



Progress Report

Progress Report No. 4

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Title of the Intervention: Promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solution in the water and civil protection sectors for enhanced rural resilience
Project Period: 01 December 2018 – 31 March 2022

Reporting period:

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 **Austrian
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List of Abbreviations

ADA – Austrian Development Agency
ADC – Austrian Development Cooperation
BCI – Business Consulting Institute NGO
CEI – Call for Expression of Interest
CCDRR – Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction
CALM – Congress of Local Authorities in Moldova
COVID-19 – Coronavirus disease of 2019
CWG - Community Working Group
EIARMSP – Environmental Impact Assessment and Risk Management & Sustainability Plan
LPA – Local Public Authorities
LPAC – Local Project Appraisal Committee
GIES – General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations
MDL – Moldova Lei
USD – United States dollar(s)
NGO – Non-governmental Organization
PIU – Project Implementation Unit
RC – Rayon/District Council (tier 2 LPA)
UNDP – United Nations Development Program

Summary of the progress of the intervention

During the reporting period, both project components have significantly progressed in implementation.

Output 1, Activity 1.1 Mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management priorities into local development planning frameworks has been finalized and targets have been achieved. Therefore, Local Public Authorities from all selected communities (5) have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management plans as an integrated part in the local development strategies which contribute to the increased resilience of the local natural ecosystems. Moreover, 70 persons (officials from 5 LPAs, heads of public institutions and the private sector, including women and men) have increased capacities to integrate climate and disaster risks into local development strategies.

Output 1, Activity 1.2 Pilot water storage infrastructures in 5 districts of the country to enhance adaptation to climate change in the water and agriculture sectors has registered progress as well during the reporting year, resulting with 10 out of 10 completed technical project and EIARMSP documentation for water storage infrastructures construction for ten selected beneficiaries (farmers) within CEI held in 2019.

As for the sub-activity 1.2.iii: Conduct capacity development activities for agri-producers for at least 50 farmers, during 2020, the Project has fully finalized the planned reports on the on-site analysis of the most appropriate agricultural crops, irrigation technologies and production approaches for all 10 selected beneficiaries and a comprehensive report of technical specifications for equipment and irrigation schemes (drawings, detailed configurations, power sources, specifications for pumping installations, etc.) for one selected beneficiary for which the photovoltaic system for irrigation is planned to be installed in the upcoming year.

Output 2, Activity 2.1. Establish Community-based rescue and firefighting brigades in the most vulnerable and risk exposed districts of the country has registered progress as well, resulting with finalization of negotiation process and approval on financial contribution for firefighting stations with 4 out 5 intervention areas. Subsequently, during 2020, the Project has signed respective Financial Agreements with participating LPAs from Cantemir, Leova and Ungheni districts in the amount of 2.96 million MDL or approximately 172,000 USD and the Statement of Intent for procurement of 1 intervention vehicle in Sarata Galbena (4th intervention area) that has an estimated value of minimum 75,000 USD (2020 market prices). Regarding the last area of intervention (Drasliceni), the project is in the process of negotiating with details in the next section of the report.

During 2020, the Project in collaboration with the National Implementing Partner and project beneficiaries has also finalized and agreed on the technical specifications for the intervention vehicles in 4 communities, planned to be procured in 2021.

Moreover, during 2020, the Project has finalized 5 out of 5 planned Environmental Impact Assessments identifying the potential social and environmental risks as well as feasible options for their mitigation (EIARMSP) and technical designs for all stations to be established in the selected communities.

Output 2, Activity 2.2. Conduct capacity development for climate and disaster response local teams and raise awareness towards building a culture of safer living

During 2020, the Project identified the expert to develop a tailor-made and targeted training curriculum for the compliant attestation of volunteer firefighters at community level, that should include the specifics for the non-professional intervention group. The training curriculum is to be coordinated and approved for use by the Republican Training Center, an accredited institution of GIES. Thus, the main output of this process is to strengthen the capacities of the rescue brigades from the rural communities.

Background (update)

During the reporting period and up until the cut-off date, the following significant changes occurred with regards to framework conditions (*i.e. relevant governmental and sectoral policies, political support, the environment of the intervention or other*): presidential election, changes in the water sector legislation to allow using underground water for irrigation purposes and COVID-19 pandemic and its impact during 2020.

As of August 19, 2020, the Government has approved the “Regulation on the use of groundwater for drip irrigation of agricultural land”. Since the Project promotes irrigation with stored water from precipitations exclusively, legislation allowing underground water for irrigation would have imposed some risks on project implementation and results (*farmers dropout*). However, the risk has been eliminated as the Project’s technical engineers have analyzed the selected lands for the construction of water infrastructures and these, from a technical standpoint, were selected accordingly, including taking into consideration the subsequent capacity to store the required volume of water from precipitation only for the irrigation.

The COVID 19 outbreak had a considerable impact especially on the collaboration process with the project contractors and beneficiaries, farmers, and especially local public authorities as follows:

- Project beneficiaries (LPAs and farmers): the pandemic situation has challenged the local authority governance overall and especially the decision-making process. Since the project requires a financial contribution from the beneficiaries in implementing the activities, due to COVID 19, difficulties have been encountered undergoing public consultation procedures at the local level, achieving a quorum to adopt decisions that subsequently led to a delay or changes in securing the planned contribution from the direct beneficiaries.
- Contractors: delays in the design that has undergone a permitting process from the state authorities and subsequent construction works of the water storage basins and firefighting posts have been registered in 2020 due to limitations imposed by the pandemic situation.

It must be noted that, despite COVID-19, the consultation and participation mechanisms for project beneficiaries have been respected in line with the project’s provisions. Meetings of the Local Councils have taken place which ensured that the decisions taken by the LPAs reflect the interest of the local population. Support to the district councils has been provided by the project team and GIES in several cases when there were difficulties to engage with the community-level authorities.

Presidential elections have impacted the project implementation as well, several risks have been identified around political factors. Hence, the Project activities were planned in a manner that allowed all local interventions to occur outside the election-related activities and processes.

