

## **Review Report of Decent Work Country Programme of Moldova 2016-2020**

*Author: Roxana Irimia*

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## List of abbreviations

ALMMs	Active labour market measures
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CNPM	National Employers' Confederation of Moldova
CNSM	National Trade Unions' Confederation of Moldova
CPO	Country Programme Outcome
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT/CO	Decent Work Team/Country Office
EESE	Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises
EC	European Commission
EO	Employers' organization
EU	European Union
HRD	Human Resources Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
LEP	Local Employment Partnership
MHLSP	Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MSA	Market System Analysis
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NC	ILO National Coordinator
NEA	National Employment Agency
NES	National Employment Strategy
NEETs	Inactive young people not in employment, education nor training
OB	Overview Board
OSH	Occupation Safety and Health
PES	Public Employment Service
PwD	Persons with disabilities
RBM	Results Based Management
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEC	Social and Economic Council
SLI	State Labour Inspectorate
SSC	Sectoral Skills Committee
TCCCB	Teritorial Commission for Consultation and Colective Bargaining
ToR	Terms of reference
TU	Trade union
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDAF	UN Joint Programming Framework

## Executive summary

### Description of the Decent Work Country Programme 2016-2020 in Moldova

During the ILO Programme and Budget cycle 2014-15, the ILO DWT/CO Budapest jointly with the constituents developed the Decent Work Country Programme for Moldova for the period from 2016 through 2020<sup>1</sup>. The DWCP was signed on 19.02.2016.

The programme is focused on the following priorities identified for collaboration between the ILO and the tripartite constituents in the framework of the Decent Work concept, which refers to policies promoting employment, which should be safe and secure, decently remunerated, ensure social protection of workers and their families, give voice to workers, and guarantee equal opportunities and treatment for all:

*Priority 1. Promoting employment and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises*

*Priority 2. Strengthening capacity of government institutions and social partners for effective social dialogue*

*Priority 3. Enhancing social protection and conditions of work.*

The DWCP Monitoring and Implementation Framework, including outcomes, outputs, indicators, was developed as an internal document, along with the Country Implementation and Monitoring Plan. This Plan enables the Office to organise and monitor its work towards the achievement of a number of outcomes under three DWCP priorities, as follows:

*Priority 1. Promoting employment and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises*

Outcome 1.1: Improved legal and regulatory framework to promote enterprise development.

Outcome 1.2: Improved human resources development and employment policies.

Outcome 1.3: Strengthened labour market information system - including skills analysis - in line with international standards on labour statistics.

*Priority 2. Strengthening capacity of government institutions and social partners for effective social dialogue*

Outcome 2.1: Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels

Outcome 2.2: Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining.

*Priority 3. Enhancing social protection and conditions of work*

Outcome 3.1: Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented.

Outcome 3.2: Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage.

Outcome 3.3: Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases.

### Purpose, scope and clients of the review

The *purpose* of the review was to contribute to programme improvement and learning. More specifically, it was to get feedback for improving further collaboration, taking stock of the results to date and proposing adjustments in the approach and strategy if necessary. The review also aims to ensure internal and external accountability.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/budapest/information-resources/information-resources/WCMS\\_453903/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/budapest/information-resources/information-resources/WCMS_453903/lang--en/index.htm)

The *specific objectives* of the review were to provide:

- an assessment of the context of implementation and a summary of results and achievements per each of the outcomes,
- an analysis of relative effectiveness<sup>2</sup> under each outcome and areas for improvement,
- assessment of the extent to which international labour standards were mainstreamed in the implementation of activities undertaken within the framework of the DWCP,
- good practice examples,
- recommendations for the next stage of cooperation, including possible recommendations on a/ activities; b/ strategies; c/ design and implementation process, as relevant and appropriate.

The review results are planned to feed into the decision-making by the ILO and the constituents with the purpose to inform the next DWCP programming cycle. The findings are used to see what progress has been achieved, lessons learned and what needs to be done next.

The main *clients* of the review are the specialists and management of the ILO DWT/CO Budapest, ILO country staff, including development cooperation projects, ILO Regional Office for EUROPE, technical departments at the Headquarters, UN agencies, donors, tripartite constituents, and national implementing partners in Moldova.

In terms of the *scope*, the review covered all activities carried out under the Decent Work Country Programme from its start back in 2016 through the time of the review (tentatively, November 2020). It also took into account the findings of the evaluation of the RBSA-funded CPO on youth employment (MDA 130) that was conducted back in 2019. The review focused on the progress made on tangible outcomes directly resulting from ILO contributions (a total of eight outcomes under three DWCP priorities).

## **Main findings and conclusions**

### ***Relevance***

In the design of ILO's interventions in Moldova three elements are taken into consideration: the strategies and country priorities of the Government, priorities of the social partners and the ILO strategy in the region. To a certain extent, the priorities of the DWCP 2016-2020 were also ascertained from statistical data. The draft DWCP was subject to an ILO quality assurance corporate procedure which is organised at the ILO DWT/CO Budapest and ILO Headquarters levels. In terms of assuring the quality of the DWCP design, the relevance of the DWCP design encountered two major challenges. The first one refers to how to design a flexible DWCP document without compromising the accountability. This appears to be a matter of capacity building and ownership on behalf of the social partners, who are less interested to invest in developing their project/programme/policy management capacity. The second challenge refers to maintaining the relevance of the planned outcomes in the absence of having a budget attached to the interventions planned. Elements of resources are included, but only in general terms. While this does not appear to be important for constituents, it may become very challenging for a successful implementation of the programme. The DWCP 2016-2020 paid particular attention to aspects related to gender equality and non-discrimination, however less visible in the design phase and more actively in the implementation phase.

The principles of results-based management (RBM) were applied both in the design and implementation of the DWCP 2016-2020. At the country level, the DWCP (with the Results Matrix and the Monitoring Plan) provided quite a good RBM framework which was used. Nonetheless, this emerges more like a tool of the ILO rather than of the tripartite constituents.

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<sup>2</sup> Elements of efficiency (i.e. better ways of achieving results) were also analysed, however in relation with the level of achievement of the results, which was covered under effectiveness.

## Coherence

There is a clear logical chain of coherence among the national priorities (as per the National Development Strategy Moldova 2020 and EU-Moldova Action Plan), the DWCP country programme priorities and outcomes, and the priorities and outcomes of the projects implemented within the frame of the DWCP. The high level of coherence is captured by the DWCP results framework matrix which is the result of consultations among stakeholders in the process of DWCP and its subsequent projects' design. This is widely recognized by all national social partners as a one of the major contributions ILO brings to the country's development.

The DW programming framework for 2016 to 2020 was aligned with six ILO strategic outcomes (Outcome 1 - More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects; Outcome 3 - Creating and extending social protection floors; Outcome 4 - Promoting sustainable enterprises; Outcome 7 - Promoting workplace compliance through labour inspection; Outcome 8 - Protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work; and Outcome 10 - Strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations). In Moldova, employment and social protection-related outcomes were funded more than others because this topic attracted more funding from the external partners.

The country programme outcomes of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova are fully aligned with priorities of both UNPF 2013-2017 and UNPF 2018-2022, even though chronologically, the DWCP anticipates the UNPF. There were improvements in the ILO collaboration within the current UNPF compared to the previous UNPF. Thus, ILO encouraged more involvement on behalf of the social partners to promote decent work, including at the level of UN cooperation. The ILO contribution to the achievement of UNPF outcomes seemed to have achieved recognition on behalf of the UNCT members mostly within the frame of the outcomes addressing employment, equitable access on the labour market and social protection. This is perhaps because UNPF remained a process much more than a real joint programme. The contributions of the ILO NC and staff in the country appears to be recognized more than the contributions of the ILO, as a corporate entity.

## Effectiveness

In response to the country's priorities, the interventions planned and implemented within the frame of the DWCP were clustered around three main areas: employment, social dialogue, and social protection and conditions of work. The achievement of the DWCP outcomes depended on the resource mobilization, the remarkable commitment of the ILO staff in Moldova and the capacity of social partners to contribute to the implementation. The effectiveness of the DWCP appears to be less related to setting and maintaining priorities as it was to aligning priorities to the actual results of resource mobilization. For this reason and others related to the changing realities in the country, the flexibility of the DWCP was appreciated by the social partners and to a certain extent by the ILO staff in the country. This flexibility is more cautiously considered in the DWT/CO Budapest for reasons of maintaining accountability in terms of accurate planning and reporting.

Overall, the effectiveness of the DWCP in Moldova was satisfactory. Based on the data collected and feedback obtained from ILO staff and partners, the review consultant assessed the level of achievement of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova as follows:

CPOs of the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova	Scoring	Overall assessment
CP outcome 1.1 "Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development"	4	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 1.2 "Improved human resources development and employment policies"	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.

CP outcome 1.3 “Strengthened labour market information system - including skills analysis - in line with international standards on labour statistics”	5	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 2.1 “Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels”	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 2.2 “Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining”	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 3.1 “Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented”	5	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 3.2 “Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage”	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 3.3 “Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases”	4	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.

(Scoring: 1 = highly unsatisfactory, 2 = unsatisfactory, 3 = somewhat unsatisfactory, 4 = somewhat satisfactory, 5 = satisfactory, 6 = highly satisfactory)

ILO facilitated a *participatory approach* and involved all relevant partners in the country to participate in the design and overview of DWCP's progress. Besides participation in consultations, the DWCP stakeholders were involved in the implementation of the activities and in ensuring sustainability of the results achieved so far. The DWCP has drawn on various tools and guidelines developed by ILO units with expertise and experience in the domain, such as concerning policy development for employment, development of local employment partnerships, non-standard forms of employment, M&E of employment promotion programmes, training and international best practices on ILS, wages and collective bargaining etc. were all highly appreciated by the tripartite constituents. More specifically, for example, the outreach component of LEP pilot Cahul reached about 600 young people, out of which 282 have benefited from ALMMs. Two cooperatives (beekeepers' and sheep breeders) have been established in Cahul, as result of LEP activities and 20 beekeepers (8 women and 12 men), including 3 PwD, got their start-ups off in Cahul under LEP pilot. Members and potential members of newly established cooperatives (2 women and 8 men) were trained on innovative business models and 30 representatives (22 women and 8 men) of 8 Territorial Commissions for Consultations and Collective Bargaining were trained on social dialogue, local labour markets and LEP.

The ILO Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming supports a two-pronged approach of gender mainstreaming: analyzing and addressing in all ILO initiatives the specific needs of both women and men, and targeted interventions to enable women and men to participate in, and benefit equally from, development efforts. In the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova both these two approaches are to be found.

Due to the high level of satisfaction of the national stakeholders regarding the achievements of the DWCP 2016-2020, there is limited evidence concerning how things could be done better. However, it appears that challenges around an accurate monitoring mechanism in the implementation of the DWCP remain to be further addressed, especially from the perspective of maintaining the balance between delivering relevant results and guarding the credibility of these results. When it comes to reporting the progress, the burden remains on the ILO NC with limited possibilities to influence the process and the ultimate result. Recently, the ILO NC initiated a culture of co-reporting among the DWCP OB members with the aim of increasing the accountability of each social partner, but much remains to be done until the social partners will fully integrate it. Also, the collaboration between the DWCT/CO specialists and the ILO NC for undertaking accurate monitoring of the DWCP progress remains of utmost importance.

There are several factors which have a negative influence on the implementation of the DWCP such as the negative demographic trends of population, the shortages on the labour market, the predominance of employment in the informal sector, a weak labour market dynamic.

A major positive factor was the entry into force of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement (in July 2016) which paved space for and increased relevance of ILO expertise and development cooperation. The agreement recognizes the Decent Work Agenda and creates demand for ILO technical support to the reforms of labour market institutions, employment policy, social protection and social dialogue.

In terms of the COVID-19 pandemic influence, this was a factor which showed the existing weaknesses in all systems of the society and the need for urgent action, flexibility and adjustment of the strategies. The ILO response to pandemic was integrated in the UN response plan to COVID globally and nationally. According to the UN Moldova "COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan" (updated) ILO will contribute to Pillar 2: Protecting people (Output 2: Identified vulnerable groups in Moldova are benefiting from social protection, education and essential services), Pillar 3: Economic Response and Recovery, as well as Pillar 5: Social Cohesion and Community Resilience. Among DWCP stakeholders it is perceived that ILO gained profile and was recognized as the lead agency in the domain of labour and social protection in the country.

### ***Sustainability***

The sustainability of the DWCP results at the policy and legislation level appears to be high. The political instability and frequent changes of Government in crisis conditions have a negative effect on sustainability because it is difficult to plan for political risks and to limit their impacts on any reform. In terms of the sustainability from the institutional perspective, bottlenecks may result from certain challenges currently existing in the employment-related institutional framework. Thus, the implementation of the Reform of the Central Administration, which begun in 2017, may reduce substantially the ability of the MHLSP and NEA to play the role that they intended on assuming. Also, the high level of bureaucratization and the modest level of digitalization of the public services will generate slow responses to the potential beneficiaries' needs, especially in the current context of pandemic. From the financial perspective, the sustainability of the DWCP achievements appears to be moderate. According to the MHLSP in 2020 not all ALMMs could be implemented as per the Employment Promotion Law, for example for the measures addressing employment in the rural area there were no funds allocated. The sustainability of the changes brought by the DWCP, maybe not so much in terms of existence, as in terms of their path, is significantly influenced by cultural norms such as a strong culture of hierarchy to the detriment of the interests of the beneficiaries. Concerning the perspectives of future funding on behalf of the ILO, the approach for the next DWCP appears to be based on the diversification of sources.

Following-up on how the ILO partners are using the outputs resulted from the implementation of the interventions subscribed to the DWCP is perhaps less visible as it would deserve to be. Most of the outputs are new or innovative tools for the ILO partners and for this reason combined with, sometimes modest capacity of certain partners, may need time to get into regular use. In addition, the use of some outputs may involve additional advocacy or awareness raising efforts. As a general strategy, the interventions within the frame of the DWCP are designed and implemented with clear sustainability focus which is pursued by the social partners with ILO's assistance.

