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**Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) meeting for the
„Programme for Improving the Quality of Moldovan Democracy through Electoral
and Parliamentary Support (Elections II)”**

MINUTES

UN House
131, 31 August Str., Chişinău, Republic of Moldova
14 August 2014

Agenda

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| 15.00-15.05 | Opening remarks
Alla Skvortova, Portfolio Manager, UNDP Moldova |
| 15.05-15.20 | Presentation of the project’s objectives, components and activities. Project management and implementation arrangements
Elmars Svekis, Electoral Specialist, UNDP Moldova |
| 15.20-15.40 | Discussions and recommendations |
| 15.40-15.55 | Questions and answers |
| 15.55-16.00 | Conclusions |

List of Participants

1. Alla Skvortova, UNDP
2. Iurie Ciocan, CEC
3. Doina Bordeianu, CEC/CCET
4. Elmars Svekis, UNDP
5. Veaceslav Palade, UNDP
6. Stela Leuca, USAID
7. Angela Matcov, SE Cadastru
8. Stefan Crigan, State Agency on Land Relations and Cadaster (ALRC)

Proceedings of the meeting

1. Introduction

Alla Skvortova opened the meeting, thanking all participants for taking their time to participate and discuss the proposed programme extension. She mentioned that organization of the LPAC meetings is a standard procedure of UNDP whereby the project proposal is being scrutinized and discussed with all concerned stakeholders with the main goal to seek the opinions of those concerned and eventually introduce changes into the project proposal for its improvement. From this perspective UNDP is very grateful to all participants at this meeting and their opinions, remarks and recommendations regarding the discussed projects are very much welcome and valuable. All participants introduced themselves.

2. Presentation of the Project

The project document was presented by Elmars Svekis. Mr. Svekis started with the background of the project and justification, presented the expected results, outcomes and goals, continued with explanation of the planned activities and budget and in the end invited all participants to address questions and remarks.

The Project is a continuation and expansion of the current Democracy Programme Electoral Component (hereinafter referred to as Electoral Component II), to be funded by the Government of Norway with the time frame of 2 years and four months, from September 2014 until end of 2016.

Background:

Currently CEC and UNDP are partners in implementing a programme on Parliamentary development and Electoral support. While there have been significant achievements over the past years within this project, a number of priorities require further support. Also, during implementation of the first phase of Democracy Programme between 2012 and 2014 a number of new developments have taken place in the context of electoral administration and in the wider context of governance in the Republic of Moldova.

There has been a discussion on possible new electoral systems with a draft proposal on changes to the electoral code being sent for official opinion to the Council of Europe Venice Commission in November 2013. There have also been extensive discussion and changes to the Electoral Code and other relevant legislation on, inter alia, introduction of the State Register of Voters (SRV), introduction of temporary special measures, as well as changing the system of political party financing in Moldova. The Central Electoral Commission (CEC) in the near future may have additional responsibilities on monitoring implementation of political party finance legislation. Electoral reform and political party finance legislation are two further issues that require support, in line with the CEC Strategic Plan. The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) has been set up and started to function in full in 2013. CCET has the responsibility to train and certify electoral administrators on a wide range of subjects. The CCET and its trainings are key to ensure better electoral administration during future elections. ~~CCET requires additional support to~~ strengthen its programmatic and methodological basis as well as to enable training of all electoral administrators. The institutional development of the CCET is a strategic priority for Moldova and the CEC. In this context CEC have addressed an appeal to donors to provide and continue support for the above mentioned priorities. Based on this request, UNDP has developed a project concept submitted to the Norwegian MFA to continue the current programme with the following key activities:

- 1) Support to the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training;
- 2) Support to implementation of comprehensive electoral reform;

- 3) Support to implementation of political party finance legislation;
- 4) Support to development of official address register and other key registers.

Activity 1 – Support to the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET)

As part of this activity, in line with CCET Development strategy the project will support training to the core team of CCET employees; development of the website of the Centre and the elaboration of the roadmap for further developing the CCET (Strategic Plan); support to establishment of Centre's didactic foundation, training programs and methodology; support for training and certification of professional electoral officials.