The project maintained a neutral profile in the regard; thus, it was not associated with any electoral or pre-electoral processes neither at local, nor district or national level.

As from the project overall coordination standpoint, the UNDP team has reacted promptly to the situation and a series of adaptation measures were implemented. The coordination/cooperation with local public authorities, actors and stakeholders during the crisis was being carried out remotely via online communication channels and, when necessary, physical meetings were organized respecting the imposed sanitary measures. Project Board and discussions were conducted online. All measures taken were highly regarded by project implementation partners and beneficiaries, as these secured smooth project implementation amidst the pandemic context.

Stakeholder analysis (update)

During the reporting period, no changes occurred with regards to target groups (i.e. beneficiaries, gender disaggregated data, or other). The Project has worked with the GIES in all project implementation matters especially pertaining to Output 2.

In terms of stakeholders, beyond the anticipated cooperation, the project has identified potential collaborations around Project Output 2: *Community-level climate and disaster management capacities improved for risk reduction, prevention, and timely response.*

These relate to 2 separate lines of support highly valued by project stakeholders and were built around the aim of increasing sustainability, effectiveness, and efficiency of project interventions. During 2020, the project team's efforts to mobilize resources have led to the financial assistance kindly provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia that contributed as much as 100,000 Euro to increase the Project's capacities to support enhanced support to communities in terms of infrastructure and equipment. To be noted that the contribution from Ministry of Foreign of Estonia is a complementary one, i.e., in addition to the planned (as per the budget) co-financing contributions of EUR 242,190.

Monitoring results

Output 1. Adaptation interventions in the water sector for agricultural purposes and flood management demonstrated and local climate change related policy frameworks in place in a selected number of districts.

Activity 1.1 Mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management priorities into local development planning frameworks

Targets:

- *LPAs from 5 communities have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities integrated into approved local development strategies*
- *50 officials from 5 LPAs, heads of public institutions and the private sector, including women and men, will have increased capacities to integrate climate and disaster risks into local development strategies.*

During the reporting period, the activity has been finalized and targets have been achieved resulting in LPAs from 5 communities (Sarateni, Drasliceni, Pirlita, Baimaclia, Sarata Galbena) having gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management plans as an integrated part in

the local development strategies which contribute to the increased resilience of the local natural ecosystems.

UNDP has contracted a specialized company through a competitive selection process to assist 5 selected communities to mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management priorities into local development planning frameworks in a participatory and gender-sensitive manner¹. The contractor (*Business Consulting Institute*) has performed the following planned activities according to the Project Working Plan for 2020:

- Community Working Groups (CWGs) have been created in each target locality and activity plans developed and adopted.
- Community profiles were developed and validated.
- Trainings on mainstreaming climate adaptation and disaster risk management priorities delivered.
- Support provided to the LPAs in the public consultation process for approval of the Community Climate Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Plans.

The main role of the established Community Working Groups (CWGs) was direct involvement in the process of elaboration or updating the development planning framework at the local level. The CWGs membership in total is as follows: 76 members, including 44 women or 58% and 32 men or 42% out of which:

- 75% are civil servants within the LPA and institutions subordinated to the local authorities and municipal enterprises,
- 15% are active citizens and representatives of local CSOs and different active social groups in beneficiary communities, and,
- 10% are representatives of the business sector.

After CWGs establishment, a desk review of existing national development frameworks, strategies, plans and development programmes was performed. Methodological tools adapted to the national planning process and national policy documents were used to examine and assess the risks and opportunities related to climate change and disaster risk management in the strategy planning processes. Issues related to community development were analyzed and the findings of the assessment, development needs and trends, improvement solutions and mechanisms were discussed with the CWG members and included into the Community profiles.

Subsequently, during August-October 2020 training sessions were organized for 154 representatives from the target communities. The training courses' aim was to increase the level of knowledge on climate change and disaster risks and develop capacities of the local public authorities and civil society on effective implementation and monitoring of the Local Policy Programs.

An overview on the participants, by group and disaggregated by gender, in the workshops and trainings is outlined in the table below:

#	Community	Date	Total pers.	Gender		Sector		
				F	M	LPA	CSO, citizens	Private sector
1	Sărata Galbenă (Hîncești)	04.06.2020	7	3	4	6	0	1

¹ Budget cost Item: 4.1.1 National company for CC&DRR&Water Priorities Mainstreaming and Capacity Building

2	Sărăteni (Leova)	09.06.2020	26	11	15	15	4	7
3	Pîrlița (Ungheni)	11.06.2020	12	10	2	9	1	2
4	Baimaclia (Cantemir)	17.06.2020	10	5	5	8	1	1
5	Drăsliceni (Criuleni)	18.06.2020	15	7	8	12	2	1
Total			70	36	34	50	8	12
%, ratio by group participation			100%	51%	49%	71%	11%	17%

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic and restrictions imposed on the organization of public events, it was no possible to carry out ordinary public hearings to consult the proposed plans. Only in one community, at their request, an online hearing was organized (Pirlita). As for the rest of communities, the documents were placed on official webpages of the mayoralty for public consultations as presented in the table below:

	Community	Web page/address link	Nr. of views/consultations
1	Sărata Galbenă (Hîncești)	https://www.facebook.com/dinsaratacudrag/	26
2	Sărăteni (Leova)	https://www.facebook.com/Biblioteca-Public%C4%83-S%C4%83r%C4%83teni-Leova-938894766198770	107
3	Pîrlița (Ungheni)	https://www.facebook.com/primaria.pirlita.77/posts/337397327594161	62
4	Baimaclia (Cantemir)	https://www.facebook.com/people/Biblioteca-Publica-Baimaclia/100057528185770/	163
5	Drăsliceni (Criuleni)	http://drasliceni.md/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Pr-nr.17-din--Plan-riscuri-climatice-2-files-merged.pdf	26

As a result, the Community Climate Adaptation and Risk Management Programs elaborated under the Project were adopted at the local level by all target communities contributing also to the achievement of national targets outlined in the SDGs 13.1, 5.5.

Activity 1.2 Water storage infrastructures piloted in 5 districts of the country to enhance adaptation to climate change in the water and agricultural sectors.