In the context of the UN reform and the analysis of the ILO's ability to adjust to the changes brought by it, the approach of the new DWCP design is different. The general context of the programme becomes more complex and more competitive in terms of access to resources for implementation. Therefore, requires a combination between learning from robust evidence resulted from the implementation of the previous decent work programme with a more strategic orientation of the next programme. ILO recently developed a complex instrument which manages to capture accurately such a complex picture. This instrument, called Market System Analysis (MSA) started with system analysis for the private system, but proves to become an instrument for analysis for decent work as well. In Moldova, the MSA for the design of the next DWCP involves a wide variety of constituents and prioritizes the analysis of the target

groups' needs, which is different from the previous practice of DWCP design which began with the political and institutional framework analysis.

Despite of not being called as such, the whole process of MSA for the design of the DWCP and its' result (a national programme based on robust evidence and wide participation of the stakeholders) are in fact elements of an ex-ante evaluation for the next DWCP which will ensure high level of relevance and coherence of this programme and proves to be a modern process of policy cycle in line with the existing practice in the EU. Thus, the next DWCP will gain more visibility for both the country's decent work agenda and the ILO and its' national social partners, as well it will strengthen ownership on behalf of the national social partners. This is an emerging good practice for the ILO not only in the region, but internationally.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Stakeholder participation in all programming cycle phases should be increased. When agreeing on priorities and outcomes, the ILO should consider more accurately the capacity and commitment of constituents to contribute actively to implementation and to take over achievements for further developments. Consultations for the design and implementation of DWCP should include not only central government actors but also stakeholders active at the local grassroots level. In addition, more focus on developing social dialogue at the local level is necessary.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWCP OB, ILO NC, DWT/CO-Budapest	High	Mid-term	Low

**Recommendation 2:** The next DWCP should include clear, quantified measures of performance for future outcomes of the DWCP backed by baselines and targets in order to increase the evaluability of the programme. The ILO should better prioritize and increase consistency between planning, monitoring and reporting. This should include budget estimates to the outcomes in the new DWCP and clear indication on what is already covered and what needs to be funded through additional resource mobilization efforts. The DWCP OB could be involved more in monitoring progress with reference to country indicators and changes in DWCP planning.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC, DWCP OB	High	Long-term	Low

**Recommendation 3:** Make additional efforts to promote gender equality and non-discrimination. The ILO and the national constituents should make additional efforts to ensure that gender and non-discrimination principles are integrated in the new DWCP design and implementation, and considered in the ILO's strategy to influence policy development, formulation and implementation.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWCP OB, DWT/CO Budapest	High	Mid-term	Low

**Recommendation 4:** It is advisable to attempt to expand the circle of ILO constituents. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economy could be more involved along with other state institutions that are decisive, including the Ministry of Finance. In addition, a more open communication from ILO Headquarters and the DWT/CO Budapest is expected, i.e. communicating not only with our constituents should become an acceptable practice.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Government of Republic of Moldova, DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Long-term	Low

**Recommendation 5:** In order to ensure the consolidation of employment reform the Government and the ILO may consider joint activities aimed to strengthen the capacity of social partners in the design, monitoring and evaluation of decent work-related policy and programmes. Also, policy coherence and coordination across ministries (MHLSP, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance) needs to be improved in order to increase more effective and stable results.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Government of Republic of Moldova, DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Mid-term	Medium

**Recommendation 6:** ILO may consider the exit strategies in the earlier stages of the projects in order to increase the national ownership and sustainability of the respective interventions. This may involve a stronger message to the beneficiaries to increase their commitment to move from beneficiaries of international funding to beneficiaries of transfer of competences allowing them to perform functions independently of the international assistance.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Long-term	Low

**Recommendation 7:** In a post-pandemic scenario, continue contributing to the strengthening of the social protection systems and active employment policies. It is recommended that the ILO continue to provide assistance to Government in order to extend social protection and strengthen employment policies, with the objective of countering the effects of the crisis, facilitating access to medical services, and mitigating the social and economic repercussions of the pandemic, both at the level of individual households, to provide a secure basic income, and at macroeconomic level, by stabilizing the demand.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Government of Republic of Moldova, DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Mid-term	Medium

**Recommendation 8:** In the context of the UN reform, ILO should revisit the visibility of the DWCPs at the national level, including in Moldova. The DWCP national partners will have to be encouraged to make the DWCP achievements more visible. The complex process of the next DWCP's design is an emerging good practice which is worth being promoted both nationally and internationally.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWT/CO-Budapest, DWCP OB	Medium	Long-term	Low

## 1. Introduction

The present document is the Review Report for the assignment called *Review of the Decent Work Country Programme of Moldova 2016-2020*, under the Contract No. 40318598/0/29.09.2020, between the ILO Office Budapest and Pluriconsult Ltd.

The review was carried out between October and December 2020. The evaluation was commissioned by the ILO Budapest and conducted in the framework of the regional Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan for 2019-2020. This is in accordance with ILO Procedures stipulating that RBSA-funded outcomes are subject to evaluation with the aim of examining the results achieved with RBSA resources and their contribution to broader ILO programming and country cooperation framework (DWCP).

## 2. Background and context

### ***Decent Work Country Programme***

During the ILO Programme and Budget cycle 2014-15, the ILO DWT/CO Budapest jointly with the constituents developed the Decent Work Country Programme for Moldova for the period from 2016 through 2020<sup>3</sup>. The DWCP was signed on 19.02.2016.

The programme is focused on the following priorities identified for collaboration between the ILO and the tripartite constituents in the framework of the *Decent Work concept*, which refers to *policies promoting employment, which should be safe and secure, decently remunerated, ensure social protection of workers and their families, give voice to workers, and guarantee equal opportunities and treatment for all*:

**Priority 1. Promoting employment and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises**

**Priority 2. Strengthening capacity of Government institutions and social partners for effective social dialogue**

**Priority 3. Enhancing social protection and conditions of work.**

The DWCP Monitoring and Implementation Framework, including outcomes, outputs, indicators, was developed as an internal document, along with the Country Implementation and Monitoring Plan. This Plan enables the Office to organise and monitor its work towards the achievement of a number of outcomes under three DWCP priorities, as follows:

**Priority 1. Promoting employment and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises**

Outcome 1.1: Improved legal and regulatory framework to promote enterprise development.

Outcome 1.2: Improved human resources development and employment policies.

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**Priority 2. Strengthening capacity of Government institutions and social partners for effective social dialogue**

Outcome 2.1: Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels

Outcome 2.2. Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining.

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### Priority 3. Enhancing social protection and conditions of work

Outcome 3.1: Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented.

Outcome 3.2: Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage.

Outcome 3.3: Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases.

In addition, an HQ-led semi-annual Outcome-Based Work Plan (OBW) review is another mechanism that allows to monitor the progress and status of the ILO assistance to a particular country in accordance with the ILO Programming Framework.

#### **Resource base and RBSA-supported country programme outcomes**

The main resources for the implementation of the DWCP are being provided from the ILO Regular Budget, RBTC funding, development cooperation projects and cost-sharing by the national partners. In addition to the above, extra funds were allocated from the ILO Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) in order to support the work on the DWCP as per the following Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs):

MDA 102. Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases
MDA 103. Comprehensive working time system developed
MDA 104. Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development
MDA 130. Comprehensive employment policy designed, including youth and migration dimensions
MDA 151. Strengthen the coverage and sustainability of the social security system
MDA 152. Strengthened capacities of constituents for effective protection for the most vulnerable workers from unacceptable forms of work
MDA 801. Strengthened institutional capacity of employers' organizations
MDA 826. Strengthened capacity of member States to ratify and apply International Labour Standards and to fulfil their reporting obligations

#### **DWCP Management arrangements**

The oversight function over the DWCP rests with the ILO and the tripartite constituents. The ILO National Coordinator in Moldova is also in charge of monitoring the implementation of the programme and provides periodic updates on the status of implementation.

### **3. Purpose, scope and clients**

The overall **purpose** of the review was to contribute to programme improvement and learning. More specifically, it was to get feedback for improving further collaboration, taking stock of the results to date and proposing adjustments in the approach and strategy if necessary. The review also aims to ensure internal and external accountability.

The **specific objectives** of the review were to provide:

- an assessment of the context of implementation and a summary of results and achievements per each of the outcomes,
- an analysis of relative effectiveness under each outcome and areas for improvement,
- assessment of the extent to which international labour standards were mainstreamed in the implementation of activities undertaken within the framework of the DWCP,
- good practice examples,
- recommendations for the next stage of cooperation, including possible recommendations on a/ activities; b/ strategies; c/ design and implementation process, as relevant and appropriate.

The review results are planned to feed into the decision-making by the ILO and the constituents regarding further DWCP implementation and planning. The findings are used to see what progress has been achieved and what needs to be done next.

The main **clients** of the review are the specialists and management of the ILO DWT/CO Budapest, ILO country staff, including development cooperation projects, ILO Regional Office for EUROPE, technical departments at the Headquarters, UN agencies, donors, tripartite constituents, and national implementing partners in Moldova.

In terms of the **scope**, the review covered all activities carried out under the Decent Work Country Programme from its start back in 2016 through the time of the review (tentatively, November 2020). It also took into account the findings of the evaluation of the RBSA-funded CPO on youth employment (MDA 130) that was conducted back in 2019. The review focused on the progress made on tangible outcomes directly resulting from ILO contributions (a total of eight outcomes under three DWCP priorities).

## 4. Methodology and limitations

### 4.1. Review framework

The review framework of analysis was designed based on the OECD/DAC criteria including the relevance of the programme to beneficiary needs, the coherence of the programme design, the programme's effectiveness<sup>4</sup>, and the estimation for sustainability. For each criterion, several specific review questions were suggested in the ToR. The questions' scope was to address priority issues and concerns for the national constituents and other stakeholders. The final version of the review questions discussed and agreed in the inception phase is presented below.

The review integrated gender equality and non-discrimination, social dialogue and international labour standards as crosscutting concerns throughout its deliverables and process, in line with EVAL Guidance Note no. 4<sup>5</sup> for gender issues and Guidance Note no. 7<sup>6</sup> to ensure stakeholder participation. It examined the DWCP alignment and contribution to UNPF and relevant targets as prioritized by the national sustainable development strategy.

#### **Relevance**

- To what extent do the ILO interventions in the country address the beneficiaries' needs, including from equity perspective?
- Did the ILO work in Moldova apply principles of Results-Based Management (RBM)?

<sup>4</sup> Elements of efficiency (i.e. better ways of achieving results) were also analysed, however in relation with the level of achievement of the results, which was covered under effectiveness.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_165986.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165986.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_165982.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165982.pdf)

**Coherence**

- To what extent are the ILO interventions in the country aligned with the national priorities (policies and strategies)?
- To what extent are the ILO interventions in the country aligned with the ILO priorities in the region?
- To what extent are the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova was/is aligned with the UNPF in the country?

**Effectiveness**

- What is the level of progress towards the outcomes under the DWCP priorities?
- Are the stakeholders satisfied with the quality of the results? What was the level of commitment and engagement of constituents and of the support received from the ILO?
- To what extent the results are addressing both men and women?
- Are there better ways of achieving the results?
- What was the context of implementation? What is the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on the implementation of the programme and how is the ILO responding to the crisis?

**Sustainability**

- What is the level of sustainability of achievements? What makes them sustainable?
- To what extent the ILO partners are using the outputs?
- Are there any emerging/new priorities that need to be considered in the planning of new activities?

**4.2. Review methodological approach**

The methodological approach used for this review relied on a comprehensive data collection from a variety of sources (primary and secondary) and analysis of data. The methodological approach followed closely the ToR (Annex 1).

According to the ToR the review was based on a non-experimental methodological design and used a mix of methods and tools for data collection. This included document analysis (a list is provided in the Annex 1), 13 online interviews (10 individual interviews and 3 group interviews), one online panel of experts (which was planned for the validation of the preliminary findings of the review) and quantitative secondary data analysis to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The Interview Guide used is available in the Annex 2.

The review exercise was previewed as a participatory assessment of current practice. In the implementation of the review, in addition to the ILO Office, the tripartite constituents as well as other parties involved in the country programme and targeted for making use of the ILO's support were invited to contribute and participate (the list with review informants is available in the Annex 3).

In terms of the analysis, the review included a rating of the overall performance of the DWCP by triangulating data resulted from desk review, interviews and panel discussion (Annex 4).

Since the travel restrictions were not lifted, the interviews were conducted remotely using zoom meeting platform. Similarly, the panel of experts planned close to the finalisation of the review was organised as an online event.

**4.3. Limitations**

The review had two main limitations. From the methodological perspective, this was not an evaluation and the impact of the DWCP was not assessed. In terms of the timing, this is a final review undertaken at the end of the implementation of the DWCP 2016-2020. For certain key informants the earlier years of the DWCP were more difficult to reconstruct, either because they were not related to this programme at that time, or because they could not recollect accurate evidence, which in their case was extracted from the desk review.

#### **4.4. Observance of norms, standards and ethics**

Ethical considerations were taken into account in the review process. As requested by the UNEG Norms and Standards<sup>7</sup>, the reviewer was sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs, acted with integrity and honesty in the relationships with all stakeholders, ensured that contacts with individuals were characterized by respect and protected the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information.

It was equally important to ensure the integrity of the review process. For that reason, it was ensured that the reviewer was not involved in any of the stages of the DWCP design or implementation which guaranteed the impartiality across the review data collection, analysis and reporting.

