONSULTING, and Centrul de Resurse are visible at the bottom. A navigation menu on the left lists course sections from 1.1 to 1.9.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying an e-course page. The URL is [https://ilias.inj.md/ilias.php?baseClass=iISAHSPresentationGUI&ref\\_id=5895](https://ilias.inj.md/ilias.php?baseClass=iISAHSPresentationGUI&ref_id=5895). The page title is "Insula nelocuita". The main content area features a colorful illustration of a diverse group of people on a tropical island. A text box on the right contains the following text: "Grupul este divers, format din 19 oameni femei și bărbați în proporție aproape egală: •un grup turistic organizat de ucraineni din Lviv •o familie de moldoveni •3 turci •câte 1-2 de englezi, francezi, italieni sau alte națiuni. Francezii sunt o familie, iar femeia este însărcinată. Plaja de vârstă este largă și uniformă (tineri, medii, în vârstă)." The page includes a navigation menu on the left with sections 1.1 to 1.5. Logos for DANIDA, International Consulting Expertise, EWC EAST WEST CONSULTING, and Centrul de Resurse are visible at the bottom. A navigation bar at the bottom right shows "Inapoi" and "Inainte" buttons.

The e-courses are available in SCORM 2004 format (allowing uploading on any Learning Management System (LMS) supporting SCORM 2004) and on-line format (allowing posting on websites).

#### **1.4 Supporting carrying out key functions of the National Institutions**

In addition to the training programme itself, the institutions participating in the Project had access to small funding for initiatives integrating and mainstreaming human rights in their activities<sup>1</sup>. Individual projects and initiatives developed by the participating institutions were seen as a mechanism for implementing the knowledge and skills obtained by the participants during the trainings, strengthening their results, and applying in practice the knowledge received. It also aimed at consolidating the capacities of the staff of the relevant institutions to develop various project proposals and successfully manage and implement them.

During the preparatory phase of funding programme the relevant regulatory framework (Operational Instruction on the Implementation of the Programme for Funding Initiatives/Projects of Change in the Area of Human Rights, application forms, instructions, forms for reporting, etc.) was approved and the Funding Committee in charge with the evaluation and approval of project proposals was established. The Funding Committee included representatives of UNDP, NIJ, Equality Council, Ombudsperson's Office, and one member representing civil society (Centre for Legal Assistance for People with Disabilities), chairing the Committee.

Eight national institutions participating in the Project received financial support for the implementation of 14 human rights projects (including one interinstitutional project) selected out of 20 applications submitted during two calls for proposals. The overall budget of implemented projects is USD 291,645, out of which USD 261,279 were allocated by the Project and USD 30,366 represent the contribution of national institutions.

The implemented project addressed the needs of different vulnerable groups and referred to the following human rights areas: human rights education, non-discrimination and equality, human rights protection, access to justice of people with mental and psycho-social disabilities, inclusive justice, quality of legal aid, accessible information on human rights protection mechanisms, human rights awareness, quality education for young people with special educational needs, prevention of human rights violations in prison environment, prevention of reoffending.

This support has contributed to building stronger engagement in advancing the institutional human rights agenda, while the results achieved<sup>2</sup> enabled a change in the national human rights landscape. For instance, the Ombudsperson Office uses a new training needs assessment methodology to deliver tailored human rights training to public institutions<sup>3</sup>; the National Prison Administration applies a set of guiding rules on conducting prison inspections from a human rights perspective<sup>4</sup> and has developed and tested instruments for assessing the reoffending risks<sup>5</sup>; the national legal aid system follows a set of quality standards for providing legal assistance to persons with intellectual or psycho-social disabilities<sup>6</sup>. By transposing the Equality Law into an easy-to read and understand format and making the Petitioner's Guide available in six languages, in Braille

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<sup>1</sup> Reportage "Human Rights in Public Servants' DNA",

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AUbuEfGulg&list=PLW8tTWcbumfOgt4GfldRR7Cu32hMfUgA&index=5&t=0s>

<sup>2</sup> For more details, please see Annex 1.

<sup>3</sup> <http://old.ombudsman.md/ro/content/curs-de-instruire-domeniul-drepturilor-omului-pentru-noii-angajati-din-sistemul-penitenciar>

<sup>4</sup> <http://anp.gov.md/ateliere-de-lucru-operationalizarea-conceptului-de-inchisoare-sanatoasa>,  
<http://irp.md/library/publications/1168-nchisoarea-sntoas-ghid-practic-de-desfurare-a-inspeciei-penitenciare.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.justice.gov.md/libview.php?l=ro&idc=4&id=3904>, <http://irp.md/news/1056-sesiune-de-dezvoltare-a-capacitilor-personalului-penitenciar-n-vederea-respectrii-drepturilor-categoriilor-vulnerabile-de-deinui.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cnaigs.md/ro/news/o-calitate-mai-buna-a-asistentei-juridice-garantate-de-stat-prestate-persoanelor-cu-dezabilitati-intelectuale-si-psihosociale>



alphabet and two language audio versions, people from vulnerable and marginalized groups have access to the information about the national antidiscrimination mechanism<sup>7</sup>. The 2018 Human Rights Perception Study, produced with UNDP support, offers a strong evidence base for the progress in the human rights area<sup>8</sup>.

The Project has also facilitated a post-implementation analysis and knowledge sharing among the institutional project teams. Individual sessions were organized to discuss challenges and problems faced during the implementation of the projects, analyze the results obtained and impact produced, lessons learned, way to ensure sustainability of the results and their further strengthening. The results of individual work and ideas for further interinstitutional cooperation were shared with the peer teams during a follow-up workshop in November 2018.

