



April –
May
2014

No. 2

News Digest

of the Joint Integrated
Local Development Programme

Contents:

- Local elected officials and public servants from JILDP target communities are trained in various fields of local public administration
- A small grant exhibition was organized as part of JILDP's Quarterly Mayors' Meeting
- JILDP target communities are now on Facebook!
- High school students from JILDP target communities say „NO” to plagiarism



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK
DANIDA | INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



The Parity Commission for Decentralization discussed ways to accelerate the reform and transition to the new local finance system

On 19 May 2014, Moldovan Prime Minister Iurie Leancă chaired a meeting of the Parity Commission for Decentralization, which examined the current stage of implementation of the National Strategy for Decentralization and its prospects for the future.

Members of the Parity Commission found that not all actions promoted by ministries followed the principles of decentralization. In some cases, there were deviations towards centralization, and misunderstandings of the principles of decentralization and local autonomy.

However, according to the participants, the Government's efforts in recent years contributed to a better understanding of the situation by its development partners. Thus, various foreign development programs dedicated to Moldova contain action plans to support the implementation of the National Strategy for Decentralization and local autonomy, including additional opportunities for institutional capacity building.

The participants also discussed the new system of public finance management, division of competences between tier I and II local governments, and the sustainability of local public services and social assistance. They also stressed the need to conduct an extensive awareness raising campaign on decentralization, and on the benefits and risks associated with this process, and the importance of decentralization for the socioeconomic development of the country.

The Parity Commission for Decentralization is the main governing body for coordinating the decentralization reform. It works within the Government of Moldova.



Local Government Representatives: “The new system of local finances allows us to be genuine managers in our localities”

The new local public finance system allows local municipalities to increase their own income and gives them the freedom to manage the available funds to meet people's interests. To this conclusion arrived the participants to a public consultation meeting organized by the State Chancellery on 30 April 2014 in order to assess the implementation of the new system of local public finances.

The meeting was attended by mayors, public finance specialists, and other officials from Basarabeasca, Ocnița, Râșcani, and Chișinău – where the new system of local public finance is implemented this year – as well as representatives of the Ministry of Finance, and experts from the Congress of Local Public Authorities and local government assistance programs.

Most of those present at the meeting praised the new system of public finance. “Before, the town hall was merely an information center. Now, with the implementation of the new system of local finance, I came to feel as a true householder,” said Valeriu Scutelnic, Mayor of Bârnova, Ocnița.

Representatives of the Government and development partners will assist LPAs to transition to the new system. JILDPA will train and assist officials responsible for finances in the regions where the system is tested this year. The Programme will consult 71 communities.

The new system of local public finance is an important part of the decentralization reform and passed by Parliament at the end of 2013. The new system will be implemented throughout Moldova starting with 1 January 2015.

Sergiu Palihovici: “There is complete openness and support for the new system of local finances, at the administrative level. Local authorities have realized the advantages the new law offers them. Even though there are some discrepancies or problems, they are accounted for – including through the momentum and desire of the LPAs to have genuine local autonomy.

At the same time, there are problems. These refer to the capacities of the local governments - and I mean not only to the institutional capacity of municipalities or their human resources, but also to the structure that emerges from the current territorial organization of the country. In this context, we are currently finalizing the LPA trainings on the new system of local public finances.”

Excerpt from an interview for *Moldpres* News Agency on 23 May 2014

Mayors and local officials from JILDP target communities, trained to create model municipalities

Elected representatives and officials from 30 Moldovan communities participate in an extensive training program, intended to help them create model municipalities, capable of effectively managing public affairs and providing quality services to local residents.

As part of the training program, mayors, local councilors, secretaries, accountants, tax collectors and other local officials share and deepen their knowledge in several areas of public administration. These are public procurement, local public finances, local tax administration, human resource management, and management of public property. The training program started in the fall of 2013 and will continue throughout 2015.

Nearly half of the employees of the 30 municipalities participate in this series of trainings, which will allow local governments to work better in the interests of their residents.