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<sup>7</sup> UNEG and OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. See UNEG, 2011. Norms for Evaluation in the UN System, United Nations Evaluation Group. Available at: [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=21](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=21) and UNEG, 2005. *Standards for Evaluation in the UN System*, United Nations Evaluation Group. Available at: [http://www.uneval.org/documentdownload?doc\\_id=22&file\\_id=561](http://www.uneval.org/documentdownload?doc_id=22&file_id=561)

## 5. Findings

### 5.1. Relevance

#### 5.1.1. Relevance of the ILO interventions in the country to the beneficiaries' needs, including from an equity perspective

The Decent Country Programme Framework (DWCP) is the primary framework for delivering support to the country to promote decent work as both a key component of the national development strategy and as a national policy objective of the Government and social partners. The priorities and outcomes of the DWCP 2016-2020 have been agreed upon following an extensive process of tripartite consultations facilitated by the ILO in the country.

*In the design of ILO's interventions in Moldova three elements are taken into consideration: the strategies and country priorities of the Government, priorities of the social partners and the ILO strategy in the region. Ultimately, the DWCP's priorities mirror the intersections of the priorities of these three parties - the Government, social partners and ILO. For the period 2016-2020 the design of the DWCP was based on a new approach compared to the past practice. The ILO organised separate discussions with each social partner. The Government set the priorities defined from the line ministries' perspective, while the trade unions and employers' confederation had their own meetings also facilitated by an ILO representative. After each social partner's priorities were set-up, they were discussed in a working group to find a common ground.*

*"I think that the DWCP is not a rigid document, but one that can be adjusted to the requirements of the social partners. The DWCP is based on the priorities of the Government, which are ahead of other social partners. Each partner's priorities must correspond to these Government priorities, but we also try to promote our own agenda. The best case is when a consensus is reached among all social partners."*<sup>8</sup>

To a certain extent, the priorities of the DWCP 2016-2020 were also ascertained from statistical data. Labour statistics in Moldova were streamlined to underpin informed decent work policy decisions on labour migration, youth employment, informal work, OSH, etc. A Decent Work Country Profile<sup>9</sup> was developed to monitor and assess the progress towards decent work in priority areas such as: employment opportunities; income and productive work; working time; reconciliation of work and family responsibilities; occupational health and safety; social security and social dialogue.

The draft DWCP was subject to an ILO quality assurance corporate procedure which is organised at the ILO DWT/CO Budapest and ILO Headquarters levels. The suggestions for improvement are not mandatory, however are strongly advised and contribute to a high quality strategic document which sets the frame for implementing strategic interventions and stays away from ad-hoc interventions while maintaining a high ownership by the constituents.

*"The DWCP is very flexible and involves all social partners. It is their voice that must be heard. For example, regarding the central administration reform, ILO came up with an advisory note explaining the implications of the reduction of staff, changes of functions and withdrawal of the legal status from territorial offices of the National Employment Agency. We did not strongly advocate to stop the process, even though we foresee the negative consequences. We informed about the risks, but ultimately it was the Government's decision and did their own way."*<sup>10</sup>

In terms of assuring the quality of the DWCP design, the relevance of the DWCP design encountered *two major challenges*. The first one refers to how to design a flexible DWCP document without compromising the accountability. This appears to be a matter of capacity building and ownership on

<sup>8</sup> Interview with social partner representative

<sup>9</sup> Decent Work Country Profile of the Republic of Moldova, Budapest, ILO, 2013 available on: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms\\_424048.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_424048.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Interview with ILO staff

behalf of the social partners, who are less interested to invest in developing their project/programme/policy management capacity. Therefore, they are less inclined to absorb international technical assistance which may come together with robust monitoring and reporting conditionality, without additional financial support for development of the respective capacity.

The second challenge refers to maintaining the relevance of the planned outcomes in the absence of having a budget attached to the interventions planned. Elements of resources are included, but only in general terms. While this does not appear to be important for constituents, it may become very challenging for a successful implementation of the programme.

Another matter of concern for the design of the DWCP (the current one, but it appears to be for the next one too) refers to equitable access to the labour market. *The DWCP 2016-2020 paid particular attention to aspects related to gender equality and non-discrimination*, however less visible in the design phase and more actively in the implementation phase. This was done for example, by adopting gender-responsive local labour market diagnostic tools and pursuing advocacy for non-traditional occupations and skills. Activation packages were designed to take into consideration the need to reconcile work and family responsibilities and break away with some stereotypes that mostly affect women. The “Human Resources Development” Project strategy and planned outputs specifically target disadvantaged groups (e.g. persons with disabilities) and was designed to meet their needs. However, it should be mentioned that equity on the labour market does not represent a major concern for all social partners. While for the Government and TUs this appears to have been and remains a priority, for the employers organisations this was and tends to remain a marginal issue.

#### **5.1.2. Alignment of the DWCP 2016-2020 with the Results-Based Management (RBM) principles**

The principles of *results-based management (RBM)* were applied both in the design and implementation of the DWCP 2016-2020. The assessment of this topic may consider three levels of analysis: (1) intervention (either project or non-project based activities), (2) country and (3) DWT/CO Budapest. The development cooperation projects are fully aligned and complied with the principles of RBM. This is because ILO has a policy that RBM must be applied in all phases of project cycle management (design, implementation and reporting). The use of the RBM principles was less rigorous when it came to the ILO activities which were not part of development cooperation projects (e.g. workshops with tripartite constituents, studies, editing of awareness raising materials). The evidence collected from the country proved that these activities were useful in the short-term, however, their outputs were sometimes difficult to document and, in most of the cases, could not be connected with medium- and longer-term effects.

At the country level, the DWCP (with the Results Matrix and the Monitoring Plan) provided quite a good RBM framework which was used. Nonetheless, this emerges more like a tool of the ILO rather than of the tripartite constituents. The result-based management concept is not yet internalized to the same level among the constituents as it is for the ILO staff. For example, whether an indicator is smart enough or not, the social partners will be less concerned about this. Nevertheless, it should be noted that at the country level the social partners were trained on what RBM concept means, how certain objectives should be formulated, how the progress should be measured against indicators and targets. Involvement of the social partners in the preparation stage of the DWCP, as well as in reporting and monitoring the progress in implementation of the DWCP as members of the DWCP Overview Board is relevant for the development of a culture of RBM co-reporting and showing the contribution of each social partner.

The DWT/CO staff uses outcome-based work plans for planning and reporting on their activities. ILO's DWT/CO program department always follows the principles of RBM to ensure that this is applied and there is a quality operational mechanism in place. Also, the program department comments on this aspect and follows the results chain, defined indicators to outcomes and outputs that are clearly measurable. The alignment of the country programme outcomes with the ILO's strategic outcomes and the DWCP outcomes are presented in the Results Matrix and Monitoring Plan that accompanies the DWCP document and they were fully aligned.

## 5.2. Coherence

### 5.2.1. Alignment of the ILO interventions in Moldova to the national development context and priorities

The design of the DWCP 2016-2020 was largely guided by the national context which included priorities such as development of human capital, social protection and the integration of young people on the labor market. *There is a clear logical chain of coherence among the national priorities (as per the National Development Strategy Moldova 2020 and EU-Moldova Action Plan), the DWCP country programme priorities and outcomes, and the priorities and outcomes of the projects implemented within the frame of the DWCP* (Table 1). For example, in 2016 the Government of Moldova adopted the National Employment Strategy (NES 2017-2021) with a focus on young people. This strategic document is aligned to the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020". The interventions planned and implemented within the frame of the "Human Resources Development" Project were designed to tackle challenges presented in the above mentioned strategic documents related to the development of the labour market, particularly for young people, and to foster dialogue and cooperation around job creation.

**Table 1 – Alignment of the DWCP 2016-2020 country programme priorities and outcomes to the national development strategies and plans<sup>11</sup>**

Country programme priorities	Country programme outcomes	Link with national development strategies and plans
CP priority 1: Promoting employment and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises	CP outcome 1.1: Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development	National Development Strategy (NDS) Moldova 2020: Development priority - Business with clear rules of the game  EU-Moldova Action Plan: Priority for action - Enterprise policy "...develop Moldovan legislative and administrative framework for SMEs development"
	CP outcome 1.2: Improved human resources development and employment policies	NDS Moldova 2020: Development priority - Education relevant for a career EU-Moldova Action Plan: Priority for action - 1/education, training and youth; 2/employment and social policies
	CP outcome 1.3: Strengthened labour market information system including skills analysis in line with international standards on labour statistics	NDS Moldova 2020: Development priority - Education relevant for a career EU-Moldova Action Plan: Priority for action - Education, training and youth; Employment and social policies; Statistics fully compatible with European standards
CP priority 2: Strengthening capacity of Government institutions and social partners for effective social dialogue	CP outcome 2.1: Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels	EU-Moldova Action Plan: Priority for action - Democracy and the rule of law; Strengthening dialogue and cooperation on social matters
	CP outcome 2.2: Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining	
CP priority 3: Enhanced social protection and conditions of work	CP outcome 3.1: Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented	EU-Moldova Action Plan: Priority for action - Economic and social reform and development; Strengthening dialogue and cooperation on social matters
	CP outcome 3.2: Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage	NDS Moldova 2020: Development priority - Pension system equitable and sustainable

<sup>11</sup> DWCP Moldova 2016-2020 Results Framework Matrix

	CP outcome 3.3: Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases	
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In practical terms, this high level of coherence is captured by the DWCP results framework matrix which *is the result of consultations among stakeholders in the process of DWCP and its subsequent projects'* design. This is widely recognized by all national social partners as a one of the major contributions ILO brings to the country's development.

*"I can only mention that the DWCP priorities and outcomes coincided to a large extent with the national priorities. For example, in the domains such as fair wages, employment, social security etc. we hired experts who assisted us in the process of legislative change, with the ILO's support within the frame of the DWCP 2016-2020."*<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, at the project level a major milestone in the process of identifying the priorities for action there are the tripartite consultation meetings, such the one organised in August 2017 with the participation of the Deputy minister of Labour, the EU High-level adviser to the minister of Labour, as well as of representatives of the Public Employment Service, the National Confederation of Employers and National Confederation of Trade Unions, and the Youth Council. As a result of this consultation and dialogue, participants brought to the attention of the ILO the several issues which were the building blocks of the "Human Resources Development" Project:

- Implementation of the National Employment Policy in view of supporting the introduction of employment objectives in other sectoral strategies, including the industrial and competitiveness policy. This would happen in the context of "Moldova 2030 National Development Strategy" and it would also allow for completing the work on the draft employment promotion law. Elements of sectoral jobs and skills forecasts could be introduced.
- Design and implementation of Territorial/Local Employment Pacts based on the role of the tripartite Territorial Commissions for Consultations and Collective Bargaining.
- Implementation of the recommendations from the functional audit of the PES, particularly with regard to the changes in the organizational setup, the extension and improvement of services and outreach of the PES (regional offices, activation packages, M&E functions).

Overall, at the project level, the outcomes and output remained stable and aligned with the DWCP's CPOs. Based on notable changes of the national context, certain changes were introduced only at the level of activities implemented and/or implementation timeframe.

### **5.2.2. Alignment of the ILO interventions in Moldova to the ILO strategic priorities in the region**

Quality job creation, skills development, youth employment, transition from informal to formal economy, social protection, social dialogue and promotion of labour standards remain the ILO priorities in the region, but new concerns are emerging. Working poverty and growing inequalities as well as the development of non-standards forms of work require new responses.<sup>13</sup>

As presented in the Table 2, in Moldova, *the DW programming framework for 2016 to 2020 was aligned with six ILO strategic outcomes* (i.e. Programme & Budget outcomes). It should be mentioned that the creation of CPOs is influenced by multiple factors (e.g. strategic or political, as well as with the availability of funds) mixed with the country needs and the availability of DWT/CO specialists (CPOs are not created unless there is someone available in Budapest to deal with it). The creation of a CPO was also the result

<sup>12</sup> Interview with high level official

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/europe/about-us/lang--en/index.htm>

of consensus between HQ technical departments concerned, the DWT/CO specialists and the ILO NC. Nevertheless, the evidence strongly suggests that quite often *it is difficult to focus on just a few key priorities because they were the result of negotiations with the three groups of constituents, each with their priorities and agenda.*

*In Moldova, employment and social protection-related outcomes were funded more than others because this topic attracted more funding from the external partners. Moldova is a country where ILO RBSA funding can be used, which among the countries in the sub-region only applies to Ukraine too. Other outcomes are funded through the ILO's other regular funds (RB and RBTC). In terms of allocations versus expenditures for the CPOs in Moldova it appears there is a high delivery rate for each project, so there were no needs for reallocations.*

*“When it comes to the CPOs targets and resources most of them do not require large funding. All changes in the legislations involve technical expertise and this can be provided by the ILO staff so there is not much cost involved. There is always a funding gap and we could do much more, but so far for Moldova there are no target CPOs marked as having funding gap.”<sup>14</sup>*

**Table 2 – Alignment of the country programme outcomes of the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova with the ILO Programme & Budget outcomes<sup>15</sup>**

Country programme priorities	Country programme outcomes	Alignment to the ILO Programme & Budget outcomes
CP priority 1: Promoting employment and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises	CP outcome 1.1: Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development	Outcome 4: Promoting sustainable enterprises
	CP outcome 1.2: Improved human resources development and employment policies	Outcome 1: More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects
	CP outcome 1.3: Strengthened labour market information system including skills analysis in line with international standards on labour statistics	
CP priority 2: Strengthening capacity of Government institutions and social partners for effective social dialogue	CP outcome 2.1: Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels	Outcome 1: More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects
	CP outcome 2.2: Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining	
CP priority 3: Enhanced social protection and conditions of work	CP outcome 3.1: Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented	Outcome 1: More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects
	CP outcome 3.2: Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage	Outcome 3: Creating and extending social protection floors
	CP outcome 3.3: Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases	Outcome 8: Protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work

### 5.2.3. Alignment of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova with the UNPF in the country

The country programme outcomes of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova are fully aligned with priorities of both UNPF 2013-2017 and UNPF 2018-2022, even though chronologically, the DWCP anticipates the

<sup>14</sup> Interview with ILO staff

<sup>15</sup> DWCP Moldova 2016-2020 Results Framework Matrix

UNPF. In case of UNPF 2013-2017, the DWCP contributed to the UNPF Pillar 2: Human Development and Social Inclusion (Outcome 2.1: "People have access to more sustainable regional development, economic opportunities – innovation and agriculture in particular - and decent work" and Outcome 2.4: "People enjoy equitable access to an improved social protection system"). The DWCP also contributes to the UNPF 2018-2022 (Outcome 2: "The people of Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable, have access to enhanced livelihood opportunities, decent work and productive employment, generated by sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth" and Outcome 4: "The people of Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from gender-sensitive and human rights-based, inclusive, effective and equitable equality education, health and social policies and services").