Targets:

- 10 water storage basins built in 5 districts.
- At least 120 ha of agricultural land with increased capacity to withstand droughts.
- 120 ha of irrigated land producing high value agricultural crops
- Precipitation water storage capacity of 120,000 m³
- Beneficiaries' perception of the quality of their production and their capacity to withstand severe drought conditions is increasingly positive compared to baseline situation.

Sub-activity 1.2.iii: Conduct capacity development activities for agri-producers

During 2020, the Project expert on Agriculture and Irrigation², Mr. Anatol Fala, has launched the process of capacity building of the beneficiaries of the 10 project sites.

² Budget Cost Item 4.1.4.f National Consultant - Soil and Land/ Irrigation

Considering COVID 19 and subsequently delays, the following activities were completed only during the reporting:

- Reports on onsite analysis of most suitable crops, irrigation technologies and production approaches for the 10 selected beneficiaries.

- A comprehensive technical specifications report for irrigation equipment and schemes (drawings, detailed configurations, energy sources, pumping installations specifications, etc.) for each beneficiary.

The Project has started to re-think the capacity building program approach to delivery, taking into consideration the imposed limitations by pandemic situations with regard to meetings and events. Therefore, at the end of 2020, the expert on Agriculture and Irrigation has adjusted the approach/method of implementing the sub-activity relying on digital tools mostly. The Project will update on the progress in the next reporting period.

Sub-activity 1.2.iv: Construction of water storage basins.

During 2020, the Project has managed to fully finalize all 10 envisaged Environmental Impact Assessment/Risk Management & Sustainability Plans (EIARMSP) for the selected pilot sites where the water storage infrastructures will be put in place. The EIARMSP was developed in line with UNDP and ADA requirements for social and environmental safeguards. The EIARMSP contain inter alia such information as: socio-economic and environmental context of the selected project’s sites, potential social and environmental impacts due to project interventions and proposed mitigation measures.

Further, facing challenges in identifying technically compliant contractors due to limited market of specialized companies to design hydrotechnical objects such as water storage infrastructures, the Project has managed to contract two companies as a result of a competitive selection process for the first and direct contracting for the second, and has fully finalized the technical designs for all ten water infrastructures. Moreover, the Project has supported the project direct beneficiaries to obtain the permits and authorizations required by the national law which were issued accordingly by the end of 2020. Hence, the Project has also secured the required contribution of minimum 20% per site by signing Memorandums of Understanding with the selected farmers as outlined in the table below:

Beneficiary	District	Estimated storage Capacity of basin (m ³)	Planned area for irrigation (ha)	Farmer contribution USD	Farmers contribution %
1. "Grand Depot", SRL	Cantemir	4200	28.3 ha	5,145.00	21%
2." Concom RTCA" SRL*	Criuleni	5160	16 ha	10,911.74	27%
3." Agro-Vet Consulting" SRL	Hîncești	16000	32,6 ha	7,600.00	20%
4."GG Prim" SRL	Hîncești	5250	5 ha	17,825.00	37%
5.GȚ" Rotaru Lucia"	Hîncești	12800	20 ha	11,618.00	28%
6." Concom RTCA" SRL	Hîncești	15000	30 ha	10,911.74	27%

7."Binețe - Lux" SRL	Leova	10310	23 ha	11,310.00	27%
8." Cand-Vas" SRL	Ungheni	15430	27 ha	25,700.00	46%
9. FF" Popa Ilie"	Ungheni	25000	5.08 ha	9,456.49	25%
10. FF" Ursu Constantin"	Ungheni	25000	6 ha	23,191.36	44%
Total		106,150	193 ha	133,153.69 USD	Min: 21% Max: 46%

*Note1: The Memorandums of Understanding between UNDP - Farmers are in USD.

*Note 2: Planned area for irrigation was revised as per finalized detailed technical project designs.

With reference to the set targets, an area of at least 193 ha is planned to be irrigated through the water infrastructures having a total storage capacity estimated at 124,000 m3. The variations in the proposed area for irrigation against the water storage capacity depend on the type of agricultural crops proposed by farmers that represent different necessities' in terms of water quantity to be used/applied.

The farmers contributions according to the signed Memorandums of Understanding exceed the minimum of 20% as required contribution to the construction of the water basins.

During 2020, also facing the challenge in identifying specialized vendors in the hydrotechnical field, the Project has managed to contract two companies as a result of a competitive process and kick off the construction process for 7 out 10 water reservoirs. The remaining three are to be launched in the process at the beginning of 2021.

It must be noted that, this activity is highly dependent on the weather conditions, since most of the construction works are related to earthworks that require specific soil/field conditions and minimum to zero precipitation so that soil moisture is low to perform the groundworks. For this reason, the schedule of works on this sub-activity undergoes changes which, however, do not exceed the general project planning. The project ensures constant monitoring in this regard, and any changes received from contractors are first approved by the Project, technical engineer and EIA expert to ensure the quality of the works and respecting required measures related to environmental protection in the process.

The substantial completion of works and commissioning for this sub-activity is planned to be achieved no later than mid-autumn 2021. The final commissioning is preceded by preliminary/substantial commissioning which is meant for remedying of defects or incompliances with the Bill of Quantities (if any) within an established period set by the reception committee accordingly. Also, both commissioning processes , i.e., preliminary, and final take place in the presence of relevant national bodies authorized to commit such works as a measure of risk prevention related to construction works. Detailed information will be provided in the next reporting period.

In terms of monitoring and quality assuring for the activity, the onsite contract monitoring and management was/is being ensured by the project engineer, while overall contract management by the Project Manager and Cluster Lead. The Project Engineers, the technical supervisors and representatives of the beneficiaries are monitoring the whole process and evaluate the performance through regular on-site visits. Also, ad-hoc monitoring visits were undertaken by the project engineers.

Output 2 Community-level climate and disaster management capacities improved for risk reduction, prevention, and timely response

Activity 2.1 Establish Community-based rescue and firefighting brigades in the most vulnerable and risk exposed districts of the country

Targets:

- 5 completed technical designs and EIARMSP documentations.
- 5 new rescue and firefighting posts established, properly equipped and corresponding local budgets allocated and inclusive prevention plans
- 55 communities (and their population) from 5 districts benefit from increased protection from natural and man-made disasters due to capacitated rescue and firefighting teams.