## Project component 2:

### Strengthening capacities of the National Institute of Justice

Output 2		Capacity of the National Institute of Justice developed to ensure institutionalization of training in human rights standards and criminal justice, and implementation hereof	
Output indicator 2		National Institute of Justice functions as the ongoing anchoring platform for training activity and other joint institutional support in human rights and NI functions for the NIs, e.g. e-library; curriculum with resource materials; network/resource group of staff in participating institutions established; human rights training for justice sector enhanced	
Baseline	Year	2014	No joint facilities of support and/or cooperation for the institutions and no comprehensive or joint training facility for institutions staff. Some training activity in human rights carried out at the National Institute of Justice.
Target	Year	2018	Facilities provided, with the National Institute of Justice capacitated to serve as the anchor for the ongoing capacity building and networking among the NIs in Moldova, and in terms of provision of high-quality human rights training within the justice sector institutions.
Achieved	Year	2018	Multifunctional training facilities created to foster professional development and interinstitutional cooperation  The National Institute of Justice has strong capacities to provide skills-based high-quality professional training to justice professionals, making the human rights issues more prominent in the training curricula

<sup>7</sup> <http://egalitate.md/news-and-information/egalitatea-pe-intelesul-nostru-proiect-prin-care-consiliul-reusit-sa-accesibilizeze-informatia/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/library/effective\\_governance/percep\\_ii-asupra-drepturilor-omului-in-republica-moldova.html](http://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/library/effective_governance/percep_ii-asupra-drepturilor-omului-in-republica-moldova.html)

### **2.1 Strengthening capacities of the NIJ for the training sessions for targeted National Institutions: Renovation and equipment of the NIJ training facilities**

The NIJ provided premises for the Project's use, including office spaces and a training room. These spaces have been renovated in 2015 by the Project to provide an inviting and user-friendly environment. The training room was furnished and equipped to ensure a flexible learning space adjustable to training needs and served as the premises for the training programme for the national institutions implemented under Component 1 of the Project.

#### ***Adapting the Institute's building to the needs of people with disabilities.***

Following the NIJ's important initiative to make its premises more accessible to the needs of people with disabilities, the Project has partnered with two NGOs (*Centre for Legal Assistance for People with Disabilities* and the NGO *Motivatie*) to conduct an innovative "user safari" exercise (a kind of targeted audit) of the NIJ entrance and ground floor in terms of accessibility for people in wheelchairs and for people with visual impairments. A number of adjustments have been made in response to this need:

- The main entrance was equipped with a ramp that eased the access for people in wheelchairs into the NIJ building;
- The ground floor displays a more user-friendly environment for people with visual impairments. Tiles of different colours and texture have been used to help people with visual impairments to better navigate around;
- The ground floor toilet was made accessible for people with disabilities having been adapted to their needs and equipped with relevant tools (access ramp, accessible doors, handrails, accessible sink).

The process started by the Project in 2015 became part of the NIJ's institutional psychology. In subsequent years the NIJ continued making efforts to ensure greater accessibility of its facilities (Braille signage, tactile pavement in the courtyard, all toilet rooms were made accessible). Supporting this enthusiasm, the Project has assisted the NIJ in making the upper floor accessible for people with disabilities. After a number of consultations with technical specialists it was decided that the most efficient and appropriate solution to ensure accessibility would be to install a platform stair lift for wheelchairs at the main staircase of the NIJ. Now, the NIJ building complies with various accessibility requirements and serves as an example for many other public institutions.

The support to increase NIJ's accessibility expanded to the information provided on the institutional webpage. The NIJ's webpage (<http://www.inj.md>) was adjusted to correspond to the requirements of W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, level AA, thus strengthening its accessibility for people with visual impairments.

### **2.2 Strengthening capacities of the NIJ in training judges and prosecutors**

Project support provided to the NIJ was instrumental in reshaping the professional training of future judges and prosecutors, ensuring the access of NIJ trainees to practical knowledge and judgecraft skills based on modern adult learning techniques. The NIJ moved to a qualitatively new level of practice-oriented training<sup>9</sup>, using new mock-trial/simulation methodology and associated instruments. The mock-trial exercises represent more than 50% of the entire training process. Human rights standards are at the core of the new approach to the professional training.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.inj.md/sites/default/files/18/PFI%202018-2020\\_0.pdf](https://www.inj.md/sites/default/files/18/PFI%202018-2020_0.pdf)

The **new training model** employed by the NIJ is built on the extensive analytic and capacity building support provided by the Project, being inspired by the experiences of peer institutions from France, Spain, Romania and Germany. National and international expertise was deployed to assess the NIJ training programme and address the shortcomings in the training process at the NIJ. The findings of the assessment emphasized the importance of implementing practice-oriented trainings based on simulations and mock trials, practical problems solving, and introducing specific human rights problems and issues into scenarios of simulations in order to increase their practicability and to allow NIJ's trainees to see practical value of human rights in their future work as judges and prosecutors. The new training methodology was elaborated in a participatory manner, engaging NIJ management and staff, trainers and trainees, NIJ partners and other stakeholders. It represents a significant change in approaches to the training of future judges and prosecutors that aims at substituting rote learning by skills and competence building through practical exercises.

All case scenarios include human rights and diversity aspects. Thus, human rights and equality issues are dealt with in practical exercises and in specific context similar to real life situations. This approach allows teaching future judges and prosecutors to identify human rights issues and problems, perceive them as vital and essential questions that arise in real cases on daily basis rather than some theoretical concepts torn away from reality.



80 NIJ trainees admitted in 2017 and 2018 are practicing the new mock-trial/simulation methodology, developed with Project's support. The feedback after first year of implementation from both NIJ trainers and

trainees is very positive. Though there were a number of issues to be improved (inconsistency in approaches by various tutors, some tutors still having difficulties in getting adapted to the new requirements) all participants involved in the training process emphasized the fact that the training sessions had become very practical, while the number of purely theoretical lectures had been significantly reduced.

The redesigning of training approach was reinforced and endorsed by the NIJ's strategic development framework, elaborated with Project's support. The NIJ's **Strategic Plan for 2017-2020**<sup>10</sup> was developed in a participatory manner and engaged all levels of NIJ staff, capitalizing on their individual expertise and visions about the future of NIJ. Besides reflections about the main priorities in the activity of the NIJ (initial and continuous/in-service professional training), the new Strategic Plan also reflects such specific aspects and commitments as implementation of ISO standards for increasing the quality of management systems at the NIJ, development of the Legal Information Center, adjusting the NIJ's infrastructure for simulation sessions and increasing the accessibility for disabled persons, creation of the Consultative Forum of NGOs, and establishment of the Eastern partnership platform for judicial training institutions.