*In terms of alignment of ILO priorities to UNDAF ones I think they very well aligned and the cooperation with ILO is very proactive and responsive."*<sup>16</sup>

It is reported that the UN agencies are able to identify a series of efficiency gains obtained through synergy, notably avoidance of overlaps, more efficient use of resources, economies of scale, savings. At the same time, there are examples of UN joint projects - e.g. "Women's Economic Empowerment Programme/Improving local services"<sup>17</sup> (ILO, UNDP, IOM) which has potential to achieve results as an effect of genuine synergy and cross-practice collaboration.

There is solid evidence concerning the ILO contribution to the UNCT work. Thus, the ILO staff in Moldova is contributing to the CCA, SDGs reporting and annual country results reports. In terms of the *ILO contribution to the SDG 8* and its specific targets, for the Targets 8.2 it should be mentioned that during 2017-2019 six tripartite sectoral skills committees (SSCs) became fully functional with the support of the ILO "Human Resources Development" Project. In 2019, a round of trainings on a variety of topics such as legal aspects of SSC registration, provisions of the new law on SSCs and drafting project proposals for budgetary support have been delivered, and an e-learning platform was developed to support the work of SSCs in identifying and tackling skills-related needs for the development of the each sector.

As for the SDG Target 8.3., in the context of improvement of the capacity of MHLSP and NEA towards the design and implementation of new programmes and services for inclusive and sustainable economic growth and productive employment, the ILO delivered a guidelines for the implementation of active labour market measures (ALMMs) for NEA caseworkers. The consequent improvement of capacity has ensured a smooth launch and ongoing implementation of two employment subsidy programs addressed to persons with disability and vulnerable youth (persons released from detention; victims of human trafficking; persons fighting with consumption of narcotic or psychotropic substances; victims of domestic violence). Also, in 2019, due to the cooperation between ILO and the Territorial Committee for Consultation and Collective Bargaining (TCCCB) in Cahul a Local Employment Partnership (LEP Cahul) was designed and launched. National and local public authorities and private actors (engaging civil society and local communities) have identified and promoted inclusive local solutions for better jobs and youth employment prospects.

With relevance to SDG Target 8.5 NEA has started the pilot-testing of two ALMMs: subsidized employment and work-place adaptation for persons with disabilities. A module to ensure monitoring, data collection, systematization and consequent reporting was developed and, the ILO ensured monitoring of ALMMs which will contribute to improving the quality of the legal framework through ex-post considerations and evaluation of the performance in the implementation of these two measures.

In line with SDG Target 8.6, and in partnership with National Youth Council (CNTM), the ILO has formulated and piloted in Cahul an outreach action plan aiming to reaching out to inactive population categories (including NEETs).

Concerning the SDG Target 8.8, there is evidence that with ILO's support CNSM has adapted the ILO guide 'Rights@Work4Youth' to the country context to better inform and empower the Moldovan youth

<sup>16</sup> UN agency staff in Moldova

<sup>17</sup> This is a project proposal currently in pipeline stage.

about their rights in the world of work and consequently allow them to increase their presence on the labour market.

It should be mentioned that when the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova was developed the SDGs were recently defined, so initially the DWCP was not aligned against SDGs. Originally, the DWCP outcomes contribute to the UNPF and they had been immediately aligned with the SDGs. However, this was an ex-post alignment in the sense that the CPOs were already defined and the SDG that apply to every CPO had to be identified. According the UN reform, the country programs (including DWCP) will be based on the UNPF, not the other way around. Consequently, the outputs and outcomes in the next DWCP will derive from the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and will be already defined and included in the UNPF. However, this will not limit the ILO assistance in the country, the flexibility to address new challenges identified by the constituents not covered by the UNPF will remain. Strategically, the UNPF is about the implementation of the SDGs in the country so there will be a stronger alignment and contribution in the future.

There were *improvements in the ILO collaboration within the current UNPF compared to the previous UNPF*. Thus, ILO encouraged more involvement on behalf of the social partners to promote decent work, including at the level of UN cooperation. In addition, the ILO is leading the UNPF Result Group no.2 on inclusive economic growth and productive employment. The consultations for the UN Moldova project for UN Global Funds were more interactive and involved employers organisations/business sector, civil society, public institutions who worked based on new methodologies, such as economic and statistical forecasts.

In the context of the UN reform, *the strategic positioning of the ILO in the UNCT becomes challenging*. The ILO contribution to the achievement of UNPF outcomes seemed to have achieved recognition on behalf of the UNCT members mostly within the frame of the outcomes addressing employment, equitable access on the labour market and social protection. This is perhaps because UNPF remained a process much more than a real joint programme. The contributions of the ILO NC and staff in the country appears to be recognized more than the contributions of the ILO, as a corporate entity. More recently, there are increasing expectations for developing joint projects and building a common approach to donor resources (e.g. between ILO and FAO, ILO and OIM, UNDP).

### **5.3. Effectiveness**

#### **5.3.1. Level of achievement of the DWCP 2016-2020 outcomes**

In response to the country's priorities, the interventions planned and implemented within the frame of the DWCP were clustered around three main areas: employment, social dialogue, and social protection and conditions of work. The high level of coherence and alignment of the DWCP priorities and outcomes with national development objectives and the international development agenda did not automatically translate into activities that would be implemented in the programming cycle. The achievement of the DWCP outcomes depended on the resource mobilization, the remarkable commitment of the ILO staff in Moldova and the capacity of social partners to contribute to the implementation. The effectiveness of the DWCP appears to be less related to setting and maintaining priorities as it was to aligning priorities to the actual results of resource mobilization. For this reason and others related to the changing realities in the country, the flexibility of the DWCP was appreciated by the social partners and to a certain extent by the ILO staff in the country. This flexibility is more cautiously considered in the DWT/CO Budapest for reasons of maintaining accountability in terms of accurate planning and reporting.

Overall, the effectiveness of the DWCP in Moldova was satisfactory. The progress of the DWCP 2016-2020 CPOs presented in this section was assessed based on the review of status of the target indicators<sup>18</sup> (Table 3) and the evidence collected from the ILO stakeholders (see Annex 4).

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<sup>18</sup> ILO DWCP reporting

*CP outcome 1.1 “Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development” is partially completed.* A tripartite national enabling environment for sustainable enterprises (EESE) assessment has been conducted and validated by the constituents, but the National Employers’ Confederation (CNPM) is facing limited financial and human resources to effectively engage with Government and trade unions in policymaking. ILO’s assistance remains necessary in order to support social partners in drafting reform proposals that reflect EESE recommendations.

*CP outcome 1.2 “Improved human resources development and employment policies” is completed.* The progress towards achievement of this outcome was ensured based on the implementation of two RBSA-funded projects. As result of the “Human Resources Development” Project the final draft of the Law on Employment Promotion and its by-laws are elaborated in consultation with all stakeholders.

A framework for local employment partnerships (LEPs) was designed together with the social partners and the Territorial Commissions for Consultation and Collective Bargaining within the frame of the “Human Resources Development” RBSA-funded Project. One LEP was piloted in Cahul and two others (Causeni and Cantemir) are on the way to be established within the frame of another RBSA-funded project currently under implementation (“Reactivating social dialogue for an effective Covid-19 response in Moldova and applying it to local job creation through Local Employment Partnerships” Project). The outreach component of LEP pilot Cahul reached about 600 young people, out of which 282 have benefited from ALMMs. Two cooperatives (beekeepers’ and sheep breeders) have been established in Cahul, as result of LEP activities and 20 beekeepers (8 women and 12 men), including 3 PwD, got their start-ups off in Cahul under LEP pilot. Members and potential members of newly established cooperatives (2 women and 8 men) were trained on innovative business models.

The strategy for the local outreach of PES offices was designed and two ALMMs from the new law on employment promotion referring to workplace adaptation for PwD and employment subsidy and the new framework for the M&E functions of the PES are piloted. An IT operational facility was developed to enable MHLSP and PES better coordinate employment policies and M&E ALMPs.

A capacity development programme on youth employment was delivered in collaboration with the employers’ and workers’ organizations. Based on the ILO tool “Rights4Youth@Work” National Trade Unions’ Confederation of Moldova (CNSM) has developed a curricula and regional trainings with the aim of raising awareness of young people on their rights at work were implemented. A new legal service aimed at training employers’ on their rights, obligations as well as responsibilities pertaining to employment and raising awareness on the need to comply with labour legislation was developed by the National Employers’ Confederation of Moldova (CNPM), with particular focus on training young employers, as well as young people planning to set up their own businesses.

*CP outcome 1.3 “Strengthened labour market information system - including skills analysis - in line with international standards on labour statistics” is partially completed.* In the context of National Statistics Bureau (NBS) reform, which included staff reduction and was accompanied by high staff turnover, the NBS piloted with ILO support the standards in Labour Force Survey. ILO provided technical support in the designing of new indicators. ILOSTAT assisted NBS in drafting an analytical note “Changes to the Labour Force Survey of Moldova – overview and assessment of impact” based on which recently a joint publication was issued. The results of the ILO’s cooperation with BNS will need further consolidation, for example from the perspective of labour statistics accidents. Currently, BNS is expecting Labour State Inspectorate (LSI) to take over the responsibility of supplying them with data on work accidents-related data, which was not possible lately due to the changes in the legislation addressing LSI.

The six Sectoral Skills Committees (SSCs) currently functional in the country completed the process of registration as a legal entity following the complex procedures in line with the new law requirements. There was heterogeneity between SSCs in terms of their institutionalisation, with some of them being quite advanced and others lagging behind in the process of registration. In this context, the ILO offered support and training to respond to the different needs at different stages of setting up or development of these committees. ILO responded to the request of the MHLSP and offered maximum support when

needed by developing an e-learning platform to support regular training effort of the six sectoral skills committees, which proves to be effective in the context of COVID-19 crisis.

CP outcome 2.1 *“Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels” is completed.* The Law on organization and functioning of the National Commission for Consultations on Collective Bargaining No. 245-XVI of 21 July 2006 and Labour Code have been revised in 2017 and 2018. It provides scope for bipartite social dialogue, which was not a norm in Moldova before. Members of tripartite Working Group on Labour Code reform were trained on non-standard forms of employment. ILO DWCT/CO technical specialist provided informal comments on labour law revision. More recently, upon the request of the MHLSP, ILO provided technical comments to the on new amendments to the Labour Code on flexible worktime arrangements. The draft document was approved by the Parliament in July 2020.

CP outcome 2.2 *“Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining” is completed.* With ILO support, Moldovan constituents have been exposed to trainings and international best practices on the following topics: international labour standards (ILS), wages and collective bargaining. The technical report “Wage regulations and practices in the Republic of Moldova” was produced. Under ILO guidance, a new collective agreement in light industry was concluded based on sector wage scale and new wage grading methodology based on job evaluation at the enterprise level. In addition, at the beginning of 2020 eight Territorial Commissions for Consultations and Collective Bargaining representatives (22 women and 11 men) were trained on social dialogue, local labour markets and LEP.

CP outcome 3.1 *“Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented” is partially completed.* With ILO support, an analysis of international best practices on wage settings has been conducted which contributed to improvements of Wage/Salary Law and approval of the Concept Note on Unitary Pay System in the Public Sector in Moldova. Further support has been provided by the ILO on wage data collection, job evaluation in the sampled jobs of the public sector conducted and development of the Law on the Unitary Pay System in the Public Sector. ILO (INWORK) provided technical expertise for drafting of this law.

ILO has trained Moldovan constituents to effectively transpose the ILO Conventions and EU Directives on Work and Family and Equal Pay effectively, including through gender neutral job evaluation. Gender neutral job evaluations were carried out during the public sector pay reform under ILO facilitation and training was provided on flexible working arrangements. Also, ILO provided training on work and family-related issues. Ratification of C.156 was postponed by Ministry of Finance due to high costs related to provision of child-care facilities and there was a new request on behalf of the Government for support in conducting a legal gap analysis on C.190

CP outcome 3.2 *“Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage” is completed.* ILO has trained Moldovan constituents to better define Social Security Policies and provided comments on the proposed pension reform to guide the national dialogue on the pension reform. Also, ILO provided technical comments to the draft law on pensions and for the revision of the List of arduous and hazardous occupations for early retirement.

ILO supported an awareness raising campaign which was conducted in 2016 on the extension of social security to the informal economy. More recently, ILO conducted a feasibility study based on the survey of needs assessment for farmers to provide evidence provided for policy choice. However, the drafting of the policy document is pending, the Ministry of Industry may further request the ILO support.

ILO provided financial support to the Government to negotiate the bilateral social security agreement with Germany and Greece. The agreement with Germany was concluded in 2017 while negotiations with Greece are still going on. In addition, Moldova has also concluded bilateral social security agreements with Turkey in 2017 and Belarus in 2019

CP outcome 3.3 “*Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases*” is *partially completed*. The progress on this CPO has encountered bottlenecks because over the programming time frame of the current DWCP the ILO support was disconnected due to contradictory reform of state inspection which affected occupational safety and health (OSH) inspections by the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI). The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations urged Moldova to make all the efforts to continue benefiting from the ILO support regarding the unfinished OSH reform agenda. As result of ILO support and lobby on behalf of the ILO constituents, the OSH structure and function has been revisited and better aligned with the ILO standards. Despite these bottlenecks, an OSH profile has been developed with the ILO support to contribute developing of a new National Programme on OSH. Also, the ILO’s Ergonomic checkpoints manual and Stress prevention at work checkpoints were adapted, and translated, and ILO submitted a Technical Note on methodology on the risk-based contribution rating system for employment injury benefit system. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MHLSP) has initiated consultations with relevant ministries on the SLI/OSH reform. A Guide to effectively apply the methodology on risk-based contribution is planned to be developed following the adoption of the Government Decision.