"There are gaps in the legislative framework, there are many aspects we are unaware of, which makes our job very difficult. In class, we discussed various aspects that give us a hard time, and learned different methods to address them. These range from the proper collection of taxes and management of leases, to tracking people and taxes we missed and an efficient administration of these taxes," said Angela Ursu, tax collector from Ermoclia, Ștefan Vodă, at the end of the course of local tax administration.

The trainings are conducted by three consulting companies hired by the Joint Integrated Local Development (JILDP), and are part of JILDP's intervention to strengthen the administrative capacity of the Programme target communities.



Mayors organize exhibition of small projects, implemented in 30 JILDP communities

At the Quarterly Mayors' Meeting of 15-16 May, mayors and local officials organized an exhibition of institutional development projects (of up to 5,000 U.S. dollars) implemented in 30 communities that have been selected to participate in the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme. The projects include improving working conditions in the town hall, increase transparency of decision-making and better communication between the LPAs and local residents, introducing e-services and promoting community participation in decisions of common interest.



Please see below several examples of institutional development projects implemented in JILDP target communities.

Young people, elders and minorities use the renovated community meeting room in Mingir

The municipality of Mingir, Hâncești, developed an Institutional Development Plan and modernized its local council meeting room, with a small grant provided by JILDP. The room was furnished and equipped using a grant received from the Government. The Mingir council meeting hall has become a community meeting room used by different groups of residents. In the past two months, there have been public hearings of the draft Strategy for sustainable development of the commune, as well as meetings of young groups, the elderly, and representatives of the Roma community. The local council also convenes its sessions here. Over 270 people used the room for activities and community meetings. *JILDP institutional development grants helped most of its target communities improve the working conditions of their meetings rooms.*



Innovative project in Cupcini, Edineț: Cupcini city authorities decided to create a local Economic Council, where they invited 26 businesses operating in the community. The Council will consult the local elected officials on decisions related to the economic development of the city. The first meeting of Cupcini's local Economic Council took place in February 2014.

The municipality of Sculeni opened an Office for Public Relations

On March 27, 2014, the town hall of commune Sculeni, raion Ungheni, launched a new service for the local residents: a Public Relations Office. The aim of the service is to streamline service provision and improve relations between local officials and the people.

According to Mayor Vasile Casian, about 50 people visit the Sculeni town hall every day, asking for certificates and other documents or seeking material aid. Often people do not know whom exactly to address with their problem, and this sometimes creates confusion and disturbs specialists from their work. The new service will operate as a one-stop shop, ensuring a correct and efficient management of people's requests. See [here](#) the press release about the event.



After 22 years, Brătușeni city hall has a new and efficient heating system



Local authorities of the commune Brătușeni, raion Edineț, chose to use the small grant for institutional development, provided by the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme, for two separate projects. Some of the funds were spent on refurbishing an office in Brătușenii Noi, one of the commune's villages, where the mayor will hear local residents when on duty or during field trips to the village.



The remaining share of the JILDP grant addressed an older problem. Local officials used the funds to renovate the heating system in the town hall building, which has been inoperable for 22 years. The municipality bought 13 new windows, and changed the building's system of heating pipes and radiators. They renovated the boiler room and bought a new boiler system, which works on solid fuel.

The new working conditions – which were already tested between February and April of this year – town hall employees can work indoors throughout the whole day. Their office equipment, which used to freeze, is also operational. While locals avoided coming to the town hall during the winter, the situation now changed.