Besides the support provided to the NIJ in terms of its institutional development or the improvement of its training methodology, certain efforts were put in by the Project for exposure of the NIJ to best practices from other countries on providing training to justice professionals and sharing of knowledge and experience. The Project has also facilitated the cooperation and knowledge sharing on judicial training among the peer institutions from the CIS region. Following the Project's support, the National Institute of Justice from Moldova and the Academy of Justice from Armenia have signed an agreement<sup>11</sup>, undertaking to expand the bilateral cooperation focusing on professional training for justice actors. This initiative has contributed to a better understanding of judicial training processes conducted in Armenia and Moldova and facilitating cooperation between the two training institutions, sharing their knowledge and experience. It also contributed to the NIJ's efforts in positioning itself as a regional knowledge hub and a leader in developing and sharing innovative approaches to judicial training.

### ***2.3 Application of internet-based technologies for the NIJ's training purposes***

As a result of Project intervention and support, the NIJ has institutionalized a number of e-tools meant to improve the quality and transparency of admission, training and graduation processes.

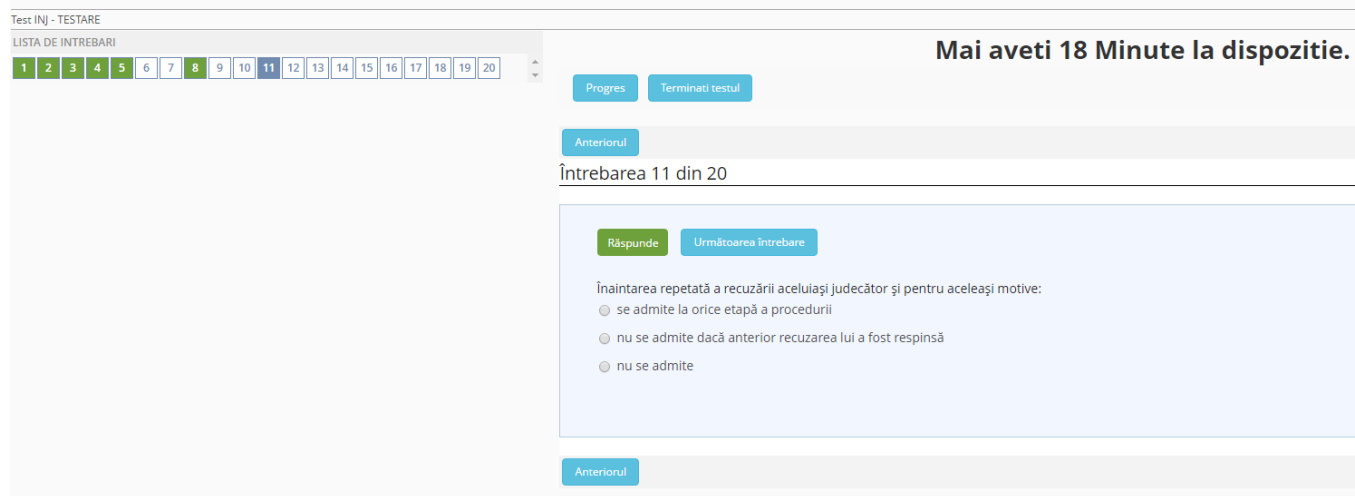
Successfully tested in 2016, the submission of **online applications** for the initial training at the NIJ became mandatory since 2017. It is a precondition for the computer-based testing as the candidates are admitted and can pass the test based on the user profile created during the on-line application process. The unique log-in name and password are generated automatically and notified to the candidates via email. Only using this log-in name and password the candidate is able to access his/her unique electronic examination test generated randomly out of a pool of 1600 multiple choice test questions.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.inj.md/sites/default/files/1.Planul%20strategic%20INJ%20draft%20%20FINAL%20-%20anexa%201%2C%20HC%205-1.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.inj.md/ro/institutul-na%C8%9Bional-al-justi%C8%9Biei-semnat-un-acord-de-colaborare-cu-academia-de-justi%C8%9Bie-din-armenia>

The **computer-based professional testing module** simplifies the process of examination, making possible to mark the candidates automatically and provide the scores straight away once the candidate enters the last answer in a multiple-choice test in the system. When the time runs out, the software no longer allows the candidates to submit any answers and the user receives a detailed report on the outcome of her/his testing indicating the correct and incorrect answers, and the overall final score. The new merit-based method ensures transparency, eliminates the influence of human factor and potential fraud during the examination, it increases trust in a fair selection of the best candidates for the positions of trainee judges and trainee prosecutors. There have been no complaints related to the new electronic testing system registered so far.



The novelty of 2017 was the introduction of a **psychological test**. To exercise the profession of a judge or a prosecutor it is not enough to have necessary professional knowledge. The respective persons should also be able to communicate and establish normal relationships with other people, control their emotions, possess other personal qualities. In order to assess whether the candidates have those qualities this test was introduced. Passing the psychological test introduced as a minimum threshold for being accepted to further professional testing. Another novelty was the introduction into the professional test of a distinct pool of questions on human rights. They aim at increasing the role of human rights in the whole process of training at the NIJ starting from the admission stage.

**IT tools** were also integrated with the oral test: the electronic system randomly chooses case studies for each candidate and provides functionality for automatic aggregation of marks given by each member of the examination commission.