The recent progress of the LI/OSH reform is currently supported by an RBSA-funded project which among other outcomes aims to strengthen the SLI’s institutional capacity to effectively conduct integrated workplace inspections in compliance with ILO Conventions Nos. 81 and 129, as a strategic follow up to the Committee of Experts’ observation on the earlier deregulation reform of the state inspection structure. As a result of this project it is foreseen that 1/ SLI will formulate a new organizational structure, and legal framework to improve the performance of labour and OSH inspections, 2/ the labour and OSH inspectors will be trained to better enforce the OSH legislation and tackle undeclared work, and 3/ MHLSP and SLI will formulate a strategy to improve the reporting of work accidents and occupational diseases, including a feasibility study of an information system of national register of work accidents and occupational diseases. These are very recent developments which are planned to be implemented next year and to prove effects in the coming years. So far, on 20 November 2020, the Parliament of Moldova adopted the amendment law which restores the functions of the State Labour Inspectorate as the control body of OSH and the investigation of work accidents.

#### **5.3.1. Stakeholders’ involvement and level of satisfaction with the progress of the DWCP**

ILO facilitated a *participatory approach* and involved all relevant partners in the country to participate in the design and overview of DWCP’s progress. A DWCP Overview Board (OB) has been set up immediately after the signing ceremony in February 2017 and is comprised of 7 members (2 on behalf of the Government, 2 from CNPM, 2 from CNSM and the ILO NC). The Overview Board members agreed to meet twice a year. At the request of the majority of the members of the OB the Minister of Labour may also convene meetings on ad hoc basis to address issues of major concern. The Overview Board met seven times during the reported period (only once in 2017 given changes of the Government). Besides of the formal meetings of the OB, consultations meetings were held each time when the implementation of the activities within the frame of the DWCP required it.

Besides participation in consultations, the DWCP stakeholders were involved in the implementation of the activities and in ensuring sustainability of the results achieved so far. For example, in 2019 the new employment policy framework has been the key focus of the *MHLSP*. On the demand side, MHLSP undertakes all efforts to frame more inclusive wage policies, combining minimum wages and collective bargaining. On the supply side work is conducted to develop skills policies and promote lifelong learning opportunities. There is an increasing focus on education and industry through enhanced capabilities of SSCs. New active labour market policies have been advanced aiming to provide job matching support for employment transitions and address inactivity traps. Sizable reform and modernization of the NEA is currently undertaken aiming to enable effective and efficient delivery of public employment services and programmes. Labour Code tripartite currently under revision is on MHLSP and social partners’ agenda.

**Table 3 – Status of the indicators of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova**

INDICATOR	TARGET	STATUS
1.1.1. A national assessment of the enabling environment for sustainable enterprises is completed	National assessment completed by the end of 2019	Completed
1.1.2. Government, based on the recommendations of the EESE assessment, develops and/or adopts legal and institutional reform proposals	Reform proposals by 2020 reflect recommendations of the National EESE report	Ongoing
1.2.1. Moldovan constituents have improved capacities to design, implement, monitor and evaluate engendered employment policies	National Employment Strategy (NES) 2016-2020 and its Action Plan drafted and approved by 2017	Completed
1.2.2. Moldovan constituents are better able to engage in public consultations on employment policy-related issues	Methodological guidance provided and 10 country-wide public consultations on new draft of NES conducted by June 2016	Completed
1.2.3. Moldovan constituents have consolidated capacities to draft and promote new employment promotion frameworks also including priority groups, such as youth or rural population	New employment promotion law drafted and the ILO expertise provided <i>Additional target: 30 % of NEA Functional Assessment Recommendation fulfilled by 2020</i>	Completed
1.3.1. National stakeholders are better able to produce, compile, align and disseminate essential labour statistics to monitor new employment trends	Improved and updated labour statistics by 2019	Ongoing
1.3.2. National stakeholders apply ILO skills anticipation tools, and assess the effectiveness of national or sectorial skills policies through tripartite skills councils	Sectorial skill anticipation reports produced by 2019 as a result of ILO's technical assistance	Ongoing
1.3.3. Occupational standards (OS) in a commonly agreed priority sector are reviewed in a tripartite fashion	E-learning platform for skills committees established by 2020	Completed
2.1.1. The draft law amending and supplementing certain acts concerning social dialogue is developed jointly with the social partner	Draft law submitted to the Government approval by the end of 2017	Completed
2.2.1. Collective agreements concluded at sectorial and local level regulate matters which are not covered by the labour law or raise the level of protection provided by law	Wage fixing mechanisms are set through collective agreements by 2018	Completed
3.1.1. The capacity of constituents on wages and minimum wages is increased	Improved mechanisms on minimum wage setting are considered by tripartite constituents by 2020 as a result of ILO's technical assistance	Completed
3.1.2. The capacity of constituents on equal remuneration for work of equal value is increased	A gender neutral job evaluation is carried out by 2020	Completed

INDICATOR	TARGET	STATUS
3.1.3. Moldovan constituents consider ratification of the Workers with Families Responsibilities Convention (No. 156)	A legal review is conducted by 2020 as a basis for the consultation and preparation for ratification procedure	Ongoing
3.2.1. Options for reforming social security system are developed together with their financial impact analysis, and the national consensus achieved by key tripartite stakeholders	Policy options formulated by 2018	Completed
3.2.2. Moldova adopts and implements the reformed social security systems	Amendment of the social security laws or adoption of new regulations by 2019	Completed
3.2.3. Increased level of awareness on the benefits and advantages of formal employment and declared work, thereby promoting a culture of compliance and encouraging transition to the formal economy	An awareness raising campaign is carried out by the end of 2016	Completed
3.2.4 Government adopts and implements a policy document to extend the social security coverage for agricultural workers with an ILO feasibility study based on the survey of needs assessment for farmers	The policy document is adopted by the end of 2017	Completed
3.2.5. Number of negotiations initiated and the number of bilateral social security agreements concluded and implemented	At least two bilateral agreements initiated by the end of 2020	Completed
3.3.1. Legislation on OSH improved	A Working Group is established to review the national OSH legislation and make recommendations on improvement; Moldova takes steps towards the ratification of ILO OSH Convention (e.g. C.161)	Ongoing
3.3.2. Moldova adopts the risk-based contribution rating system for employment injury benefit system	The Government Decision (GD) and the Information Notes submitted for final approval by 2018; Guide to effectively apply the methodology on risk-based contribution developed by 2019	Completed Ongoing
3.3.3. Capacity of tripartite constituents improved to effectively implement a gender-sensitive national OSH programme	Representatives from the enterprises' OSH Services are trained on risk assessment and risk management; Guide to effectively apply OSH legislation developed by 2019	Ongoing
3.3.4. Labour statistics with regards to accidents at work and occupational diseases adjusted to European standards	Regulation on labour accidents inspection revisited by 2018	Ongoing

*The National Confederation of Employers (CNPM)* was constantly engaged in consultations on issues related to economic, employment and social policy environments, necessary to sustain and develop free enterprise and the market economy. CNPM closely follows employers' concerns with respect to quantity and quality of the workforce, tax reforms and artificial monopolies in most relevant markets. CNPM has been actively promoting the new active labour market policies (ALMP) among employers and facilitated better understanding of specific ALMP tools, i.e. employment incentives for job creation, workplace adaptation and support, etc.

*The National Confederation of Trade Unions (CNSM)* is further alerted with the impact of the reform of state control bodies over Labour Inspection and OSH. CNSM is further advocating ratification by Moldova of the ILO Convention No. 161 on Occupational Health Services and Convention No. 102 on social security. CNSM was actively involved in promoting rights at work for youth and, together with MHLSP and CNPM, are working to find solutions for regulating the Temporary Agency Work, fixed term contracts and casual work arrangements, teleworking, protection against unfair dismissal, termination of employment during the trial period and the clause of non-competition.

*ILO's commitment to quality was highly appreciated by stakeholders.* The design and implementation of the DWCP involved an important number of activities which required mobilization of very good experts capable to deliver tasks at a high conceptual level. The DWCP has drawn on various tools and guidelines developed by ILO units with expertise and experience in the domain, such as concerning policy development for employment, development of local employment partnerships, non-standard forms of employment, M&E of employment promotion programmes etc. all highly appreciated by the tripartite constituents.

*"The ILO assistance within DWCP frame has speeded up the reforms we did in the domains related with decent work and it ensured a clear strategic orientation and coordination of efforts."*<sup>19</sup>

Building on its good technical reputation in the domains the project was concerned, ILO team has further developed excellent cooperation with the line ministry responsible for the policies on human resources development (MHLSP) and the agencies who were targeted as key implementing partners (NEA). Apart from the technical skills that were mobilized, the ILO team challenged their partners in terms of making the best use of their soft skills (communication, leadership, trust building, cultural influence etc.) given that the progress of the DWCP activities has moved from slow implementation at the beginning to an impressive level of achievement close to the end.<sup>20</sup>

### **5.3.2. Gender equity in the implementation of the DWCP**

The ILO Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming supports a two-pronged approach of gender mainstreaming: analyzing and addressing in all ILO initiatives the specific needs of both women and men, and targeted interventions to enable women and men to participate in, and benefit equally from, development efforts. In the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova both these two approaches are to be found.

In 2017 the first ILO publication which specifically covers wage regulations and practices in the Republic of Moldova was published. One of the main topics of this study called "Wage regulations and practices in the Republic of Moldova" was gender pay gap which is a topic reality still confirmed by the social partners, predominantly TUs and public officials, much less by the EOs.

In 2018 the study "Roma women and the world-of-work in the Republic of Moldova" was carried out with ILO support. This study assesses the situation faced by Roma women in Moldova, with a particular focus, the world-of-work. It describes some of the main labour market challenges for Roma women, and outlines how these are affected by, and impact upon social issues such as healthcare and education. Similarly, the topic remains relevant as the barriers for Roma women on the labour market did not disappear but most probably widened during the COVID-19 crisis.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with high level official

<sup>20</sup> Interview with representative of a social partner in Moldova

Also, DWCP and subsequent projects' monitoring included gender disaggregated reporting, which indicates *a high concern for equitable activities for women and men*. For example, in the frame of the „Human Resources Development” Project CNPM organized and delivered in 2019 five training sessions for employers on labour law related issues. The training sessions were attended by a total of 172 participants of which the majority were heads of HR departments and accountants, as well as directors and companies' owners. The Table 4, part of CNPM reporting, reflects an accurate gender disaggregation both at the level of planning and implementation. Also, as presented in the Section 5.3.1., the DWCP reporting includes reference to the outputs achieved presented in a gender disaggregated manner (see reference to the CPO 1.2).

**Table 4 – Example of reporting on beneficiaries including gender and age disaggregation<sup>21</sup>**

<b>Regions</b>	<b>Balti</b>	<b>Soroca</b>	<b>Ialoveni</b>	<b>Hincesti</b>	<b>Cahul</b>	<b>Total</b>
Planned	20	20	20	20	20	<b>120</b>
Actual	62	29	26	18	37	<b>172</b>
Women	53	24	17	14	30	<b>138</b>
Men	9	5	9	4	7	<b>34</b>
Young people	15	3	4	1	7	<b>30</b>

### 5.3.3. Better ways of achieving results

Due to the high level of satisfaction of the national stakeholders regarding the achievements of the DWCP 2016-2020, there is limited evidence concerning how things could be done better. However, it appears that challenges around an accurate monitoring mechanism in the implementation of the DWCP remain to be further addressed, especially from the perspective of maintaining the balance between delivering relevant results and guarding the credibility of these results. Despite of an increasing ownership of the national partners for the DWCP, from the accuracy of reporting perspective, this continues to be perceived as an ILO business, while the interest for a relevant *and* flexible approach remains high. According to the ILO procedures, the ILO DWCT/CO technical specialists are responsible for the CPO targets. In practical terms, the responsibility for achievement of the targets attached to the country outcomes is shared among the ILO DWCT/CO technical specialists, the ILO NC and project staff and the social partners. But when it comes to reporting the progress, the burden remains on the ILO NC and technical projects' staff with limited possibilities to influence the process and the ultimate result.

Recently, the ILO NC initiated a culture of co-reporting among the DWCP OB members with the aim of increasing the accountability of each social partner, but much remains to be done until the social partners will fully integrate it.

At the level of DWCT/CO Budapest the biannual reporting meetings include before the formal programming meeting the individual consultations per country of the ILO NC with the specialists. These country monitoring meetings appear to go more in-depth into the challenges in the DWCP implementation compared to the formal presentations when everyone is focused on promoting success and achievements only. Thus, the collaboration between the DWCT/CO specialists and the ILO NC for undertaking accurate monitoring of the DWCP progress remains of utmost importance.

### 5.3.4. Factors influencing DWCP implementation and implications of COVID-19 crisis

There are several factors which have a negative influence on the implementation of the DWCP. The *negative demographic trends of population* decline continued and amplified between 2014 and 2019. According to the revised statistical data the number of population with habitual residence decreased by 6.5% from 2.87 milion in 2014 to 2.68 milion in 2019. In this general unfavourable demographic context, the EOs are pointing to *the shortages on the labour market*, which is more a result of the labour migration

<sup>21</sup> ILO and Pluriconsult (2019): Final Evaluation of the “Human Resources Development” Project

and of the decreasing qualification of the workers remaining on the labour market in Moldova. The TUs continue to indicate *the predominance of employment in the informal sector*, which they still consider a widely spread phenomenon in the country reducing the interest of young workers for the national labour market and representing a factor contributing to an increase of their migration. In addition, the current low salaries among young people, low opportunities to earn more, mismatch of education and labour market needs, integration problems into the workplace while entering into first job, workplace discrimination, especially for young women, low attractiveness of existing vacant positions etc. are the factors that intensify the youth labour migration outside the country. All these aspects indicating a *weak labour market dynamic* are major challenging factors towards DWCP's progress towards attaining its targets and achieving sustainable results.