During 2020, the Project has managed to fully finalize all 5 envisaged Environmental Impact Assessment/Risk Management & Sustainability Plans (EIARMSP) for the selected pilot sites where the community firefighting stations will be put in place. The EIARMSP was developed in line with UNDP and ADA requirements for social and environmental safeguards. The EIARMSP contain inter alia such information as: socio-economic and environmental context of the selected project's sites, potential social and environmental impacts due to project interventions and proposed mitigation measures.

Further, the Project has managed to contract a specialized company certified in technical designing ("BimTech" LLC, license nr. AMMII 0445303 issued on 31.07.2014) as a result of a competitive selection process and has fully finalized the technical designs for all 5 objects by the end of 2020.³ The key experts that were assigned by the company to develop the technical designs are the following: Nicolae Petrov, chief architect, certificate 2019-P nr. 0465 issued on 18.12.2019 and Petru Popa, chief engineer, certificate 2019-P nr. 1639 issued on 15.06.2017. All compartments of the technical design were approved by certified national verifiers accordingly as per the verification notices that are a part of the list of deliverables according to the contract between the design company and UNDP.

Moreover, the Project has supported accordingly the project direct beneficiaries, end-users of the firefighting stations to obtain the required permits and authorizations by the national law which were issued accordingly by the end of 2020.

Hence, the Project has also established solid partnerships at the community level resulting in the Local Public Authorities' engagement to co-finance the activity through signed Cost-Sharing Agreements for the required contribution of minimum 20% per site as outlined in the table below:

Intervention area District	Participating LPAs	Financial contribution (MDL)	Additional contribution planned to be secured in 2021	Status
1.Ungheni district Pîrlița village	9	950,000.00	150,000.00	Decision adopted/allocated

³ Budget Cost Item 4.2.1.b *Refurbishing support (contribution to costs related to refurbishing premises to accommodate the rescue/firefighting staff while on duty and a garage for the location of specialized vehicle. It includes, works costs including where necessary replacement or installation of new windows, roofs, gates)*

2.Cantemir district Baimaclia village	9	914,130.00	185,870.00	Decision adopted/allocated
3.Leova district Sarateni village	11	1,100,000	-	Decision adopted/allocated
4.Criuleni district Drasliceni village	5		1,100,000	Decision submitted for public consultation/to be decided/adopted in 2021
5.Hincesti district Sarata Galbena village	4	<i>In-kind contribution.</i>	-	Decision adopted
Total	38	2,964,130 MDL allocated in 2020	1,435.870 MDL expected to be allocated in 2021	4/5 communities have allocated co-financing

*Please note that the Cost-Sharing Agreements between UNDP-LPAs are in MDL.

During 2020, the project team held multiple consultations and went through a negotiation process with the Local Public Authorities to ensure co-financing of the envisaged constructions, given that the final construction costs, according to the technical design, proved to be higher than initially estimated. The negotiation process resulted in the signing of Cost-Sharing Agreements with all LPAs in 4 out of 5 intervention areas. Since the technical design for Drasliceni (Ratus) firefighting post was finalized at the end of 2020, the respective commitment with the LPAs will be decided upon/finalized in 2021.

Specifically, it should be noted that, by the end of 2020, the project secured the LPAs financial contribution from Cantemir, Leova and Ungheni districts in the amount of 2.96 million MDL or approximately 172,000 USD (UNORE December).

Moreover, the Project also ensured in 2020 the in-kind contribution of LPAs from Hîncești district by signing and adopting the Statement of Intent by which the community must provide a fully equipped fire truck/intervention vehicle that has an estimated value of minimum 75,000 USD (2020 market prices).

With this contribution under the Financing Contracts and respective Statement of Intent, the Project managed to launch the competitions for procurement of construction services for 4 out of 5 posts. Further information should be covered in the next progress report.

During 2020, the Project has also finalized and agreed on the technical specifications for specialized vehicles with the national implementing partner (GIES), including the equipment, planned to be procured in the following year, 2021.

It should be noted that, this activity is highly dependable on the political factor at the local level due to COVID-19 and political events as well during the reporting year. Several risks have been identified and either are mitigated or in the process as follows:

- Security/Health risk: COVID-19 challenging the local authority governance that led to difficult/delayed decision-making process on funds allocation that subsequently could impact the upcoming construction process organization.

- Political risk: LPAs' dropout due to insufficient funds to either contribute to the establishment of the firefighting station or/and early based contribution for maintenance.
- Political risk: LPAs dropout due to local councilors' unwillingness to support the initiative.
- Financial risk: insufficient funds for firefighting stations construction and intervention vehicle due to market price variation/instability as a result of COVID-19.

During the year, the Project and the National Implementing Partner (GIES) closely monitored and communicated with the participating LPAs thus anticipating some cases in which either LPAs were going to abrogate the decision due to the lack of necessary funds in their allocated budget for the current year and managing in due time to negotiate with the district councils to cover the contribution or identify other LPAs that fall within the intervention area criteria.

Also, to ensure that the LPAs are aware about the project objectives and expected results, the Project has had several meetings either physically or via online tools to cover necessary information thus resulting in a low rate of LPAs' dropout from the initially targeted ones considering COVID-19 and having 38 participating LPAs by the end of 2020 that agreed to contribute to the project out of which, 33 have allocated the necessary financial contribution to the Project.

It should be mentioned that the final number of LPAs participating and benefiting from the subsequent services of the fire station will be reviewed finally in 2021. In addition to the authorities participating to the construction of the station, the project in close cooperation with GIES will facilitate attracting other potential LPAs in the area. It is important to secure the budget for the maintenance of the fire station during the project implementation period to ensure the stations' operationality and sustainability of the project. Progress in this regard will be reported in the next reporting period.