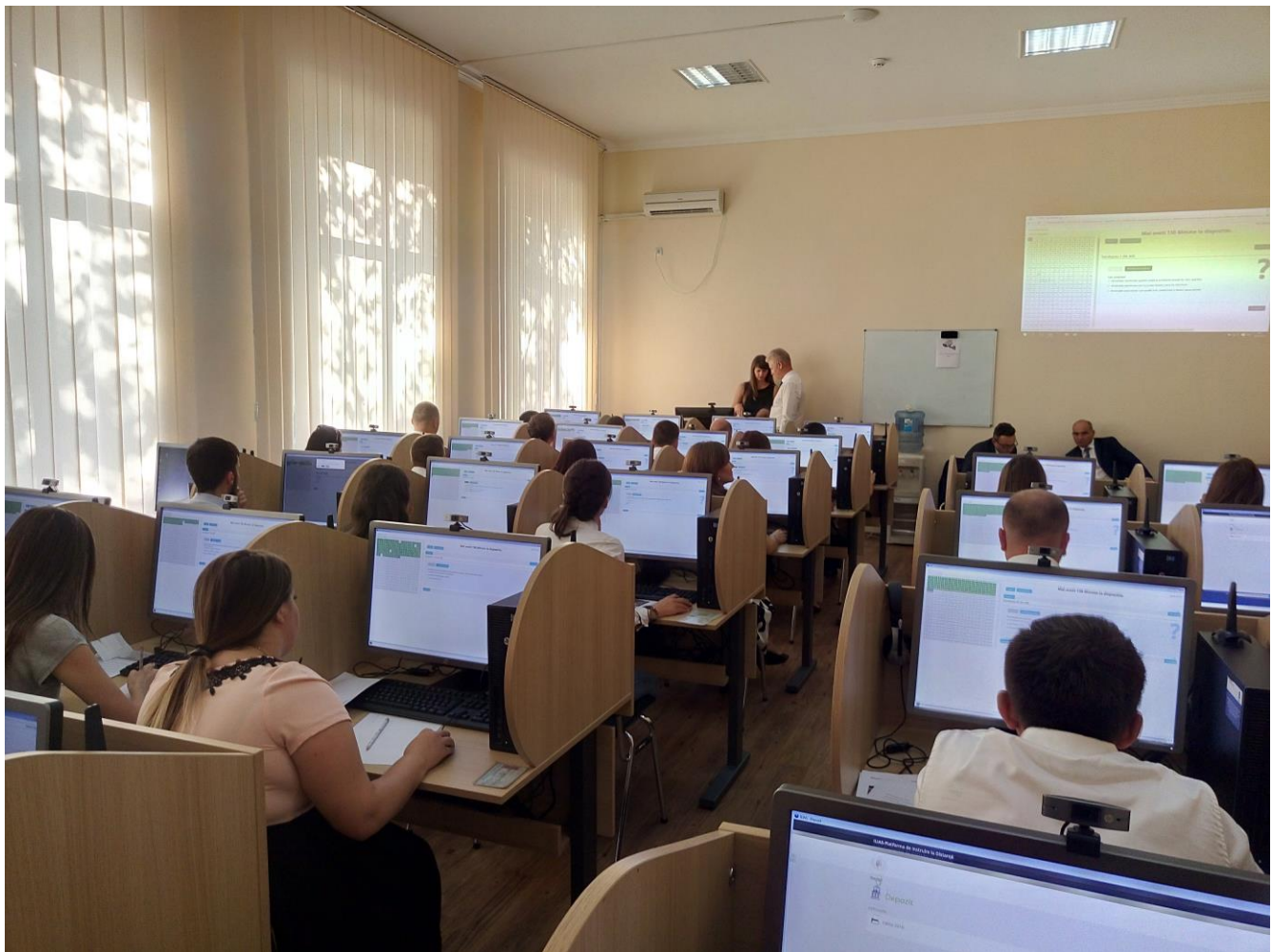
The computer-based testing module simplifies the process of examination by reducing the amount of paperwork and the time for verifying and evaluating the written works, reduces the influence of human factor and potential fraud during the examination and increases **transparency and trust** in the fair selection of the best candidates for the positions of trainee judges and trainee prosecutors.

In 2018 the NIJ continued, with UNDP's support, developing its electronic system and completed the following tasks:



- (i) upgrade and configuration of ILIAS interface for a better e-learning experience and customization of individual user's content,
- (ii) ensuring the interoperability of NIJ's e-management and e-learning platforms by optimizing business processes, ensuring exchange of metadata and excluding redundant data,
- (iii) development of e-tools for the graduation process (codification of users, random distribution of case studies, e-evaluation forms/registers, etc.) and their integration with existing e-platforms.

The aforementioned transformations increase transparency and quality of admission, training and graduation processes and reduce the incidence of human factor interference in the assessment of candidates. These novelties will further strengthen the merit-based competition and will contribute to achieving greater transparency and public trust in the justice system at large.



The NIJ was enabled to develop and implement **e-learning** content. The Project advocated for the strategic positioning of e-learning within the NIJ's development vision. As a result, the NIJ's Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 pays particular attention to e-learning and the opportunities it provides.

Furthermore, the Institute was assisted to develop internal knowledge and skills (instructional design, content management, authoring tools, etc.) and upgrade the hardware and software ecosystems. The Learning Management System (ILIAS LMS) used by the NIJ was customized to provide a more user-friendly experience

and integration with other e-tools applied by the NIJ. A new computer class room was equipped expanding the NIJ capacity from 25 to 36 working stations. The computer room is used not only for learning activities, but also for evaluations and examinations. The NIJ was also provided with two interactive whiteboards/smartboards meant to expand the learning opportunities and experiences and to explore new ways of engagement with NIJ trainees in a collaborative and interactive manner.



The Project engaged with the NIJ to develop three on-line courses to serve as reference products for any further e-learning content NIJ will produce. These courses contain content objects of various level of interactivity to ensure an engaging and dynamic learning process. These courses are as follows:

- (i) UN System of Human Rights;
- (ii) Forensics;
- (iii) Legal Psychology.

All three course were completed and validated and are now used by the NIJ as part of the initial training programme. By February 2019 overall 79 persons completed all three online courses (40 judge-trainees and 39 prosecutor-trainees).

#### **2.4 Establishment and capacity building of the NIJ's Legal Information Centre**

The 2011-2016 Justice Sector Reform Strategy provided that a legal information centre should be established for the benefit of the whole legal profession community in Moldova. The NIJ was appointed as the institution responsible for the creation of such centre.

The Project provided the NIJ with international expertise to assist the Institute in establishing and developing the vision on the Centre. Following a participatory analysis of the situation and consultations with various stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of the Legal Resources and Information Centre (NIJ staff, Ministry of

Justice, Supreme Court of Magistrates, the Union of Lawyers, Public Law Library, other stakeholders) a comprehensive analysis of the then existing capacities of the NIJ to establish and effectively manage such a Centre was provided, as well as the analysis of the needs for legal resources and information across the legal community. The recommendations were based on the proposed core functions the Centre should exercise: (i) creating a law library network, (ii) transforming the NIJ's existing library collection, (iii) developing e-information resources, (iv) providing a one-stop legal website, (v) developing and implementing a clear research agenda, (vi) providing a neutral platform for professional discussions, and (vii) organizing educational events. Three potential models of Centre organization were proposed, ranging from a basic model with the least resource implication, to an intermediate model and an advanced model. The difference between them is the extent to which the Center meets its seven core functions.

The NIJ Legal Information Centre was established at the end of 2016. It combined several of the NIJ services: IT Unit, eLearning Unit and the Library. The NIJ's Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 contains a separate chapter dedicated to the Legal Information Centre focusing on capacity development, awareness and creation of various services for justice professionals.