A major positive factor was the *entry into force of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement* (in July 2016) which paved space for and increased relevance of ILO expertise and development cooperation. The agreement recognizes the Decent Work Agenda and creates demand for ILO technical support to the reforms of labour market institutions, employment policy, social protection and social dialogue. The alignment of national legislation with international labour standards and EU norms features prominently in the national development agendas.

In terms of the COVID-19 pandemic influence, this was a factor which showed the existing weaknesses in all systems of the society and the need for urgent action, flexibility and adjustment of the strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic is placing an ever-increasing pressure on the health care and social protection systems, causing major disruptions to economic processes and limitations to social life, deepening inequalities and proving the systemic vulnerabilities.

According to the ILO, COVID-19 crisis has worsened the labour market situation in Moldova. It affects workers and enterprises of all sizes; it has increased unemployment, underemployment, and informality; it has kept many seasonal workers off their circular migration path, while others (mostly women) have returned home, losing their livelihoods<sup>22</sup>.

In April and May, the Government provided immediate relief in the form of income support to almost 15 thousand affected individuals, as inactive young people, young informal workers in rural settings and returnees due to the Covid-19 crisis, through the registration at the National Employment Agency (NEA). This has provided an extended emergency database for the NEA, filled with individuals in need of additional support to integrate the labour market once the state assistance is over. However, the support could be rather limited, due to little available funds and capacities of public institutions (especially in terms of digital services) to deliver in a short run employment services and programs to the most affected individuals.

The ILO response to pandemic was integrated in the UN response plan to COVID globally and nationally. The UN Country Team initiated a COVID-19 Policy Dialogue Series to ensure complementarity to ongoing assessments. To date this has included 7 analysis briefs including the ILO contribution called "COVID-19 Thematic Brief on the Impact on the World of Work"<sup>23</sup>. Currently, ILO is conducting an "Assessment of the COVID-19 crisis policy responses in Moldova. Effects and needs for further inclusive recovery".

According to the UN Moldova "COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan" (updated) ILO will contribute to Pillar 2: Protecting people (Output 2: Identified vulnerable groups in Moldova are benefiting from social protection, education and essential services) with a project funded by Austrian Development Agency. It is foreseen that with support from this project approximately 100 unemployed persons (young seasonal workers and returned women migrants due to the COVID-19 crisis, in

<sup>22</sup> In the first part of 2020, over twice more people registered as unemployed as compared to the same period of 2019 (34 thousand individuals), 34% being young people and 54% from rural areas. (Source: NEA's newsletter as of June 2020)

<sup>23</sup> UN Moldova (2020): "COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan"

particular from the care economy in Western Europe) will benefit from enhanced self-employment and income opportunities.

ILO is also implementing two RBSA-funded projects which will contribute to the COVID-19 UN Joint Programme Portfolio, Pillar 3: Economic Response and Recovery. The project “Moldova: Protecting workers and ensuring decent and safe working conditions in times of COVID-19 crisis and recovery” will assist the Government and social partners to implement practical and gender-responsive COVID-19 prevention and mitigation actions at workplaces to respond to the current crisis, taking into account the variety of work situations that require specific guidance. The project will further strengthen the capacities of the employers’ and workers’ organisations to respond to their members’ needs through customised services and legal advice on the implementation of OSH-related measures in the context of COVID-19.

The ILO project “Reactivating social dialogue for an effective COVID-19 response in Moldova and applying it to local job creation through Local Employment Partnerships” will contribute to the COVID-19 UN Joint Programme Portfolio, Pillar 5: Social Cohesion and Community Resilience. It is expected that at national level the Tripartite Standing Committee on labour legislation, employment and social protection of the NTCCCB revitalized and equipped to evaluate COVID-19 measures implemented by the Government, to submit evidence-based recovery recommendations and to revisit and adapt work arrangements regulations in line with ILS. Also, it is foreseen that workers’ and employers’ organizations will increase their capacity to participate in policy discussions on response measures and to tailor their services to members’ needs to address COVID-19 challenges in the workplace. At local level territorial tripartite commissions will be equipped and positioned to address the need for quality job creation and recovery at the community level and young inactive women and men from rural communities will be activated through LEPs.

In this context, among DWCP stakeholders it is perceived that ILO gained profile and was recognized as the lead agency in the domain of labour and social protection in the country<sup>24</sup>.

*“When we had to adjust to remote work, we were advised by ILO experts who helped us a lot.”<sup>25</sup>*

## **5.4. Sustainability**

### **5.4.1. Level of sustainability of achievements**

The sustainability of the DWCP results at the policy and legislation level appears to be high. The adoption of the Employment Promotion Law and the related by-laws indicate a high political commitment for a stable policy and legal employment framework. However, evidence indicates that the subsidy programs remain unattractive for employers and there are not enough registered unemployed to fit the vacancies. A potential solution currently explored is through revision of the subsidy programs guidelines and outreach for inactive people. The analysis of effects and the revision of subsidy measures is estimated to involve an increased cooperation among social partners, particularly by the involvement of and cooperation with the employers.

*The political instability and frequent changes of Government in crisis conditions have a negative effect on sustainability because it is difficult to plan for political risks and to limit their impacts on any reform. This reality causes a break or slow-down in implementation. In addition, there is a significant gap between the formal existence of laws and policies promoting employment and active labour market measures, and the realities in practice on the ground.*

In terms of the *sustainability from the institutional perspective*, bottlenecks may result from certain challenges currently existing in the employment-related institutional framework. Thus, the implementation of the Reform of the Central Administration, which begun in 2017, may reduce substantially the ability of the MHLSP and NEA to play the role that they intended on assuming. The above mentioned Reform aimed at rationalizing the Government structure (e.g. merging Ministry of

<sup>24</sup> Interview with UNCT staff member

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Government official

Health with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection) and reducing the fragmentation of the administrative and territorial structures. It has been reported that the implications for NEA have been larger than expected during the second half of 2018 (reduction of staff/redundancies, changes in functions, withdrawal of the legal status from the regional offices). Also, the high level of bureaucratization and the modest level of digitalization of the public services will generate slow responses to the potential beneficiaries' needs, especially in the current context of pandemic.

*From the financial perspective, the sustainability of the DWCP achievements appears to be moderate.* Due to funds constraints and shortage of resources, the MHLSP may neglect the recommendations to include outreach measures and LEPs in the new legal framework on employment. In addition, according to the MHLSP in 2020 not all ALMMs could be implemented as per the Employment Promotion Law, for example for the measures addressing employment in the rural area there were no funds allocated. Overall, MHLSP tends to give priority to the social protection measures which remain much higher on the national political agenda.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MHLSP) and Ministry of Education are expected to foresee financial means for the new platform administration and delegate a representative to take over the tutoring trainings under the e-learning platform to ensure the sustainability and provision of support to new SSCs.

In addition to the above mentioned aspects concerning sustainability, there are several contextual factors which will influence the stability of the DWCP's results. Thus, the request from informal farming households to formalize their income generating activities through LEPs, combined with the migration path considered by many youth from rural area, may result in *a limited interest of the young people for the opportunities created so far* for the domestic labour market.

The sustainability of the changes brought by the DWCP, maybe not so much in terms of existence, as in terms of their path, is significantly influenced by *cultural norms* such as a strong culture of hierarchy to the detriment of the interests of the beneficiaries, a lack of self-critical culture and public accountability, and a very limited capacity of independent reporting in implementation in the public administration. A still emerging culture of social dialogue and trust may also reduce the sustainability of the DWCP results.

*"Apart from traditional mentalities and social norms, we had obstacles in promoting any reform because of a lack of common vision. For example, an activity would be good from the point of view of the Government and employers, but maybe it is not good for employees. Or vice versa."*<sup>26</sup>

The stereotypes and discrimination against persons with disabilities when it comes to their employment and the resistance to cooperation (among social partners at both local and national levels) are part of the cultural norms which may also hinder the sustainability of the measures adopted so far.

Concerning the perspectives of future funding on behalf of the ILO, the approach for the next DWCP appears to be based on the diversification of sources. These include Austrian Development Agency (for the project "No one is left behind during COVID 19" mentioned in the section 5.3.5), DFID (for a project aiming at a Market System Analysis of two value chains, apiculture and berries), EU Delegation, World Bank (an earmarked loan will be used for the higher education sector reform and digital upgrades of NEA; MHLSP and NEA are willing to make use of the ILO technical expertise for the IT system development), SDG Fund (two projects in partnership with FAO are in different stage of planning – one project, addressing climate change, pre-selected from the UN SDG Fund, and another project in a more incipient planning phase). The recent ILO – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) cooperation aiming at raising awareness among SMEs about the navigating COVID-19 Crisis and post-Crisis employment and labour relations is highly appreciated by the EBRD representative to the extent that it is foreseen an intensification of the collaboration (see Good Practice Case 1 in the Annex 5).

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Government official

*"The ILO team is very professional and responsible. We did not have any stress when we worked together, because I saw that they stick to what they say. So, the quality was remarkably high. We had very good feedback from the participants and, for Moldova, we had a large number of participants who also asked many questions that ILO was able to answer. We discussed that we would like to expand this cooperation between the two organizations (i.e. EBRD and ILO) in Moldova in the future."*<sup>27</sup>

#### **5.4.2. The use of the outputs on behalf of the ILO partners**

Following-up on how the ILO partners are using the outputs resulted from the implementation of the interventions subscribed to the DWCP is perhaps less visible as it would deserve to be. Most of the outputs are new or innovative tools for the ILO partners and for this reason combined with, sometimes modest capacity of certain partners, may need time to get into regular use. In addition, the use of some outputs may involve additional advocacy or awareness raising efforts.

For example, one of the most demanding priorities of the DWCP 2014-2020 was strengthening social dialogue. The ILO field evidence indicates that people do not know about the Law of social dialogue. ILO has made an analysis of the social dialogue at different levels which included not only the analysis of institutional framework, but also several focus groups. These activities were justified because the *LEP was included in the list of pilots for analysis by the Ministry of Economy to be transformed into a national program*. A pilot project was recently discussed with ODIMM as a support for individuals affected by COVID and expected to be approved soon by the Ministry of Economy. Overall, the sustainability of the social dialogue depends on the stability of the social partners' membership, ultimately on their human and financial capacity, which was often reported as modest, especially at the local level.

In terms of *social partners' capacity to better respond to the needs of their target groups*, TUs have adapted the ILO tool Rights of Youth at Work and plan to make good use of it during CNSM trainings targeting Moldovan youth. Think.COOP and Start.COOP toolkits are available now in Romanian, they have been conceptualized to support further training of small producers, associations and cooperatives in Moldova. These tools are user-friendly and there is evidence they are beginning to be used.<sup>28</sup> The beekeeping and sheep breeding cooperatives, established with the ILO support, have been equipped with good-quality processing machinery and became fully functional.

The IT module for Monitoring and Evaluation of ALMMs has been developed and handed over to NEA. It is reported that using this digital module, NEA specialists and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection will be able to assess employment programmes more easily. The module allows detecting the mismatch between planned and achieved results and evaluating the intervention performance in a short time. Territorial subdivisions staff so far have not had a digital tool for collecting data on the implementation of employment measures, which would then allow them to make an assessment of the employment programme benefits. NEA caseworkers and representatives of the Ministry of Labour consolidated their capacities on monitoring and evaluation of ALMMs.

*"The implementation of active labour market measures, in accordance with the new employment law, requires a detailed cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis of employment measures for evidence-based decisions. The digital module will facilitate disaggregated data collection at local level and will provide evidence to decision-makers on programme performance. These data will help to improve the employment programmes greatly."*<sup>29</sup>

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the ILO-funded *e-learning platform* proved to be a valuable online training tool for Sectoral Skills Committees (SSC). However, it should be mentioned that due to voluntary

<sup>27</sup> Interview with representative of a development bank

<sup>28</sup> Interview with social partner representative

<sup>29</sup> <https://moldova.un.org/en/47982-digital-module-monitoring-and-evaluation-employment-programs-launched>

nature of the work of SSCs members their activity and involvement remains modest<sup>30</sup>, which diminishes the sustainability of this result.

As a general strategy, the interventions within the frame of the DWCP are designed and implemented with clear sustainability focus which is pursued by the social partners with ILO's assistance. For example, in 2017 a functional review of NEA was undertaken with ILO support. This document pointed to 1/ the need to diversify and improve the offer of active labour market policies for young people, particularly with a view to increasing the labour market attachment of young women; 2/ the significance of integrating sectoral concerns into the implementation of the National Employment Strategy 2017-2021, particularly in order to address the skills mismatches; and 3/ the importance of strengthening labour market institutions, including at the local level, to foster dialogue and cooperation around job creation. These were the pillars of the "Human Resources Development" Project which shaped most of the decent work interventions in the country for the next two years and half. Furthermore, the achievements of this project are currently taken over and developed through the current projects. This indicates an important concern of the ILO and its national partners for designing and building on sustainable interventions.

#### **5.4.3. Emerging priorities to be considered in the planning of the next DWCP**

In the context of the UN reform and the analysis of the ILO's ability to adjust to the changes brought by it, the approach of the new DWCP design is different. The general context of the programme becomes more complex and more competitive in terms of access to resources for implementation. Therefore, requires a combination between learning from robust evidence resulted from the implementation of the previous decent work programme with a more strategic orientation of the next programme. ILO recently developed a complex instrument which manages to capture accurately such a complex picture. This instrument, called Market System Analysis (MSA) started with system analysis for the private system, but proves to become an instrument for analysis for decent work as well.

