



Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting

Project: Enhancing Women`s Political Representation through improved capacity and enhanced support in Moldova (Women in Politics)

Venue: Jolly Alon 1st floor Conference room (37, Maria Cibotari Str.)

Date: 12 December, 2017

Members of the Steering Committee:

1. *Asya Varbanova, UN Women ad interim Country Representative*
2. *Stefan Liller, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative*
3. *Nina Orlova, Senior Programme Officer, Embassy of Sweden*
4. *Sorin Mereacre, President of East Europe Foundation Moldova*
5. *Alexei Buzu, Executive Director of the Center "Partnership for Development"*

Observing members:

1. *Victor Besleaga, Senior Advisor in Strategic development at Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova*
2. *Alina Russu, Chairperson of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC)*
3. *Alla Skvortova, UNDP, Programme Specialist/Cluster Leader Governance, Justice and Human Rights*
4. *Sergiu Galitchi, Programme Manager, UNDP Democracy Programme*

Secretariat:

Emilia Rusu and Cristina Turcu, "Women in Politics" Project Associates

1. Opening remarks

Asya Varbanova, UN Women Acting Head of Office

Ms. Varbanova opened the meeting and thanked the Implementing Partners, the Parliament, the Government and WiP team for contributing to the Programme achievements. Special gratitude and appreciation went to the Embassy of Sweden in Moldova for the offered support. Ms. Varbanova mentioned that the Programme was implemented within 3.5 years, while encountering huge challenges, such as 4 governments being changed, local, national and presidential elections. Despite these, we have reached great results, such as adoption of the National Gender Equality Strategy, with one of the objectives being advancement of women participation in decision making, and other objectives related to the advancement of gender equality in Moldova. We rely greatly on women leaders to take this agenda forward, in partnership with men. The Strategy on Ending Violence against Women was also developed and is expected to be adopted. Same for the National Action Plan on Security Council Resolution 1325.

The first "outcomes" of the Law 71, the adoption of which the Programme contributed to as well, could be observed this year. No results could be observed in relation to quota, since there were not yet elections deployed after its adoption. But in relation to provisions of sexist language, sexism in advertising, and paternal leave, real effects are ongoing.

Ms. Asya Varbanova ended up by thanking the Embassy of Sweden for entrusting the team with this Programme – a never implemented before modality of bringing together two UN Agency and two NGOs to realize it. Gratitude was expressed not only for being Programme's donor, but its ally and partner and strong supporter of the Programme objectives. Thanks were extended to the team which proved to be incredibly committed to the cause of the Programme. Mrs Varbanova pointed out that the developed partnership will not end up and will continue for the sake of advancing gender equality for even more ambitious and stronger results.



Mr. Stefan Liller, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative

Mr. Liller reconfirmed that this Programme was very successful and brought significant achievements on gender equality promotion. He thanked the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the Secretariat, the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), the Center for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) and other direct partners for their contribution to implementing this programme, for all openness and engagements on integrating the gender perspective within their institutions and activities.

Mr. Liller emphasized that among Programme's advancements, as a result of the above mentioned partnerships, Moldova was chosen to host the Regional Conference on Gender Sensitive Parliaments in October 2017 showcasing some achievements and some of them were Women in Politics Programme related. It was mentioned during the Conference that even if increasing the number of women decision making has been relatively modest, their capacities have been strongly developed and their voices made being heard. Still, in terms of society perceiving women as leaders in politics and decisions making needs more efforts.

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative also highlighted the role of the Programme in engaging men and boys in speaking up publicly on supporting gender equality (He For She Campaign, 2015), political participation of women, challenging of traditional Gender stereotypes, capacity building activities, regional and local political forums, and Individual Gender Champions campaign, all of these actions being critical in advancing GE in different institutions. He also mentioned that much more should be done in the context of the electoral systems changes, as real impact on the gender quota is forecast.

Mr. Liller stated that the international development context represents some challenges in terms of violent extremism, disproportional negative effect of climate changes on women, sexism in the political speeches worldwide, etc. He spoke about the newly approved UNDP core documents: Strategic Plan (approved on 20th of November 2017) and the new Country Programme Document, both containing gender equality mainstreaming. For the first time the Strategic Plan contains a common chapter for UNDP, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, UNFPA mentioning specifically the joint work together in this direction. Mr. Liller also spoke about the recent UN Women Special Town Hall Meeting hold on November 20, 2017 between the UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner on joint work at country and global levels to advance GE agenda.

Ms. Asya Varbanova added that UN WOMEN had finalized and approved the 5 years Strategic Plan for Moldova and Women in Leadership is one of the three strategic areas, meaning work with partners on promoting women and developing their capacities would continue.

2. Progress update on the implementation of the Programme in 2017

Svetlana Andries, WiP Programme Manager

Mrs. Andries presented the 2017 Progress update on the Programme implementation in 2017, as well as the achievements, lessons learned and key results reached during 2014-2017 (more details in the WiP Final Report and ppt).