The project supported the first steps towards fulfilling some of the functions listed above. The NIJ library has been enriched with modern and updated professional literature (120 titles in English, Romanian and Russian), focusing mainly on human rights issues. In addition, the Centre has been provided with ICT instruments (eight PC stations) to increase technical capacities required for fulfilling its mandate.

To ensure the sustainability of efforts directed to diversification of the eLearning content, the NIJ Legal Information Centre was endowed with the specialized software (Articulate Storyline 3, Photoshop CC, Adobe Premiere Pro) meant to be used for the creation and administration of the content for on-line training.

### ***2.5 Alignment to the EU standards and requirements for the peer justice professionals training institutions***

Another important intervention for the Project is to assist the National Institute of Justice in the process of alignment with the relevant international standards. Following the preliminary research, a common decision had been taken by the NIJ administration and the UNDP to implement two ISO standards that were relevant for the activity of the NIJ: ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management Systems – Requirements) and ISO 29990:2010 (Learning services for non-formal education and training – Basic requirements for service providers).

The work on the implementation of the standards included the development and approval of the internal documents required by the standards, providing necessary trainings to the NIJ staff. There were a number of delays in the implementation process caused by the legislative changes that took place during the implementation process and substantial reconstruction of the NIJ's building and training facilities.

By the end of 2018 all the implementation steps had been finalized, entering into the evaluation and certification process. In March 2019, the NIJ was successfully certified<sup>12</sup> in providing services for initial training of judges and prosecutors and services for continuous training of judges, prosecutors, court clerks, judicial assistants, court chief secretaries, prosecutor's assistants, probation officers, legal aid lawyers and other justice related professionals in line with three standards:

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.inj.md/ro/certificate-iso>



- SM SR EN ISO 9001:2016/ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management Systems – Requirements);
- ISO 21001:2018 (Educational organizations – management systems for educational organizations);
- SM ISO 29990:2016 (Learning services for non-formal education and training – Basic requirements for service providers).

Thus, the NIJ has joined the few public institutions from Moldova complying with ISO standards.

### **III. Conclusions and lessons learned**

Following the completion of the project implementation activities, a number of conclusions and lessons learned can be drawn, as summarized below:

#### **Training programme**

- Significant changes in the attitudes of the participants to the issues of human rights could be observed. Some of the participants came to first modules with the attitude of skepticism and denial of the importance of the issues of human rights and their role in the activity of some of the participating institutions. However, after several modules and in the course of exercises performed they started to better understand the importance of the issues in question. They became aware of how their professional activities can relate to the specific human rights topics, learned to identify many human rights related challenges and issues that they had not been previously aware of;
- There were difficulties for some of the participants to make links between certain existing problems in their respective areas and recognize the elements of human rights in them. Though many participants were able to identify those problems and were aware of them, they did not consider them as human rights issues and respectively were less inclined to find solutions through the existing human rights instruments and mechanisms (preferring to search for solutions in specialized primary or subordinate legislation in their respective areas, thus limiting their options). However, many participants started understanding that many problems that they deal with have human rights dimension and, respectively, can be tackled and dealt with from the perspective of the available human rights instruments (national or international);
- There were changes in the number of the participants in the course of the training programme during the whole 8-modules cycle. After it had been launched, some institutions showed more interest to it than the others, and they were given the possibility to delegate more participants than initially planned. This was made in order to encourage those institutions that truly wanted to increase the level of professional competence and improve the skills of their staff. Some of the participants had to leave the programme due to various reasons (personal or professional). At the same time, during the course of the programme a reform of the central government in Moldova took place leading to some participants being released from the positions they occupied. However, those of them who expressed their willingness to continue the programme were given such opportunity, particularly as most of them planned to continue their careers in public sector and the knowledge and skills acquired by them would be used in their future activities for the benefit of the people of Moldova;

- There were also certain modifications introduced into the initial structure and content of the training programme in the process of its delivering. These changes were determined by the observations made by UNDP's Consultant who supported the Programme, the Project team, and the company that provided the trainings (International Consulting Expertise) regarding the level of participation, participants' existing knowledge and level of their preparedness and evaluation made by them after each module. Thus, the possibility to develop and introduce the relevant modifications into the programme showed the flexibility of the implementing team and its readiness to adapt the training course to professional and personal needs of the participants in the process of delivering the programme;
- It could be more effective to have different groups of participants and a variety of programmes adapted to the needs of each such group: depending on the specific nature of their institutions and positions, their personal role in taking decisions and drafting policies, relevant experience, etc. It could have produced a more profound impact on each participant. However, such approach would imply developing several different training programmes and would significantly increase the costs and change logistical arrangements. Therefore, a more general approach was approved that covered the needs of as many participants as possible;
- During the programme a number of specialists were involved representing various national and international human rights institutions in designing and delivering training sessions. That provided better understanding of some specific problems and challenges related to human rights. If designing similar programmes in future, it would be advisable to involve more representatives of civil society organizations that work on specific human rights issues and problems;
- A core group of participants were identified who were particularly higher interest to the programme and the issues that were dealt with. Out of this group a narrower group could be established who were particularly active and willing to implement the knowledge received in their professional activities. This group should be supported in future (through trainings, involvement in other activities) and can be relied upon in developing various policies, implementing programmes and solutions based on human rights, promoting and mainstreaming human rights in public and private institutions. They also need support in order to make the changes produced more durable and sustainable.

### **National Institute of Justice**

- The initial reforms implemented at the National Institute of Justice faced a certain level of internal institutional resistance. It particularly referred to the ideas that regarded the implementation of the initial training methodology and human rights mainstreaming at the NIJ. The reasons for such resistance lay mostly in the fact that the new approaches came against the established practices and traditions of legal training in Moldova and insufficient understanding of the importance of human rights in practical work of judges and prosecutors.

The most important key for overcoming this issue was the persistence of the NIJ's senior management and constant coordination of efforts between the NIJ, the Project team and the consultants contracted to implement the reforms.

Another factor was that the Project not only helped the NIJ in developing the new methodology, but also provided support in the course of its implementation by holding regular meetings and sessions with the tutors and trainees of the Institute, conducting a 3-days workshop after the first year of implementation of the new methodology focusing on the results achieved and obstacles faced, and developing solutions for further improvement of the methodology. These measures ensured the greater impact and sustainability of the activities performed.