In Moldova, the MSA approach for the design of the next DWCP involves a wide variety of constituents and prioritizes the analysis of the target groups, which is different from the previous practice of DWCP design which began with the political and institutional framework analysis. This complex endeavor received full support from both HQ and DWCT/CO levels and received funding for implementation because it requires high expertise.

The first step in this process was to analyze the progress based on the decent work country profile before 2015, to identify and focus on vulnerable groups. A Background Report<sup>31</sup> has been prepared to guide the discussions and to provide ILO constituents with:

- background information on potential priority areas for the DWCP, and
- an initial assessment of each possible priority area against established selection criteria.

The 'universe' of all possible priority areas for the DWCP was set out, based on the ILO's statistical framework for measuring decent work<sup>32</sup>. This background preliminary analysis covered the following eight extensive elements which correspond to the four strategic pillars of the Decent Work Agenda:

1. Employment opportunities
2. Productive work and adequate earnings
3. Decent working time

<sup>30</sup> ILO and Pluriconsult (2019): Final Evaluation of the "Human Resources Development" Project and PRISACARU, Veronica and CARADJA, Alina (2020): "Rationalization of the Activity of the Sectoral Committees for Vocational Training as a Factor of Increasing the Quality of Professional Education in the Republic of Moldova"

<sup>31</sup> ILO (2020): Moldova Decent Work Country Programme (2021-2024) – Selection of DWCP Priority Areas Background Report

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms\\_229374.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_229374.pdf)

4. Work that should be abolished
5. Stability and security of work
6. Equal opportunity and treatment in employment
7. Safe work environment
8. Social dialogue, workers' and employers' representation

Each element in the longlist was assessed against particular decent work deficits being faced by the potential target groups ('who'), as well as the challenge they are facing ('what'). Focusing on the well-being of workers and their families is the basis of a 'human-centred' approach to DWCP development, in the analytical process and in the development of activities.

A participatory two-day DWCP workshop was conducted with the ILO constituents. During the workshop, the constituents reviewed the selection criteria, the DW challenges and the findings from the above mentioned background analysis report. Guided by the ILO, the constituents assessed each DW challenge relative to the various selection criteria and had the opportunity to substantiate/justify their assessments before the participants<sup>33</sup>. It was decided that the three priority areas to be analyzed more in-depth which will be included in the new Moldova DWCP are the followings:

1. Employment Opportunities
2. Social Dialogue
3. Safety and Security at work.

It was reported that because of the ILO's limited resources, only two systems analyses were conducted in Step 2. It has been decided to analyze employment opportunities and safety and security of work. As social dialogue is a key mechanism in advancing both priority areas, it will be mainstreamed in the two analyses during step 2. Furthermore, it will be assured that sufficient coverage of social dialogue is included in the DWCP.

Also, to support more effective systems analysis in step 2, it was decided that the priority area, *employment opportunities*, was too broad and that the scope needed to be refined. Given youth employment's high relevance, opportunity and feasibility detailed in the selection report, it was defined as the priority area to further explore in step 2.<sup>34</sup>

Two consultants drafted the first version of these two studies<sup>35</sup> which are based on an extensive desk review of relevant documents, reports and data, as well as on 30 interviews with vulnerable groups, donors, youth committees, UN RCO, etc. The draft studies will be subject to endorsement of the members of the DWCP OB and of the DWCT/CO Budapest technical specialists and the final version will be included in the background of the next DWCP.

Despite of not being called as such, the whole process of MSA for the design of the DWCP and its' result (a national programme based on robust evidence and wide participation of the stakeholders) are in fact elements of an ex-ant evaluation for the next DWCP which will ensure high level of relevance and coherence of this programme and proves to be a modern process of policy cycle in line with the existing practice in the EU. Thus, the next DWCP will gain more visibility for both the country's decent work agenda and the ILO and its' national social partners, as well it will strengthen ownership on behalf of the national social partners. This is an emerging good practice for the ILO not only in the region, but internationally (more conceptual elements are to be found in the Good Practice Case 2 in the Annex 6).

<sup>33</sup> ILO (2020): Moldova Decent Work Country Programme (2021-2024) DWCP Priority Area Selection: Final Report

<sup>34</sup> ILO (2020): Moldova Decent Work Country Programme (2021-2024) DWCP Priority Area Selection: Final Report

<sup>35</sup> "Youth Employment: A Systems Analysis for Moldova's Decent Work Country Programme 2021-2024" and "Safety and Security at Work: A Systems Analysis for Moldova's Decent Work Country Programme 2021-2024"

## 6. Conclusions

### Relevance

In the design of ILO's interventions in Moldova three elements are taken into consideration: the strategies and country priorities of the Government, priorities of the social partners and the ILO strategy in the region. To a certain extent, the priorities of the DWCP 2016-2020 were also ascertained from statistical data. The draft DWCP was subject to an ILO quality assurance corporate procedure which is organised at the ILO DWT/CO Budapest and ILO Headquarters levels. In terms of assuring the quality of the DWCP design, the relevance of the DWCP design encountered two major challenges. The first one refers to how to design a flexible DWCP document without compromising the accountability. This appears to be a matter of capacity building and ownership on behalf of the social partners, who are less interested to invest in developing their project/programme/policy management capacity. The second challenge refers to maintaining the relevance of the planned outcomes in the absence of having a budget attached to the interventions planned. Elements of resources are included, but only in general terms. While this does not appear to be important for constituents, it may become very challenging for a successful implementation of the programme. The DWCP 2016-2020 paid particular attention to aspects related to gender equality and non-discrimination, however less visible in the design phase and more actively in the implementation phase.

The principles of results-based management (RBM) were applied both in the design and implementation of the DWCP 2016-2020. At the country level, the DWCP (with the Results Matrix and the Monitoring Plan) provided quite a good RBM framework which was used. Nonetheless, this emerges more like a tool of the ILO NC rather than of the tripartite constituents.

### Coherence

There is a clear logical chain of coherence among the national priorities (as per the National Development Strategy Moldova 2020 and EU-Moldova Action Plan), the DWCP country programme priorities and outcomes, and the priorities and outcomes of the projects implemented within the frame of the DWCP. The high level of coherence is captured by the DWCP results framework matrix which is the result of consultations among stakeholders in the process of DWCP and its subsequent projects' design. This is widely recognized by all national social partners as a one of the major contributions ILO brings to the country's development.

The DW programming framework for 2016 to 2020 was aligned with six ILO strategic outcomes (Outcome 1 - More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects; Outcome 3 - Creating and extending social protection floors; Outcome 4 - Promoting sustainable enterprises; Outcome 7 - Promoting workplace compliance through labour inspection; Outcome 8 - Protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work; and Outcome 10 - Strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations). In Moldova, employment and social protection-related outcomes were funded more than others because this topic attracted more funding from the external partners.

The country programme outcomes of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova are fully aligned with priorities of both UNPF 2013-2017 and UNPF 2018-2022, even though chronologically, the DWCP anticipates the UNPF. There were improvements in the ILO collaboration within the current UNPF compared to the previous UNPF. Thus, ILO encouraged more involvement on behalf of the social partners to promote decent work, including at the level of UN cooperation. The ILO contribution to the achievement of UNPF outcomes seemed to have achieved recognition on behalf of the UNCT members mostly within the frame of the outcomes addressing employment, equitable access on the labour market and social protection. This is perhaps because UNPF remained a process much more than a real joint programme. The contributions of the ILO NC and staff in the country appears to be recognized more than the contributions of the ILO, as a corporate entity.

## Effectiveness

In response to the country's priorities, the interventions planned and implemented within the frame of the DWCP were clustered around three main areas: employment, social dialogue, and social protection and conditions of work. The achievement of the DWCP outcomes depended on the resource mobilization, the remarkable commitment of the ILO staff in Moldova and the capacity of social partners to contribute to the implementation. The effectiveness of the DWCP appears to be less related to setting and maintaining priorities as it was to aligning priorities to the actual results of resource mobilization. For this reason and others related to the changing realities in the country, the flexibility of the DWCP was appreciated by the social partners and to a certain extent by the ILO staff in the country. This flexibility is more cautiously considered in the DWT/CO Budapest for reasons of maintaining accountability in terms of accurate planning and reporting.

Overall, the effectiveness of the DWCP in Moldova was satisfactory. Based on the data collected and feedback obtained from ILO staff and partners, the review consultant assessed the level of achievement of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova as follows:

CPOs of the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova	Scoring	Overall assessment
CP outcome 1.1 "Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development"	4	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 1.2 "Improved human resources development and employment policies"	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 1.3 "Strengthened labour market information system - including skills analysis - in line with international standards on labour statistics"	5	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 2.1 "Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels"	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 2.2 "Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining"	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 3.1 "Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented"	5	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 3.2 "Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage"	6	Completed – see Section 5.3.1.
CP outcome 3.3 "Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases"	4	Partially completed – see Section 5.3.1.

(Scoring: 1 = highly unsatisfactory, 2 = unsatisfactory, 3 = somewhat unsatisfactory, 4 = somewhat satisfactory, 5 = satisfactory, 6 = highly satisfactory)

ILO facilitated a *participatory approach* and involved all relevant partners in the country to participate in the design and overview of DWCP's progress. Besides participation in consultations, the DWCP stakeholders were involved in the implementation of the activities and in ensuring sustainability of the results achieved so far. The DWCP has drawn on various tools and guidelines developed by ILO units with expertise and experience in the domain, such as concerning policy development for employment, development of local employment partnerships, non-standard forms of employment, M&E of employment promotion programmes, training and international best practices on ILS, wages and collective bargaining etc. were all highly appreciated by the tripartite constituents. More specifically, for example, the outreach component of LEP pilot Cahul reached about 600 young people, out of which

282 have benefited from ALMMs. Two cooperatives (beekeepers' and sheep breeders) have been established in Cahul, as result of LEP activities and 20 beekeepers (8 women and 12 men), including 3 PwD, got their start-ups off in Cahul under LEP pilot. Members and potential members of newly established cooperatives (2 women and 8 men) were trained on innovative business models and 30 representatives (22 women and 8 men) of 8 Territorial Commissions for Consultations and Collective Bargaining were trained on social dialogue, local labour markets and LEP.

The ILO Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming supports a two-pronged approach of gender mainstreaming: analyzing and addressing in all ILO initiatives the specific needs of both women and men, and targeted interventions to enable women and men to participate in, and benefit equally from, development efforts. In the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova both these two approaches are to be found.

Due to the high level of satisfaction of the national stakeholders regarding the achievements of the DWCP 2016-2020, they are less inclined to reflect on how the current approaches could be improved. However, it appears that challenges around an accurate monitoring mechanism in the implementation of the DWCP remain to be further addressed, especially from the perspective of maintaining the balance between delivering relevant results and guarding the credibility of these results. When it comes to reporting the progress, the burden remains on the ILO NC and technical projects' staff with limited possibilities to influence the process and the ultimate result. Recently, the ILO NC initiated a culture of co-reporting among the DWCP OB members with the aim of increasing the accountability of each social partner, but much remains to be done until the social partners will fully integrate it. Also, the collaboration between the DWCT/CO specialists and the ILO NC for undertaking accurate monitoring of the DWCP progress remains of utmost importance.

There are several factors which have a negative influence on the implementation of the DWCP such as the negative demographic trends of population, the shortages on the labour market, the predominance of employment in the informal sector, a weak labour market dynamic.

A major positive factor was the *entry into force of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement* (in July 2016) which caved space for and increased relevance of ILO expertise and development cooperation. The agreement recognizes the Decent Work Agenda and creates demand for ILO technical support to the reforms of labour market institutions, employment policy, social protection and social dialogue.

In terms of the COVID-19 pandemic influence, this was a factor which showed the existing weaknesses in all systems of the society and the need for urgent action, flexibility and adjustment of the strategies. The ILO response to pandemic was integrated in the UN response plan to COVID globally and nationally. According to the UN Moldova "COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan" (updated) ILO will contribute to Pillar 2: Protecting people (Output 2: Identified vulnerable groups in Moldova are benefiting from social protection, education and essential services), Pillar 3: Economic Response and Recovery, as well as to Pillar 5: Social Cohesion and Community Resilience. Among DWCP stakeholders it is perceived that ILO gained profile and was recognized as the lead agency in the domain of labour and social protection in the country.

## Sustainability

The sustainability of the DWCP results at the policy and legislation level appears to be high. *The political instability and frequent changes of Government in crisis conditions* have a negative effect on sustainability because it is difficult to plan for political risks and to limit their impacts on any reform. In terms of the *sustainability from the institutional perspective*, bottlenecks may result from certain challenges currently existing in the employment-related institutional framework. Thus, the implementation of the Reform of the Central Administration, which begun in 2017, may reduce substantially the ability of the MHLSP and NEA to play the role that they intended on assuming. Also, the high level of bureaucratization and the modest level of digitalization of the public services will generate slow responses to the potential beneficiaries' needs, especially in the current context of pandemic. *From the financial perspective, the sustainability of the DWCP achievements appears to be moderate.* According to the MHLSP in 2020 not all ALMMs could be implemented as per the

Employment Promotion Law, for example for the measures addressing employment in the rural area there were no funds allocated. The sustainability of the changes brought by the DWCP, maybe not so much in terms of existence, as in terms of their path, is significantly influenced by *cultural norms* such as a strong culture of hierarchy to the detriment of the interests of the beneficiaries. Concerning the perspectives of future funding on behalf of the ILO, the approach for the next DWCP appears to be based on the diversification of sources.

Following-up on how the ILO partners are using the outputs resulted from the implementation of the interventions subscribed to the DWCP is perhaps less visible as it would deserve to be. Most of the outputs are new or innovative tools for the ILO partners and for this reason combined with, sometimes modest capacity of certain partners, may need time to get into regular use. In addition, the use of some outputs may involve additional advocacy or awareness raising efforts. As a general strategy, the interventions within the frame of the DWCP are designed and implemented with clear sustainability focus which is pursued by the social partners with ILO's assistance.