3. Interventions by implementing partners

Mr. Sorin Mereacre, EEF President, mentioned that they were thrilled to work with UNDP, UN Women, CPD, and along with the long-standing donor –Embassy of Sweden. He mentioned that they are ready to collaborate with the up-mentioned partners within other opportunities, as there are elections to take place in the upcoming year, as well as in 2019 and all of us should be prepared to promote the gender equality agenda. Mr. Mereacre pointed out that he is pleased with the work done in the field of advocacy and adoption of the Special Temporary



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Measures and the achievements related to legislative package 180 (actual Law 71). He also spoke about how the Gender Equality Platform was formed and how many challenges it faced within these years of activity and that it will continue being supported by their organization. Other topics brought up by Mr. Mereacre were about the created Political Clubs and their members' willingness to run for elections.

Alexei Buzu, CPD Executive Director, mentioned that the cooperation within this Programme was empowering for the Implementing Partners, due to the developed equal partnership among the UN Agencies and Civil Society. In terms of achievements Mr. Buzu emphasized the following:

- The Programme raised the gender equality degree of awareness and relevance at different levels. If making a meta-analysis of the civil society public activities, notes and actions, GE topic is placed in the top three. Mr. Buzu gave some examples about attitude changes on GE in some public institutions:
 - Changes in the electoral system in 2017: political parties were the ones stating that this modification will reduce the opportunities for women to be more represented.
 - The Venice Commission first opinion on the election system change provided in 2014 did not mention GE, but this year they placed GE in the top 6 concerns. Therefore, the Parliament mentioned that in case political parties will respect the set quota, they are possible for more funding from the state.
- In terms of GE activists, the Programme created a "big army" at the local level. WiP even reached the under-representative minority groups.
- The Programme built evidence for GE, emphasizing GE importance through data and how it impacts the life of many women and the society at general.

Mr. Buzu concluded that this work should continue and in order to achieve more results we should further use the actual build assets within the Programme.

Ms. Alina Russu, CEC Chairperson thanked WiP for the given support and cooperation and mentioned the important activities conducted together, such as the civic education campaign for voters, training of the electoral administrators on the Gender equality module, producing disaggregated data on the last 3 elections, BRIDGE trainings on the topic of enhancing awareness of electoral stakeholders on the gender perspective of different electoral systems, and support offered to the CEC leadership. Special emphasis was given to the creation of the WEM-International Association and the common successful organization of the October Round Table on the topic "Good practices in promoting gender inclusive electoral processes". She also presented the latest updates on WEM-International registration process: four founding members were identified, therefore the formalizing procedures in Belgium being developed, with CEC/CCET taking it over after WiP closure.

Mr. Pavel Cabacenco, CCET Chairperson, re-emphasized the important support in the above mentioned trainings, as well as the "Conducting together" training on building leadership skills for women and men. He also said that a program on gender equality promotion was included into the CCET curricula and that he engages on further support to WEM-International development.

Nina Orlova, Senior Programme Officer, Embassy of Sweden, spoke about the program launching and project proposal writing, as well as about MDTF framework of running the Programme. She also mentioned the risks envisaged and the mitigating measures, seeing UN as trustful partner, as well as EEF and CPD. She expressed high appreciation to all the team and partner CSOs for the results achieved in such a short time-frame, while the work done is a break-through on putting the gender equality on the political agenda.

4. Disposal and transfer of assets

Ms. Svetlana Andries, WiP Programme Manager, mentioned that according to UN WOMEN procedures, furniture will be donated to the most active and gender sensitive beneficiaries of the Mentorship Programme, run under the Programme. The Transfer of Title and Ownership will be made on the understanding that the assets will be used for supporting organizations in promoting Gender Equality purposes at local and national



levels. The Multi Functional Device (Xerox Copy Center) will be donated/transferred to CPD. The armchairs and staff PCs will be transferred to UN WOMEN CO for the implementation of Women in Leadership Impact Area.

Victoria Ignat, UNDP Component Manager, mentioned that according to the UNDP Policies, the UNDP Component has only non-assets and they will be transferred/donated as follows: furniture to UNDP projects under development, one lap-top and a working station to UNDP Country Office, one lap-top and a working station to the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova, one lap-top and a mobile phone to CCET, one water cooler and one shredder to CEC.

Nina Orlova, Senior Programme Officer, Embassy of Sweden, approved this procedures on behalf of the **Embassy of Sweden**.

Conclusions and Decisions

The donation/transfer of the Programme furniture and equipment was approved as stated above, as per Components/Agencies procedures.

The Programme will be operational closed on 31 December 2017.

The Programme will be financial closed on 31 December 2018.

The Final Programme Narrative Report will be presented to the Donor in May 2018.

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