- The innovative and highly interactive approaches employed under the new methodology contributed to the generally positive reception of it by the trainees and most of the trainers of the NIJ. Practice oriented exercises and training sessions aim at developing practical skills of future judges and prosecutors. Integrating human rights issues into practical exercises also ensured better understanding by the future legal professionals of the importance of human rights in dealing with real life cases.
- Consistent effort in mainstreaming human rights at the NIJ led not only to the integration of the related issues into the training curriculum, but also contributed to the senior management of the NIJ taking all necessary measures to adapt the NIJ facilities to the needs of people with disabilities. As a result, the building was made fully accessible for disabled people thus ensuring access to the trainings conducted by the NIJ to everyone. The Institute's web-site was also adapted to the needs of people with visual impairments. Following all these activities the NIJ became an active promoter of human rights and serves now as a positive example for other public institutions in Moldova.
- Despite all the positive effects of the new methodology there is still place for significant improvements. It is important that the trainers continue adjusting their courses to fit all the needs of the trainees. Additional attention should also be devoted to developing specialized courses or trainings on specific skills which form the basis of legal work, e.g. legal reasoning.
- The NIJ also became a more transparent institution by introducing and consistently developing the new electronic admission system and integrating e-tools into final examination procedure. It almost completely excluded the possibility of outside interference into the process of selecting candidates for the training at the NIJ. This system can also be further improved, for example, by minimizing human factor in evaluating oral examinations or ensuring fully "blind" evaluation of written papers in final graduation tests.
- Significant challenges were faced by the NIJ in the process of implementation of ISO standards. Delays were caused by various factors. It was only possible to overcome them due to the involvement of the management of the Institute and dedication of the persons directly responsible for this process.
- It is necessary to mention that the NIJ does not always enjoy the support of the institutions (courts and prosecutors' offices) from which most of tutors come. The trainers are under constant pressure from their superiors in their respective institutions because of the time and effort that they dedicate to the teaching activities at the NIJ allegedly to the detriment of their main duties. In order to overcome this challenge effectively, it is necessary to conduct additional work with the Supreme Council of Magistrates, Supreme Court of Justice and Supreme Council of Prosecutors in order to create stable and comfortable conditions of work for NIJ's tutors.

- During the whole Project implementation period the NIJ consistently improved its capacities to develop various forms of online trainings. It implemented a variety of electronic tools into the administrative and teaching processes. The newly established Legal Information Center shall be in charge of further integration of innovative technologies into the training process. However, it is important for the Center to not only work to meet the needs of the Institute, but also to become an information hub for the whole legal community in Moldova. In order to achieve this goal, this idea should be backed up by the senior management of the Institute, and additional resources shall be allocated (which the NIJ currently does not possess).
- In 2016 the NIJ officially became an observer at the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN). However, the level of involvement of the NIJ into the EJTN's activities remains rather low. This happens due to a number of reasons: lack of a clear vision on such involvement and lack of sufficient financial resources. It would be important that the NIJ gets additional support to ensure a more active participation in various activities organized by the EJTN that have a potential for developing the NIJ institutionally and providing targeted trainings to Moldovan judges and prosecutors.
- At the same time the NIJ plays an active role in developing judicial training at the regional level. The reforms that are being implemented by the Institute draw attention to them from peer institutions from other CIS countries and from Romania. Close cooperation relations have been established with the Armenian Academy of Justice, and the NIJ has a potential for further exporting its innovative approaches and methods to other similar institutions in the region.

#### IV. Financial Summary (preliminary figures)

Activity	Fund	Project budget expenditures (USD)					Total
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Component 1. Strengthening capacities of the human rights, equality, governance and anti-corruption public institutions in performing their key functions	DANIDA	97,979	284,006	277,785	323,431	9,658	992,859
Component 2. Strengthening capacities of the National Institute of Justice	DANIDA	316,277	212,174	159,607	103,016	16,194	807,268
	UNDP	-	-	12,000	-	-	12,000
Project Management	DANIDA	100,929	91,450	86,580	85,505	27,469	386,543
	UNDP	-	-	-	-	405	405
<b>Total DANIDA</b>		<b>515,185</b>	<b>587,630</b>	<b>523,972</b>	<b>511,952</b>	<b>53,321</b>	<b>2,192,060</b>
<b>Total UNDP</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>12,405</b>
<b>Grand Total Project</b>		<b>515,185</b>	<b>587,630</b>	<b>535,972</b>	<b>511,952</b>	<b>53,726</b>	<b>2,204,465</b>

## Annex 1

### Overview of the Programme for Funding Initiatives/Projects of Change in the Area of Human Rights

The first call for proposals under the funding programme was launched in March 2017. Nine applications for funds have been received from the targeted public institutions and evaluated against the approved criteria. Out of those four proposals were approved for further implementation. They were completed at the beginning of 2018 with the following results achieved:

- *The Office of the Ombudsperson/People's Advocate:*

The main objective of the project was to institutionalize a standardized approach to human rights training, delivered by the Ombudsperson's Office in line with its mandate, by elaborating the methodology for identifying needs and designing training programmes and strengthen the capacities of its staff to promote human rights through trainings.

The following results were achieved:

- The methodology for the institution was developed. As a result, The Ombudsperson's Office and its staff are better prepared to identify training needs and design human rights training programmes, raise awareness of human rights issues among other institutions, organizations and people, deliver knowledge and skills in human rights related areas by using a tailored-cut methodology;

- 15 staff members of the Ombudsperson's Office (8 women and 7 men) enabled through training of trainer sessions to act as trainers in various training programmes on human rights. The Ombudsperson's Office has already used the new methodology to develop human rights training for the National Prison Administration and the Carabineer troops.

- *Equality Council:*

The project's objective was to identify the discriminatory trends in recruitment announcements in private sector, creating practical instruments for preventing discriminatory advertisements, and providing 30 employers/private companies with capacity building activities to develop non-discriminatory recruitment announcements.