Visit to Chișcăreni, Sângerei: Mayors of JILDP target communities learn best practices in ensuring transparent decision making and people's involvement in community life from their colleagues

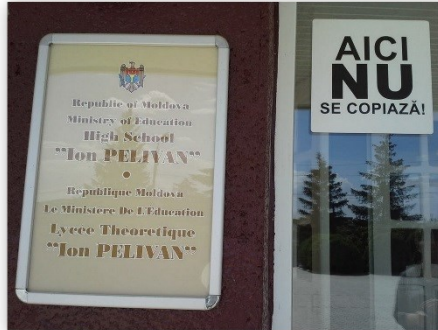
Transparency in decision-making and community involvement has been the leitmotif of JILDP Quarterly Mayors' Meeting on 15 and 16 May 2014. On 16 May, the mayors visited village Chișcăreni, raion Sângerei, where mayor Silvia Țurcanu shared her community's experience in transparency and communication with the residents. The village has a local radio station, the municipality planted several information boards in various areas of the village to keep people informed about the town hall work. At the same time, a lucrative relationship between the municipal authorities and local NGOs and suburban mayors on issues of public interest ensures that people from Chișcăreni are actively involved in local decision-making.



High school students from JILDP communities say “NO” to plagiarism during Baccalaureate exams

The “Youth for Transparency in Education” Project, launched with the support of UNDP and JILDP in the fall of 2013 and scheduled to unfold in 2014-2015, aims to increase transparency in educational institutions by ensuring a widest possible involvement of youth in identifying viable solutions for more open schools, and ideas that could be scaled up nationwide. Project activities will be organized and run by and for young people.

The first action of groups of high school students involved in the project is the distribution of boards with anti-plagiarism messages to interested schools. Project activities can be followed [here](#).



JILDP target communities open „embassies” on Facebook

The popularity of social networks turned them in very convenient - and free - communication tools, and local authorities are increasingly using them to maintain a connection between the municipality and its residents.

Communes Pelinia, Drochia, and Pepeni, Sângerei, have their own groups on Facebook, which are used to keep the residents and former villagers working abroad up to date on what's new in the villages, and to consult community members on certain decisions of common interest. Residents of Sărata Galbenă, Hâncești, also can follow the latest news from home on the village's Facebook page, which has more than 250 fans.

Mayors themselves often resort to communication via social media. Although Chișcăreni, a village in Sângerei, has its own web site and a popular group on Odnoklassniki network, mayor Silvia Țurcanu uses her personal profile and the village group on Facebook to share and promote the municipality's news and achievements.



The local public finances system made him think... of poetry

Pavel Codreanu, Mayor of village Rusești Noi, Ialoveni, is a talented man. Not only is he a good manager of his village's affairs, but he also writes poems about everyday experiences. The transition to the new system of local finances inspired the mayor to write some lyrics. (See one poem, in Romanian)



Presiunea fiscală

Ce înseamnă presiune,
Mai ales fiscală?
Am atâtea a Vă spune –
Sunt deștept, și, fără fală –

Că pe nimeni nu omor,
Cu vreo taxă ori impozit,

Presiunea-nseamnă dor
De un leș, parazit,
Ca să-l facem să lucreze
Zi și noapte cu ardoare,
Să zidească, să creeze,
Și pe ploaie, și pe soare.

Noi în locul lui să fim,
Împreună să trăim.

The **Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP)** assists the Government of Moldova in the decentralization process, which aims to promote local autonomy and access of all people, especially those in rural communities and vulnerable groups, to quality public services.

After the development and adoption, in 2012, of the National Decentralization Strategy, in 2013-2015, the Programme focuses on the implementation of the Strategy, with emphasis on two key directions:

- *Improving the policy and legal framework to ensure local autonomy, availability and more efficient management of local resources, for provision of better services to all;*
- *Strengthening the local governments' capacity to provide public services in an efficient, fair and accessible manner, ensuring sustainable development and social inclusion.*

The Programme is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), with financial support from the Government of Denmark.

JILDP's National Coordinator is the State Chancellery of the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

Opinions expressed in this News Digest are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of UNDP, UN Women, or the Government of Denmark.

JILDP Target Communities (2013 - 2015)



CONTACTS:

Lucia Aprodu
Communication Consultant
Mob: (+373) 6002-6702
E-mail: lucia.aprodu@undp.org

Follow us online:
www.descentralizare.gov.md
<http://www.md.undp.org/>
<http://facebook.com/descentralizare.md>