Activity 2.2 Conduct capacity development for climate and disaster response local teams and raise awareness towards building a culture of safer living

During the reporting period, the Project has established a working group including representatives of GIES, the GIES Training Center and EcoContact NGO (Project Board Member) to determine the training needs for the volunteers that are expected to be a part of community firefighting brigades. Based on the inputs provided by the above-mentioned working group, the Project has elaborated the Terms of Reference and as a result of a competitive selection process, the expert (Efim Olaru) was contracted to elaborate a tailor-made and targeted training curriculum and attestation process for firefighters and rescue units⁴. The activity is planned to be finalized by the end of March 2021 and should be covered in the next progress report.

Visibility events

During the reporting period, the UNDP Team, in collaboration with the GIES have conceptualized the approach to the organization and implementation of the autumn campaign on the prevention of household fires during the cold period of the year. The Project has a specific measure of support, embedded in its Project Document, aiming at mitigating the risks of household fires and fire-related household incidents through the provision of smoke detectors to the most vulnerable households situated in the 5 Project intervention districts of

⁴ Budget Cost Item: 4.2.2.a. National Consultant - Capacity Building, curricula development

Moldova. In this regard UNDP has organized and successfully conducted two tenders for: (i) procurement of smoke detectors; (ii) elaboration and production of awareness raising materials and (iii) production of a video-spot to raise the awareness of population on the importance of smoke detectors for increased household safety. UNDP procured and handed to GIES 990 high quality smoke detectors for socially vulnerable families in 5 target districts of the project based on the list provided by the national implementation partner (GIES).

Information and awareness raising materials were produced. Among these, UNDP and GIES produced calendars containing information on smoke detectors, leaflets and a short publication on the household risks associated with the cold period of the year accompanied by instructions and mitigation measures, notebooks, pens, special impermeable bags and reflective vests for primary-school aged children.

As a result, the GIES autumn campaign started during the reporting period and a visibility event was organized in one of the project's beneficiary LPAs – village Sarata Galbena, Hincesti district, where the Project also sets up collaboration with LPAs for the construction of a firefighting and rescue station at community level. The event was joined by Mr. Alexander Karner, Head of Coordination Office for Technical Cooperation of the Austrian Embassy in Chisinau, Head of GIES General Mr. Mihail Harabagiu, UNDP Resident Representative Ms. Dima Al-Khatib, Ambassador of Estonia Mr. Simu Tiik (the Estonian Government joined the project with co-financing for the construction of firefighting stations), representatives of village and district authorities and the local population. After a presentation of priorities and types of support provided by UNDP with financial support from the Austrian Government, the representatives mentioned above have visited two households where smoke detectors were installed, and information materials were handed to representatives of vulnerable groups. Beyond the event, GIES has spearheaded the campaign installing smoke detectors and handing out materials to the most vulnerable households selected by each mayoralty according to the lists of households available at the social assistant within the LPAs.

Moreover, referring to the awareness campaign, the project has issued a press release to raise the visibility in this regard and media clippings are presented below:

Issued Press release on campaign launch and smoke detectors, available in Romanian and English languages:

- [„O casă protejată – o viață salvată” – o campanie pentru salvarea de vieți a fost inițiată în cinci raioane din Moldova | PNUD în Moldova \(undp.org\)](#)
- <https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/austria-i-pnud-incurajeaz-oamenii-s-instaleze-detectoare-de-fum.html>

Social media posts on the launched campaign:

- <https://www.facebook.com/PNUDMoldova/posts/3538357962900653>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/green.moldova/permalink/3934112003266779>
- <https://www.facebook.com/PNUDMoldova/posts/3454660477937069>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pnudmediu/permalink/2570648696558712>
- <https://www.facebook.com/PNUDMoldova/videos/172537200688568>
- <https://www.facebook.com/PNUDMoldova/posts/3634227656647016>

The issued press release and social media posts were widely circulated, few media clippings are listed below:

- <http://vectoreuropean.md/austria-si-pnud-incurajeaza-oamenii-sa-instaleze-detectoare-de-fum-pentru-a-salva-vieti/>
- <http://ecofm.md/2020/12/21/austria-si-pnud-incurajeaza-oamenii-sa-instaleze-detectoare-de-fum-pentru-a-salva-vieti/>

During 2020, the Project has also implemented activities to raise the visibility, such as press releases on the water infrastructure construction progress. The press release issued by UNDP Moldova has been widely disseminated via UNDP official web page and web pages or/and newsletters of the project partners – GIES, MARDE, LPA, business companies, civil society, press, etc. as presented below:

Press release on rainwater collection and storage issued in Romanian and English languages:

- ENG: [Ten basins for rainwater collection and storage will be created with assistance from Austria and UNDP | UNDP in Moldova](#)
- ROM: [Cu ajutorul ADA și PNUD, vor fi construite 10 bazine de acumulare a apelor din precipitații - Congresul Autorităților Locale din Moldova \(calm.md\)](#)

The press release was widely circulated online as well, few media clippings are listed below:

1. <https://agrobiznes.md/10-bazine-de-acumulare-a-apei-din-precipitatii-vor-fi-construite-in-5-raioane-ale-tarii.html>
2. <https://moldova.un.org/ro/105536-cu-ajutorul-ada-si-pnud-vor-fi-construite-10-bazine-de-acumulare-apeilor-din-precipitatii>
3. <https://www.calm.md/cu-ajutorul-ada-si-pnud-vor-fi-construite-10-bazine-de-acumulare-a-apeilor-din-precipitatii/>
4. <https://expresul.md/2020/12/1a-magurele-vor-fi-construite-doua-bazine-de-acumulare-a-apeilor-din-precipitatii/>
5. <https://sputnik.md/agriculture/20201220/32958118/Agricultori-apa-ploaie-irigatii.html>
6. <https://agrotv.md/zeci-de-mii-de-dolari-pentru-construirea-bazinelor-de-acumulare/>

Social media posts on water infrastructures:

- <https://www.facebook.com/PNUDMoldova/posts/3538357962900653>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/green.moldova/permalink/3934112003266779>

Update on Environmental, Gender and Social Standards

With reference to the submitted the Environmental Appraisal, progress report in December 2020, three out of five recommendation have been fully considered and implemented accordingly by the Project during the reporting period.