Following the project activities implemented the following results were achieved:

- A study on discriminatory tendencies in recruitment advertisements in private sector had been conducted with the analysis of 535 recruitment announcements, posted on six job portals/webpages. The analysis revealed the use of a number of requirements or conditions, which excluded or favored specific categories of persons. Sex and lack of gender sensitive language, age and appearance/look are the most encountered requirements or conditions in job announcements which have a discriminatory potential and contribute to the perpetuation of social stereotypes in labour market;

- Two guidelines (one focusing on drafting job announcements and another on conducting interviews) were developed to help employers and recruiting agencies in avoiding discriminatory practices in recruitment processes;
- A special web application was developed and posted on the web-site of the Equality Council for checking the existence of discriminatory conditions in job announcements. In addition, a visual identity package (including the design of equality prize) was developed to praise the non-discrimination and equality efforts of different actors;
- 32 persons (23 women, 9 men), representing various scale employers and recruiting agencies, were trained through three training sessions on what the principle of non-discrimination meant in the context of labour market and how to avoid discrimination in advertising jobs vacancies.

- *Constitutional Court:*

The objective of the project was to promote the use of exception of unconstitutionality as a human rights protection mechanism and enable lawyers to use it.

The following results were achieved:

- Guidelines for lawyers on the use of the exception of unconstitutionality instrument was developed and distributed among the members of the Union of Lawyers (Bar Association);
- Capacities of 140 lawyers (51 women, 89 men) to use the instrument of exception of unconstitutionality enhanced through five trainings, conducted in Chisinau (3 sessions), Balti (1 session) and Cahul (1 session). The use of this instrument allows the lawyers to access the Constitutional Court directly if an issue of unconstitutionality and basic human rights set forth the Moldovan Constitution arises in cases pending before national courts in Moldova.

- *National Institute of Justice:*

The objective of the project was to strengthen the capacities of the NIJ trainees/beneficiaries to deliver an inclusive justice by developing learning instruments and capacities of NIJ (guidelines, training programme, pool of trainers) and strengthening communication and behavioral skills of judges and prosecutors to interact with people with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities.

The following results were achieved:

- The guidelines on communicating with people with disabilities for judges and prosecutors were developed;
- Special premises at the NIJ have been equipped to create conditions for developing skills in interviewing people with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities;
- Eight NIJ trainers (5 women, 3 men) trained through a 5-day course on issues of inclusive justice and interaction/communication with people with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities;

- 30 judges and prosecutors (16 women, 14 men) were capacitated through two trainings to better understand the implication of mental disability on delivering justice and how to interact/communicate efficiently with people with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities.

**Table 1. Allocation of Small Funding Programme budget in the first round of call for proposals (2017)**

Institution	Total Budget (USD)	Project's Contribution (USD)	Institution's Contribution (USD)
Ombudsperson's Office	17,990.00	15,000.00	2,990.00
Equality Council	15,780.50	14,726.50	1,054.00
Constitutional Court	16,215.00	14,665.00	1,550.00
National Institute of Justice	19,307.00	15,000.00	4,307.00

**The second call for proposals** was announced in November 2017. Eleven project proposals were submitted with 10 having been approved for implementation. The approved projects and the results achieved were as follows:

- *Legal Aid Council – Project 1:*

The project's objective was to improve the quality of legal aid guaranteed and provided by state by optimizing the information system for the record keeping of statistical data of the Legal Aid Council. The new information system aims at improving the efficiency of communication between the lawyers, Legal Aid Council, and their beneficiaries (clients), and a better collection and disaggregation of data on various categories of beneficiaries.

The following results were achieved:

- The Legal Aid Council's information system was optimized and improved to ensure more efficient collection and processing of data on various categories of beneficiaries, create individual profiles for lawyers providing legal assistance guaranteed by state, and improve the communication of the lawyers with the Council and beneficiaries. The new system allows better monitoring of the quality of services provided, verifying lawyers' reports on the services provided, handling more efficiently the complaints made by the beneficiaries;
- A set of internal regulations was developed and approved by the Legal Aid Council on the methods of collection and disaggregation of statistical data that would ensure better identification of the Council's needs relating to the work with its beneficiaries, collection of data on various categories of beneficiaries.

- *Legal Aid Council – Project 2:*

The main objective of this project was to improve the quality of legal assistance guaranteed by state provided to people with psychosocial and/or mental disabilities by developing and implementing the Standards of quality of lawyers' performance on cases involving people with the respective disabilities and evaluation criteria based on the aforementioned standards.

The following results were achieved:

- The Quality Standards and Monitoring Tools for the activity of lawyers providing state-guaranteed legal assistance in cases involving people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities have been developed. They aim at ensuring high standards of legal assistance provided to people from one of the most vulnerable social groups;
- A training was held in which 17 lawyers providing legal assistance to people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities leading. Following the training, the list of lawyers handling relevant cases involving people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities was extended.

- *Equality Council – Project 1:*

The project was designed to enable people from rural areas to claim their right to not be discriminated. This objective was expected to be achieved by developing an e-course which will be accessed through the Council's web-site, developing a video about the ways people can claim and defend their rights and lodge a complaint with the Council, organizing an awareness campaign in rural areas, and by cooperating with the postal services to reduce the costs of letters sent to the Council from rural areas.

The following results were achieved:

- An eLearning course on the mechanisms of protection against discrimination explained in simple language was developed and placed on the website of the Equality Council, and made accessible for the public;
- An information campaign was conducted in 6 rural areas around the country selected on the basis of geographical and ethnic representation; at the meetings with representatives of local communities the information on the activity of the Equality Council was presented and the materials on the mechanisms of protection distributed;
- A cooperation agreement was made with the postal service "Moldova's Post" to facilitate postal delivery of complaints sent to the Equality Council which were made free for complainants, thus making the process of filing complaints with the Council more accessible for people from rural areas.

- *Equality Council – Project 2:*

The project's objective was to improve the accessibility of information about the activities of the Equality Council and the national mechanism for protection against discrimination. This objective was planned to be achieved by organizing information campaigns, enhancing the access to information about the Equality Council and the national instruments of protection against discrimination for people with disabilities and ethnic and linguistic minorities, creating relevant guidelines with the information being presented in an adapted and easy-to-understand format.



The following results were achieved:

- The Law on Ensuring Equality in the easy to read and understand format was published and distributed;
- A bi-lingual (Romanian and Russian) sound version of the complainant's guide was prepared and placed on the Equality Council's website;
- A version of the complainant's guide in the Braille language (for people with visual impairments) was prepared and distributed;
- A complainant's guide was published in 4 most common languages of ethnic minorities in Moldova (Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz, and Bulgarian);
- Guidelines for organizations on making information accessible were prepared and distributed.