Activity 2 – Support to implementation of comprehensive electoral reform process

As part of the activity the programme will provide support to the CEC, Parliament, Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations and academia to conduct analysis, provide expertise and technical assistance and will provide support to organizing workshops, conferences and public discussions on electoral reform to increase transparency and inclusiveness of the process.

Activity 3 – Support to implementation of political party finance legislation

As part of this activity the programme will support training programmes for political parties on the new political party finance legislative framework; will support capacity building support to the relevant CEC departments to enhance ability on monitoring and reporting on political party finance legislative framework and will provide small grants to Civil Society Organizations to support monitoring of the implementation of political party finance legislation.

Activity 4 – Support to development of address register and other key registers

As part of this activity the programme will support relevant Moldovan authorities including, Agency on Land Relations and Cadaster (ALRC) and SE "Cadastru" to develop a strategy on address system implementation. The programme will also provide support to the development of legislative and regulatory framework, as well as development of the required technical documentation, such as manuals, guidelines and forms templates. As part of this activity the programme will also support development of technical specifications for a modern address register. Furthermore, the programme will support development of a modern official address register, which would serve as they key register of addresses and that would be used as the single source of address data not only by the CEC, but also by other governmental and private entities. Specific support is planned to relevant line ministries and institutions on development of specifications for other key registers required for improved quality of the State Register of Voters, such as a Register of students at the Ministry of Education, a Register of citizens without the right to vote under the Ministry of Justice, a Register of persons in pre-trial detention under the Ministry of Interior and a Register of military personnel under the Ministry of Defense, a system to provide to the CEC the up-to-date information on persons in the medical institutions by the Ministry of Health before the elections day. ~~Additionally there will be facilitation and provision of technical assistance to ensure the interoperability of~~ the address register and other key registers with the State Register of Voters, as well as other key state registers, such as State Register of Population, Businesses and others through the Government interoperability platform.

The budget of the project is **1,490,051 USD** to be funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

3. Discussions:

Questions had been suggested to the participants of the meeting for appraising the project that had to reflect on **Relevance, Feasibility, Commitment, Accountability, Cost effectiveness, Sustainability, Environmental and Social Impacts, Risk management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Gender Equality** framework:

a) How relevant are the project objectives in relation to national priorities, and the Country Cooperation Framework (CCF), United National Partnership Framework (UNPF), Common Country Action Plan (CPAP) or CSN?

All participants stated that the project is in line with the national priorities; specifically it will contribute to the achievement of improved electoral processes and systems in the country and provide support to continue the current initiatives in the area, being also in line with the current agreement between the UN and the Republic of Moldova.

b) How relevant are the objectives in relation to the aspirations and needs of the beneficiary and the UNDP mission to promote sustainable human development?

The project was assessed as very timely and positively and perfectly fitting into the current development priorities of the country. As stated by Dr. Ciocan, the project is very timely – it comes just ahead of Parliamentary elections (30 November 2014) and will continue with support to local elections in 2015. It is also very relevant as in 2016 (by the end of the project) a new CEC composition will come into place and the project will ensure a continuity of the started actions with the new members and administration.

c) Does the chosen project implementation strategy represent the most promising approach to address the development problem?

The proposed project strategy was stated as being adequate and observing all principles for a successful implementation of the proposed intervention. The combination of capacity development and other technical assistance (provision of expertise, training, exposure to the best practices) will ensure a smooth implementation and achievement of all stated objectives and goals. As this project will be a continuation of an on-going programme, the approach to implementation modality will remain in the biggest part the same – each institution, CEC, CCET as well as ALRC and SE “Cadastru”, when CEC will be the Implementing partner and will be responsible for achieving the project objective and results, while coordinate the project interventions and UNDP will provide support to the process and will participate at in taking the major decisions taking.