Specifically, the 1st received recommendation was referring to the development of the Environmental Impact Assessment/Risk Management & Sustainability Plan (EIARMSP) and monitoring process of its implementation during the next phases of the construction activities and the second referring to the selection process of project beneficiaries within the Call for Expression of Interest.

The final report has been sent for comments already in December 2020 following received recommendation for the expected results of the EIARMSP exercise. The costs required to put

in place the mitigation measures were taken into consideration during the engagement with the farmers/beneficiaries and covered through the signed Memorandum of Understanding during 2020.

Moreover, during the reporting period, 5 Environmental Impact Assessment including social and gender perspective documents have been elaborated for the design and construction of firefighting station and 10 for water infrastructures in the target communities. Further, the project team has successfully assisted farmers (water basin beneficiaries) in the process of ecological expertise as required by national laws and regulation resulting with environmental permits for all sites by the end of 2020.

The EIARMSP has also been instrumental in revision of the Logframe which has been submitted to ADA for approval in October 2020. As mentioned in the sections above, implementation of the EIARMSP will be further monitored during the next phases (technical designs, construction process) by the project team and the EIA Project expert⁵ and properly documented. As for the 2nd recommendation, the Report communicating the Results of the Call for Expression of Interest was submitted to ADA for Endorsement within the first Progress Report to ADA.

On the 3rd recommendation received from the project donor, referring to funds mobilization from the private sector, during the reporting period, the Project has managed to negotiate and secure a total of 133,153.69 USD by signing Memorandum of Understandings with the selected farmers for the required contribution that exceeded the minimum contribution of 20% per site. *Please see detailed information outlined in the table under section: Sub-activity 1.2.iv: Construction of water storage basins.*

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls:

- During the reporting period, women representatives from all levels including general public, decision makers of central and local public authorities as well as women's civil society organizations were consulted during the elaboration of the Community Climate Adaptation and Risk Management Programs in target communities and women participation was *encouraged (Community Working Groups consisted of 76 people in total, including 44 women/58% and 32 men/42%);*

Human rights and social standards:

- During the reporting period, inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups into local planning process was ensured (Community Climate Adaptation and Risk Management Programs in target communities).

Lessons learned and perspectives

As a pilot project with a pronounced innovative and transformational character, this project carries the role to identify all peculiarities and support more informed approaches to future scale-ups or larger interventions of this kind and serve as an example of how similar projects should be implemented and what specifics should be considered during the implementation.

⁵ Budget Cost Item: 4.1.4.a National Consultant - Environmental Impact Assessment

Among the identified lessons learned and perspective, UNDP has highlighted the following key ones:

- Beneficiary contribution. On certain occasions the list of potential beneficiaries also narrowed down due to the potential beneficiaries' lack of financial contribution. As specified in the Project Document, a minimum 20% contribution would be around 7,000 USD for a usual simple water accumulation and retention infrastructure. That amount was considered by some potential beneficiaries as too high, which again automatically eliminated several candidates. Moreover, many farmers claimed that 7,000 USD are enough for them to buy and transport irrigation water to cover their needs for 4-5 agricultural seasons (years).
- Beneficiary profile. While some beneficiaries were on the side of the coin where a 20% contribution was a risky financial endeavor for them, others were very large farmers and for their operation they were requesting project support of up to 30,000 USD to literally "cover the costs for fuel during construction". That also presented a high risk for the project, as these would be non-replicable examples of ADA co-funding the high scale investments of large farmers - which is not the aim of this Project. In other cases, during field visits, large farmers have been observed by the project to perform illegal activities like unauthorized hydrological constructions.

At the same time, after the Project Board was conducted and project implementation advanced as per the annual work plan, another handful of lessons learned was identified:

- The initial assumption was that farmers are going to have few constraints in obtaining official documentation in preparation for technical design and construction processes, as well as succeed in obtaining the documentation fairly quick. During implementation, it was identified that farmers require a substantial amount of time and continuous support from the project to obtain Urbanism Certificates for construction, thus considerable effort should be planned to make sure farmers succeed in their communication with District and Central authorities. Please note that Urbanism Certificate is the regulatory act issued to the beneficiaries by the issuing authority, which establishes the prescriptions and elements that characterize the legal, economic, technical, and architectural-urban regime of the terrain and which allows the elaboration of technical design. At the same time, this lesson was learned, and the support was provided by the Project to the beneficiaries resulting with issued Certificates accordingly.
- There are very few technical design companies specialized in hydrological infrastructure in Moldova. The same capacity shortage applies to the limited number of licensed engineers (i.e., for the required sub-category of hydrotechnical constructions) who would be available to provide expertise at the stage of technical designing (authorized engineers in the role of designer for hydrotechnical constructions), and supervision of the quality of the works (authorized engineers in the role of technical supervisor for the sub-category of hydrotechnical constructions). That should be taken into consideration when properly planning for technical design activities and timelines.
- The technical design process is crucial not only for elaborating a viable construction solution, but also to validate any findings reached during the project's inception phases. The technical design companies are entitled to conduct thorough topography, hydrology and geology analysis that could lead to eliminating a certain farmer who could have been initially successful during the Call of Expression of Interest phase.

Fortunately, the current project interventions did not meet such situations, but practice showed these could have easily emerged given the specifics of a few locations.

During the reporting period, the lessons learned during the implementation of Component 2 are as follows:

- The initial assumption regarding the scarcity of financial resources at local level was well grounded. The mayoralities within the village clusters involved in project implementation went through difficulties identifying finances for covering the contribution to project implementation. However, by motivating district authorities to contribute to the infrastructure part of the project turned out critical for smooth project implementation. It is advised that district authorities are more actively involved in project implementation from the very beginning, as there is persistent interest and available financial resources to help clusters rural settlements gather finances for large infrastructure projects.
- The direct and permanent implication of GIES both from central and district level is crucial for successful project implementation. The GIES representatives at district level are renowned and respected women and men and their voice is extremely important in helping district councils and village clusters proceed with implementation of such projects and approaches.
- The initially planned financial resources were insufficient to cover the investment needs and meet the financial capacity of LPAs in terms of contribution. The estimated investment in a firefighting station amounts to 1 million 300 thousand MDL (or circa 80 thousand EURO). Adaptive solutions as involvement of new donors and raising funding from district authorities were implemented and would be highly beneficial, if considered for other similar project interventions.