The activities implemented within this project contributed to much greater accessibility of information on the activity of the Equality Council, its procedures, the mechanism of protection against discrimination for people from various social and ethnic groups, improved access to the relevant protection mechanism for people with disabilities and representatives of ethnic and linguistic minorities.

- *National Anticorruption Centre and Ombudsperson's Office:*

The project aimed at strengthening capacities of the National Anticorruption Centre (NAC) and the Ombudsperson's Office to ensure and protect the rights of people in cases of whistle-blowing about the cases of corruption. This was a joint project submitted by two institutions through which it was planned to design a new mechanism of protection of whistle-blowers in which the Ombudsperson's Office would ensure the rights of people in vulnerable conditions while the NAC would ensure the investigation of information received from whistle-blowers.

The following results were achieved:

- A draft methodology on protection of whistle-blowers' rights was developed;
- Trainings and workshops were conducted on the rights of whistleblowers for the staff of the National Anticorruption Centre and the Ombudsperson's Office;
- A video was made to be used in awareness campaigns on the rights of whistleblowers.

- *Ombudsperson's Office – Project 1:*

The project aimed at strengthening public awareness and information capacities of the Ombudsperson's Office by designing and developing the new web-site of the institution. The new web-site would allow submitting online petitions to the Office of the Ombudsperson, connecting the web-site with the institution's intranet, and online monitoring of the progress in processing the petitions. The web-site would also have two new sections dedicated to the rights of children and people with disabilities.

The following results were achieved:

- New website of the Ombudsperson's Office was developed. It was adapted for the use of people with disabilities. The new website of the institution contains a sub-page dedicated to the rights of children, and a section that will reflect torture prevention activity. It also allows submitting online petitions and complaints. The new intranet was also developed to be connected with the website.

- *Ombudsperson's Office – Project 2:*

The objective of the project was to conduct a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the human rights situation in the Republic of Moldova, including the assessment in dynamics (as the last such assessment was conducted in 2016), with additional disaggregation of data as compared to the previous study. The results of the assessment would be published as the National Study on the Perception of Human Rights in the Republic of Moldova.

The following results were achieved:

- Human rights perception study was conducted and presented to the public. The study demonstrates the current human rights situation in Moldova as perceived by its citizens. It was conducted with the support of the Project and other UN agencies (OHCHR and UNFPA).

The study made a comparison in perception of human rights in Moldova in 2016 and 2018. It also identified some persisting challenges related to respecting human rights in the Republic of Moldova, identifying major problems with ensuring the right to equal access to justice, education, healthcare, access to information.

- *Ministry of Education:*

The project's objective was to ensure the right to quality education for pupils/students with special educational needs and to pupils from socially vulnerable groups within vocational education institutions. The project would aim at conducting a baseline study to investigate the current situation and develop the best practices and policy recommendations in the relevant area.

The following results were achieved:

- Analysis of the current situation with ensuring the rights to vocational education for pupils/students with special educational needs and from vulnerable groups was conducted through surveys (200 students were surveyed), 15 interviews and 3 focus-groups of teachers, managers of educational institutions and other professionals working with the respective pupils/students;

- A number of internal regulations have been drafted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research on the issues of vocational trainings for people with special educational needs.

- *Ministry of Justice/National Penitentiary Administration – Project 1:*

The concept aimed at developing the concept of "healthy prison" which would establish clear criteria that the penitentiary institutions in Moldova shall meet. It was expected that a set of evaluation criteria

would be developed and used during inspections conducted at penitentiary institutions. Meanwhile, the staff of the National Penitentiary Administration would be trained to work based on the new evaluation criteria. The ultimate goal was to improve the situation with human rights of people held in detention and reduce the number of cases of abuse in penitentiary institutions.

The following results were achieved:

- The “Healthy Prison” concept was developed from the perspective of national and international human rights instruments which established conditions that penitentiary institutions shall comply with and criteria for their evaluation;
  - Workshops conducted for 25 representatives of various departments of the National Penitentiary Administration and specific penitentiary institutions on issues related to the “Healthy Prison” concept;
  - Practical guidelines developed for conducting inspections of penitentiary institutions based on the “Healthy Prison” concept;
  - Terms of reference developed for automating the process of collecting and consolidating of the information received during the inspections of penitentiaries.
- *Ministry of Justice/National Penitentiary Administration – Project 2:*

The project’s objective was to implement an effective instrument to evaluate the risks of repeated offences by convicted persons and analyse the possibilities of early release on parole. The implementation of the mechanism would be facilitated by a number of workshops and training sessions on the risks of repeated offences (including repeated sexual offences) for the staff of the Department of Penitentiary Institutions. The instrument would be shared with judges to be used in taking the decisions on early release on parole.

The following results were achieved:

- 120 people (40 staff members of the National Prison Administration and 80 representatives of the National Probation Inspectorate) were trained on the Instrument for the Evaluation of Repeated Offences Risks with recommendation on how to apply the Instrument;
- Expert visits were organized to a number of penitentiaries where sexual offenders were kept detained in order to instruct the staff on the effective application on programmes aimed at reducing risks of repeated sexual offences and subsequent social integration of the offenders.

All projects implementation activities had been finalized by October 2018.

**Table 2. Allocation of Small Funding Programme budget in the second round of call for proposals (2018)**

Institution	Total Budget (USD)	Project’s Contribution (USD)	Institution’s Contribution (USD)
Legal Aid Council, Project 1	21,145.00	19,990.00	1,155.00

Legal Aid Council, Project 2	20,284.00	19,984.00	300.00
Equality Council, Project 1	25,250.00	19,990.00	5,260.00
Equality Council, project 2	21,055.00	19,995.00	1,060.00
National Anticorruption Centre <i>and</i> Ombudsperson's Office	33,240.00	29,740.00	3,500.00
Ombudsperson's Office, Project 1	20,700.00	20,000.00	700.00
Ombudsperson's Office, Project 2	25,690.00	20,000.00	5,690.00
Ministry of Education	19,930.00	19,330.00	600.00
Ministry of Justice/National Prison Administration, Project 1	22,000.00	20,000.00	2,000.00
Ministry of Justice/National Prison Administration, Project 2	13,059.00	12,859.00	200.00