Dr. Ciocan has enquired if it would be possible that the CCET component of the project can receive funding for activities for direct implementation of activities, separately from the main project and CEC. This argument idea was is based on the fact the CCET is an independent legal body (legal body) and has the capacity for the implementation of activities can/should receive assistance on its own, besides the assistance received from CEC and related projects. Ms. Skvortova answered positively to this request in the sense that UNDP has similar experience of this type of project implementation with other projects. can enquire with the donor and look for possibilities to use Direct Cash Transfer modality for the CCET component. For this, CCET would need to be independently assessed vis-a-vie several management and

financial indicators according to a specific methodology and if the donor agrees and the outcome of the assessment will be positive then UNDP and CEC can take the decision to fund the CCET component separately using the Direct Cash Transfer modality.

d) Have all the relevant stakeholders been identified, including government and civil society organizations, local communities (as relevant), beneficiaries, donors and private sector?

The participants confirmed that the beneficiaries and stakeholders of the project have been identified in close consultations with all relevant institutions and organisations through a series of preparatory meetings.

e) To what extent did the main stakeholders of the project participate in the identification and design stages?

From early stages of project development CEC and UNDP had extensively involved all relevant stakeholders in the design of the project interventions and allocation of resources to different activities. Several meetings were held during the project formulation stage with representatives of the CCET, IS Cadastru, State Agency on Land Relations and Cadaster, relevant NGOs and elections experts.

f) Other questions and issues raised:

- Ms. Leuca, USAID inquired whether the possible electoral reform would affect provisions of both Parliamentary and Local elections. Mr. Svekis and Dr. Ciocan noted that support would be provided to the electoral reform process as a whole and in case there will be initiatives to reform the system for local level as well, then the project would provide support as needed. Mr. Ciocan also mentioned that if there would be territorial administration reform then there may be limited time to undertake electoral reform based on new provisions according to these reforms. It was noted that the component needs to take into account the risks connected to such eventual reforms and update the risk management log respectively.
- Ms. Skvortova addressed a question to Mr. Crigan (ALRC) if whether the previously other external support received support by the Agency from donors does not overlap with the activities of the current project under discussion. In his reply Mr. NNN Crigan stated that the support received, inclusively from Norway, is not intended for the addresses register as planned in the current project, so that there is no duplication. The Agency needs support to improve the legislation on Cadaster, specifically to address the problem of registration of properties first and assignment of addresses afterwards respectively.
- Ms. Leuca made a comment concerning Activity 2 and 3, specifically- if the project will support the electoral reform, then at least some information campaigns or information actions should be planned for a greater participation and transparency of the whole action. All agreed to this suggestion.
- Ms. Bordeianu (CCET) mentioned the project is very opportune and needed. The CCET has specific plans for training of electoral staff for the upcoming elections (about 4000) and the project is very timely to support these efforts.
- Dr. Ciocan also made references to the environmental impact of the project and integration of the gender aspect. The project's impact on environment is seen as positive, as CEC with the project support will implement a big part of its operations and processes in on-line mode and thus will reduce the need for paper and other resources. As regards the gender dimension: based on new ICT systems and Registers to be developed, CEC will be able to make sex disaggregated analysis of the electorate:

preliminary electoral lists, voters, voters abroad etc., of the candidates and elected officials lists and of the membership of the elections bodies. The new phase of the project is planning to use the experience and extend the gender mainstreaming actions from the previous phase when a Gender audit was conducted and an Action Plan put into application.

- Ms. Skvortova proposed the following composition of the Project Steering Committee:
 - CEC
 - UNDP
 - SE Cadaster
 - State Agency for Land Relations and Cadaster
 - Center for Continuous Electoral Training
 - MFA of Norway

5. Recommendations and decisions

The following decisions were unanimously adopted by the participants:

1. Approve the Addendum Project Document, the Work Plan and the Budget of the project.
2. Approve the suggested NIM management arrangements and the Project Steering Committee composition.

Developed by

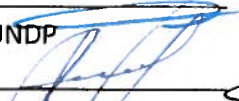
Veaceslav Palade, Programme Associate

Approved by

Dr. Iurie Ciocan, CEC



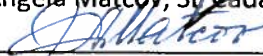
Alla Skvortova, UNDP



Elmars Svekis, UNDP



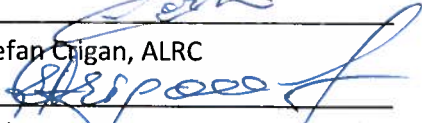
Angela Matcov, SE Cadastru



Doina Bordeianu, CCET



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Stela Leuca, USAID