Finances

Given the lessons learned described in the section above, during the reporting period, the second and third Project Board were conducted to raise a list of issues and propose a series of solutions in form of budget modifications and re-allocations. As a result of this exercise, the following financial re-allocations were debated and approved by the Project Board:

- The financial resources initially planned for rent of office [17884.80 Euro] are proposed to be reallocated to Project Output 2 – to ensure higher chances that the project will be able to purchase vehicles and protection equipment of a better quality to better serve the needs of the target communities.
- The Project proposed to reallocate the amount of savings of 124,200 Euro created under Output 1 for two budget items. First, the amount of 107,640 Euro is proposed to be reallocated to supplement the funds to procure specialized community-level firefighting trucks and protection equipment. Second, it is proposed for the remaining of 16,560 Euro to be allocated to a new demonstration activity within Output 1 – Establish a solar energy-based water pumping system.
- Since the local public authority in Sărata Galbenă, Hincesti, expressed their willingness and capacity to acquire a firefighting truck with its own resources, they requested the Project to reallocate the money budgeted for the firefighting truck for the construction of the premises of the community-based firefighting and rescue unit.
- Relocation of the contingency reserve + savings on the lines dedicated to office equipment = coverage of the salary deficit for the extension period (4 months).

Overview on secured co-financing contributions (by end of 2020):

Budget lines items	Secured co-financing, 2021	EUR⁶
4.1.4.g Support package-water storage infrastructure (20% co-financing from private sector)	133,153.69 USD	117,042.09 EUR
4.2.1.a Equipment for community rescue and firefighting posts (vehicle, protective equipment, etc.)	75,000 USD ⁷	63,288.00 EUR
4.2.1.c Community/LPA Contribution (maintenance of posts, salaries and refurbishing of allocated premises)	2,964,130 MDL/169,912.86 USD	149.353.40 EUR

Annexes of the progress report

Annex 1: Filled in matrix with the detailed description of the achievement of outcome and outputs indicators measured against baseline and target values and reflecting the quantitative and qualitative dimension of the achievement

Annex 2: Detailed planning (action plan) and budget for the following reporting period (project year)

⁶ UNORE used for EUR conversion: 1USD=0.879 EUR

⁷ The Statement of Intent for procurement of 1 intervention vehicle in Sarata Galbena, Hincesti districts (4th intervention area) that has an estimated value of minimum 75,000 USD (2020 market prices)

Annex 1: Matrix with the detailed description of the achievement of outcome and outputs indicators measured against baseline and target values and reflecting the quantitative and qualitative dimension of the achievement.

Outcome. Strengthened local policies, capacities and infrastructure which enable climate and disaster resilient development at the community level

Indicator 1: Number of rural people (men and women incl. vulnerable people) covered by appropriate climate and disaster risk management strategies with costed actions plan, inclusive of drought, flooding, and fire risks.

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	0	0	0	<p><i>4474 people, including 2185 women and 222 vulnerable in Pirlita</i></p> <p><i>775 people, including 378 women and 12 vulnerable in Sarateni</i></p> <p><i>2603 people, including 1300 women and 87 vulnerable in Baimaclia</i></p> <p><i>1607 people, including 776 women and 185 vulnerable in Drasliceni</i></p> <p><i>4790 people, including 2371 women and 105 vulnerable in Sarata Galbena</i></p>	<p>4474 people, including 2185 women and 222 vulnerable in Pirlita</p> <p>775 people, including 378 women and 12 vulnerable in Sarateni</p> <p>2603 people, including 1300 women and 87 vulnerable in Baimaclia</p> <p>1607 people, including 776 women and 185 vulnerable in Drasliceni</p> <p>4790 people, including 2371 women and 105 vulnerable in Sarata Galbena</p>

Achievement	0	0	0%	40% <i>Climate change profiles prepared and consultations with the local population undergoing.</i>	100% LPAs from 5 communities have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities integrated into approved local development strategies.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 2: Number of rural farmers (men and women) with enhanced livelihoods and access to water for production needs due to water harvesting basins in place as a result of project interventions.

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	0	0	0	At least 10	At least 10
Achievement	0	0	10%	30%	50%
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0			<i>The beneficiaries have been identified, made aware on the role of the water basins in enhancing the livelihoods and access to water and collaboration with 10 of such is ongoing through contracting of the construction works for 2 water basins, design of 5 water basins and preparation of the permitting</i>	The technical designs for all 10 selected rural farmers were developed and the necessary authorizations were issued to the project beneficiaries. The environmental impact assessment for water collection and storage basins, identifying potential social and environmental risks, as well as feasible options for their

				<i>phase for the remaining 3 beneficiaries.</i>	mitigation have been developed (EIARMSP). The construction process for 7 out of 10 water collection and storage basins was initiated and the respective Memoranda of Understanding were signed with the farmers.
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Indicator 3: Number of rural people (men and women incl. vulnerable people) covered by appropriate climate and disaster risk reduction infrastructure and capacity in place

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	0	0	0	19860 people, including 51% women and 449 vulnerable households in Ungheni 11411 people, including 51% women and 85 vulnerable households in Leova 9206 people, including 50% women and 290 vulnerable households in Cantemir 9961 people, including 51% women and 121 vulnerable households in Criuleni 8276 people, including 50% women and 45 vulnerable households in Hîncești	19860 people, including 51% women and 449 vulnerable households in Ungheni 11411 people, including 51% women and 85 vulnerable households in Leova 9206 people, including 50% women and 290 vulnerable households in Cantemir 9961 people, including 51% women and 121 vulnerable households in Criuleni

					8276 people, including 50% women and 45 vulnerable households in Hîncești
Achievement	0	0	0	20% To date, the LPAs are fully embarked into the establishment of the CC&DRR infrastructure by identifying the sites of the firefighting stations and formalizing through Councils' Mtgs of the financial contribution expected.	50% To date, the LPAs are fully embarked into the establishment of the CC&DRR infrastructure by identifying the sites of the firefighting stations and formalizing through Councils' Mtgs of the financial contribution.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Output 1: Adaptation interventions in the water sector for agricultural purposes and flood management demonstrated and local climate change related policy frameworks in place in a selected number of districts

Indicator 1: Number of rural communities with mainstreamed and costed gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities in local development strategies

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	No gender sensitive climate and disaster risk	0	0	5	5

	management measures integrated into the local development strategies; no budget allocation for these needs				
Achievement	0	0	0	70% To date, 5 communities have benefited from the climate change profiles	100% LPAs from 5 communities have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities integrated into approved local development strategies.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 2: Area of agricultural land with access to water for irrigation as a result of constructed precipitation accumulation basins.

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	No of land in the pilot districts is irrigated from precipitation water accumulation basins within the project	0	0	n/a	120 ha

	beneficiaries' agricultural plantations.				
Achievement	0	0	0		Expected: 160% As per signed Memorandums of Understandings with the selected rural farmers and technical reports (hydrology), it is expected a total area of approximately 193 ha to be irrigated as a result of infrastructures construction.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 2.1: Volume of precipitation and run-off water (m3) for irrigation conserved as a result of construction of water retention infrastructure.

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	No existing water accumulation infrastructure with capacity to store precipitation and run-off water for irrigation purposes.	0	0	n/a	120,000 m3

Achievement	0	0	0		103% As per signed Memorandums of Understandings with the selected rural farmers and technical reports (hydrology), it is expected a total capacity for water storage amounting 124,000 m3 as a result of infrastructures construction.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 2.2: Number of hectares of agricultural land with increased resilience to drought due to stored run-offs for irrigation.

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	Very limited areas of land within the project beneficiaries' agricultural plantations have drought resilient capacities as a result of available irrigation	0	0	n/a	120 ha

	solutions and practices.				
Achievement	0	0	0		Expected: 160% As per signed Memorandums of Understandings with the selected rural farmers and technical reports (hydrology), it is expected a total area of approximately 193 ha to be irrigated as a result of infrastructures construction.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 2.3: Increased agricultural productivity and resilience due to enabled access to irrigation as a result of project intervention.

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	Project beneficiaries unsecure in current conditions and unable to conduct qualitative and resilient agricultural production.	0	0	n/a	120 ha

Achievement	0	0	0		Expected: 160% As per signed Memorandums of Understandings with the selected rural farmers and technical reports (hydrology), it is expected a total area of approximately 193 ha with increased resilience to drought due to stored run-offs for irrigation.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 3: Number of officials from LPAs, heads of public institutions and private sector (disaggregated by sex) with better knowledge of climate resilient local development planning

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	0 officials from LPAs, heads of public institutions and private sector have understanding and knowledge of inclusive and gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management as well as capacity	0	50	50	76

	for building climate resilient communities				
Achievement	0	0	70	70 people have participated in the development of the climate change profiles, needs assessment and prioritizations of risks.	76 persons (officials from 5 LPAs, heads of public institutions and the private sector, including women and men) have increased capacities to integrate climate and disaster risks into local development strategies 76 members, (44 women or 58% and 32 men or 42%)
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0	0	140%	140%	140%

Indicator 4: Number of farmers with enhanced understanding and knowledge to adapt to climate change and use of natural resources in a sustainable manner

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	Farmers have limited or no knowledge on adaptation solutions in the agriculture and water sectors and sustainable	0	0	50	50

	use of natural resources				
Achievement	0	90	0	20% 10 farmers benefiting from the water storage facilities have enhanced understanding of the CC and sustainable use of water resources.	20% 10 farmers benefiting from the water storage facilities have enhanced understanding of the CC and sustainable use of water resources.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Output 2: Community level climate and disaster management capacities improved for disaster risk reduction, prevention and timely response

Indicator 1: Number of rescue and firefighting posts established and properly equipped to respond timely to man-made and natural disasters

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	0 rescue and firefighting posts in Pirlita, Sarateni, Baimaclia, Drasliceni and Sarata Galbena Cost for prevention, preparedness and response actions to climate and man-	0	0	5	5

	made disasters are not foreseen in local budgets				
Achievement	0	0	0	20% The locations of the 5 firefighting posts have been identified together with LPAs and the company for design of these is contracted.	50% The technical designs for all 5 rescue and fire stations were developed and all the necessary authorizations were obtained. Environmental impact assessments for fire stations have been developed, identifying potential social and environmental risks, as well as feasible options for mitigating them (EIARMSP). Community level fund-raising assured in strong collaboration with the IGSU, the involvement of public authorities was ensured for the co-financing of the activity (MDL 2.96 million.)
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 2: Number of communities benefitting from increased protection from natural and man-made disasters due to capacitated rescue and firefighting teams

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
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End of project target (planned)	Limited rescue/ firefighting brigades at district level resulting in increased response time, subsequently leading to considerable increase in loss of life and material damages	0	0	55	55
Achievement	0	0	0	0	69% By the end of 2020, a total number of 38 communities have adopted the decision on project participation with financial contribution put of which, 33 have already allocated the funds.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 3: Number of rescue and firefighting staff (sex disaggregated) employed and professionally trained

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	No professional staff available in rural areas to respond timely to man-made and natural disasters	0	0	50	50

Achievement	0	0	0	0	n/a
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				

Indicator 4: Number of persons from local population (men and women incl. vulnerable people) with better knowledge on climate and disaster risk reduction for resilient community development

	Baseline	May 2019	December 2019	May 2020	December 2020
End of project target (planned)	Community members have limited or no knowledge and capacities to prevent, prepare and respond to climate and man-made disaster	0	0	50	70
Achievement	0	0	0	As many as 70 people have benefited from CC&DRR information in knowledge in the reporting period.	As many as 70 people have benefited from CC&DRR information in knowledge in the reporting period.
Comparison (e.g. in %)	0				