In the context of the UN reform and the analysis of the ILO's ability to adjust to the changes brought by it, the approach of the new DWCP design is different. The general context of the programme becomes more complex and more competitive in terms of access to resources for implementation. Therefore, requires a combination between learning from robust evidence resulted from the implementation of the previous decent work programme with a more strategic orientation of the next programme. ILO recently developed a complex instrument which manages to capture accurately such a complex picture. This instrument, called Market System Analysis (MSA) started with system analysis for the private system, but proves to become an instrument for analysis for decent work as well. In Moldova, the MSA for the design of the next DWCP involves a wide variety of constituents and prioritizes the analysis of the target groups, which is different from the previous practice of DWCP design which began with the political and institutional framework analysis.

Despite of not being called as such, the whole process of MSA for the design of the DWCP and its' result (a national programme based on robust evidence and wide participation of the stakeholders) are in fact elements of an ex-ant evaluation for the next DWCP which will ensure high level of relevance and coherence of this programme and proves to be a modern process of policy cycle in line with the existing practice in the EU. Thus, the next DWCP will gain more visibility for both the country's decent work agenda and the ILO and its' national social partners, as well it will strengthen ownership on behalf of the national social partners. This is an emerging good practice for the ILO not only in the region, but internationally.

## 7. Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Stakeholder participation in all programming cycle phases should be increased. When agreeing on priorities and outcomes, the ILO should consider more accurately the capacity and commitment of constituents to contribute actively to implementation and to take over achievements for further developments. Consultations for the design and implementation of DWCP should include not only central government actors but also stakeholders active at the local grassroots level. In addition, more focus on developing social dialogue at the local level is necessary.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWCP OB, ILO NC, DWT/CO-Budapest	High	Mid-term	Low

**Recommendation 2:** The next DWCP should include clear, quantified measures of performance for future outcomes of the DWCP backed by baselines and targets in order to increase the evaluability of the programme. The ILO should better prioritize and increase consistency between planning, monitoring and reporting. This should include budget estimates to the outcomes in the new DWCP and clear indication on what is already covered and what needs to be funded through additional resource mobilization efforts. The DWCP OB could be involved more in monitoring progress with reference to country indicators and changes in DWCP planning.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC, DWCP OB	High	Long-term	Low

**Recommendation 3:** Make additional efforts to promote gender equality and non-discrimination. The ILO and the national constituents should make additional efforts to ensure that gender and non-discrimination principles are integrated in the new DWCP design and implementation, and considered in the ILO's strategy to influence policy development, formulation and implementation.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWCP OB, DWT/CO Budapest	High	Mid-term	Low

**Recommendation 4:** It is advisable to attempt to expand the circle of ILO constituents. The Ministry of Economy could be more involved along with other state institutions that are decisive, including the Ministry of Finance. In addition, a more open communication from ILO Headquarters and the DWT/CO Budapest is expected, i.e. communicating not only with our constituents should become an acceptable practice.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Government of Republic of Moldova, DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Long-term	Low

**Recommendation 5:** In order to ensure the consolidation of employment reform the Government and the ILO may consider joint activities aimed to strengthen the capacity of social partners in the design, monitoring and evaluation of decent work-related policy and programmes. Also, policy coherence and coordination across ministries (MHLSP, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance) needs to be improved in order to increase more effective and stable results.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Government of Republic of Moldova, DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Mid-term	Medium

**Recommendation 6:** ILO may consider the exit strategies in the earlier stages of the projects in order to increase the national ownership and sustainability of the respective interventions. This may involve a stronger message to the beneficiaries to increase their commitment to move from beneficiaries of international funding to beneficiaries of transfer of competences allowing them to perform functions independently of the international assistance.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Long-term	Low

**Recommendation 7:** In a post-pandemic scenario, continue contributing to the strengthening of the social protection systems and active employment policies. It is recommended that the ILO continue to provide assistance to Government in order to extend social protection and strengthen employment policies, with the objective of countering the effects of the crisis, facilitating access to medical services, and mitigating the social and economic repercussions of the pandemic, both at the level of individual households, to provide a secure basic income, and at macroeconomic level, by stabilizing the demand.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Government of Republic of Moldova, DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO NC	High	Mid-term	Medium

**Recommendation 8:** In the context of the UN reform, ILO should revisit the visibility of the DWCPs at the national level, including in Moldova. The DWCP national partners will have to be encouraged to make the DWCP achievements more visible. The complex process of the next DWCP's design is an emerging good practice which is worth being promoted both nationally and internationally.

Responsible Units	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
DWT/CO-Budapest, DWCP OB	Medium	Long-term	Low

## **ANNEX 1 - List of documents for desk review**

- ILO DWCP for Moldova 2016-2020
- DWCP 2016-2020 Results Framework
- DWCP 2016-2020 Monitoring Plan
- DWCP 2016-2020 Implementation Plan
- Minutes of DWCP Overview Board meetings
- Decent Work Country Profile updates
- ILO Mission reports
- ILO NC DWCP annual reports
- ILO NC quarterly reports for Moldova
- ILO monitoring/progress and evaluation reports for technical projects
- Studies and other relevant outputs (e.g. guidelines etc.) elaborated within the frame of ILO technical projects implemented in/covering Moldova
- ILO MDA country factsheet/website
- UNDAF Moldova document
- UNDAF logical frameworks and reporting
- HRD project documents and evaluation report.

## ANNEX 2 – Interview Guide

### Relevance

- To what extent the ILO interventions were designed to respond to the Decent Work Agenda challenges (*probe the respective stakeholder's challenges and needs for the period 2016-2020*)? Which were those, were you consulted in the programme design phase (*probe ownership of the programming framework on behalf of the respective stakeholder*) and was the DWCP in Moldova flexible in relation to the changing situations? To what extent did the DWCP design identify and integrate specific targets and indicators to capture i/ gender equality and non-discrimination concerns and ii/ concerns regarding people with disabilities, and how were these indicators defined/justified?
- To what extent the Results-Based Management (RBM) principles were applied in the design of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova? Did the DWCP design ensure a frame for measuring progress, i.e clearly defined outcomes, outputs and performance indicators with baselines and targets?

### 8. Coherence

- To what extent the ILO interventions in Moldova fit into the national development context and priorities and are relevant to the related Government's strategy, policies and plans?
- To what extent are the ILO interventions in the country aligned with the ILO priorities in the region? How the DWCP outcomes for Moldova were aligned with the ILO's strategic framework as set out in the Programme and Budget, as well as with the ILO's strategic priorities in the region? To what extent there was a balance between the volume of CPOs and the resources available for the country?
- To what extent are the ILO interventions in the country aligned with the UNPF priorities and indicators (for both 2013-2017 and 2018-2022 cycles)? To what extent the DWCP 2016-2020 indicators were designed in a manner which enables reporting on progress under UNPF specific targets and indicators?

### 9. Effectiveness

- To what extent has the DWCP 2016-2020 (*for an easy reference, probe cooperation with the ILO*) achieved its objectives in terms of stated targets, what results are noted so far, what are the lessons learned from the implementation and how these lessons should be incorporated or made use of in the formulation and implementation of the next DWCP? Do you consider there were certain unintended results (*probe unexpected benefits, unexpected drawbacks, perverse results*)?
- Are you satisfied with the quality of the results? What was the level of your commitment and engagement and of the support received from the ILO? Did the ILO activities created a framework for good relationship and cooperation among national and local level Government authorities and other relevant stakeholders, including the implementation partners, to achieve results? Did you receive political, technical and administrative support from other national partners? Were there tangible benefits from the regular/periodic meetings among ILO, beneficiaries, key partners and other relevant stakeholders? How

do you perceive the technical and administrative support received from the ILO DWT/CO-Budapest, ILO HQ and partners and how this could be improved?

- To what extent the results of the ILO cooperation activities implemented between 2016 and 2020 are addressing both men and women? Do you consider women and men benefited equitably from the DWCP activities and the most vulnerable groups were addressed with priority? Which were those groups and how they benefited in very practical terms?
- Are there better ways of achieving the results? The achievement of results was done through the planned outputs or new ones have been included? Why and how effective were such changes? In case of new outputs, did they contributed to improvement of the DWCP achievements? Were there any synergies amongst ILO activities and those of strategic partners?
- What was the context of implementation? What were the main contributing and challenging factors towards DWCP's success in attaining its targets? Were there any obstacles or barriers? What were the most succesful practices adopted? What are the good practices you would recommend to be replicated both nationally and broader in the region?
- What is the effect of the CODIV-19 crisis on the implementation of the DWCP and how is the ILO responding to the crisis?

#### **10. Sustainability**

- What is the level of sustainability of achievements? Do you think the activities developed within the frame of your cooperation with the ILO between 2016-2020 will continue in the next years? Do you think they should be further developed? How? With what resources?
- To what extent do you make use of the results of your cooperation with the ILO? Do you think they should be further developed/expanded? Do you have the knowledge and ability, institutional capacity, the legal and strategic policy framework to do that? Is there local ownership to continue the actions piloted with ILO support? What are the risks that the achievements of your cooperation with the ILO not be sustainable and what are the measures needed to improve prospects for sustainability?
- Are there any emerging/new priorities you consider important for your future cooperation with the ILO? Do you think ILO should/will change its priorities in Moldova? Why, based on what grounds?

### **ANNEX 3 – List of DWCP stakeholders and review informants**

1. Nelea Rusu – State secretary, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection
2. Anna Gherganova - Head of the Employment Policies and Migration Regulation Department, MHLSP
3. Alexandru Ghețu - Head of Labour Relations Department, MHLSP
4. Raisa Dogaru – Director, National Employment Agency
5. Valentina Lungu – Deputy director, National Employment Agency
6. Vladislav Caminschi - Executive director, National Confederation of Employers from Moldova (CNPM)
7. Sergiu Sainciuc - Deputy president, National Trade Union Confederation (CNSM)
8. Igor Ciloci - Deputy director, State Labour Inspection
9. Elena Vatcarau – Head of the Labour Market Unit, National Bureau of Statistics
10. Violeta Vrabie – ILO Project coordinator Youth Employment
11. Ala Lipciu - ILO National Coordinator in Moldova
12. Tudor Robu - Assistant FAO Representative in Moldova
13. Maria Laura Fiorotto - Head UN RCO
14. Irina Guban – economist, UN RCO
15. Veronica Arpintin - BERD Moldova
16. Agnes Fazekas - Programme officer ILO DWT/CO Budapest
17. Maria Borsos – Former programme office ILO DWT/CO Budapest

## ANNEX 4 – Scoring of the outcome-level findings

Based on the data collected and feedback obtained from ILO staff and partners, the review consultant assessed the level of achievement of the DWCP 2016-2020 for Moldova as follows:

CPOs of the DWCP 2016-2020 in Moldova	Scoring
CP outcome 1.1 “Improved legal and regulatory framework for enterprise development”	4
CP outcome 1.2 “Improved human resources development and employment policies”	6
CP outcome 1.3 “Strengthened labour market information system - including skills analysis - in line with international standards on labour statistics”	5
CP outcome 2.1 “Improved legal and institutional framework for social dialogue at national, local and sectoral levels”	6
CP outcome 2.2 “Improved mechanisms for consultation and collective bargaining”	6
CP outcome 3.1 “Wage and income policies with an emphasis on equal opportunities are developed and implemented”	5
CP outcome 3.2 “Reforming social security systems to improve their adequacy, sustainability, compliance and coverage”	6
CP outcome 3.3 “Improved legal framework for prevention and compensation of work accidents and occupational diseases”	4

(Scoring: 1 = highly unsatisfactory, 2 = unsatisfactory, 3 = somewhat unsatisfactory, 4 = somewhat satisfactory, 5 = satisfactory, 6 = highly satisfactory)

## ANNEX 5 – Good Practice Case 1

### Project /programme Title: Review of the DWCP of Moldova 2016-2020

**Name of Reviewer: Roxana Irimia**

**Date: 07 December 2020**

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the review. This case complements the text which can be found in the full review report in the Section 5.4.1.

**GP Element: Diversification of the resource mobilization – emerging cooperation between ILO and EBRD**

<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<p>In the context of the UN reform and the tough competition for funding which one of the consequences of this reform, ILO in Moldova is intensifying the efforts for resource mobilisation and diversifying these sources based on strengthening cooperation with partners who value and acknowledge ILO's specific technical expertise. These collaborations ensure both sustainability of the ILO interventions in the country, but also increase visibility of the DWCP as a highly relevant tool for the country's strategic development.</p>
<b>Relevant conditions and context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>Until this year (i.e. 2020) the ILO – EBRD cooperation consisted of discussions and consultations within the specific boards, for example Donors Sponsorship in Women Economic Empowerment. The cooperation recently became more intense because EBRD needed ILO's technical expertise and ILO was interested to develop this cooperation. EBRD is a financial institution working with SMEs but does not have any profile related to labor relations and working conditions, topics that were found of high interest in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. It was a perfect match between the need of a major target group identified by EBRD and the technical expertise brought by the international ILO experts (from DWCT/CO Budapest and ILO HQs).</p> <p>According to the EBRD representative in Moldova: <i>“until the COVID-19 crisis we did identify common priorities with the ILO. During the collaboration this year, we perceived ILO as a partner with wide and high-quality know-how”.</i></p>

<p><b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b></p>	<p>The COVID-19 EBRD-ILO Common Initiative included organising a series of webinars for SMEs on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business continuity approaches: a critical response to COVID-19,</li> <li>• Partial unemployment vs. lay-offs: an overview of measures agreed by employers and workers through social dialogue during Covid-19 crisis, and</li> <li>• Recovery from COVID 19: Boosting enterprise productivity through skills development with a focus on work-based learning and on sectoral / industry development.</li> </ul> <p><i>The overall objective</i> of the Initiative was to support delivery of the objectives of the EBRD and ILO work in Moldova, as well as raising awareness among SMEs about navigating through COVID-19 Crisis and post-Crisis employment and labour relations. The Initiative also included the communication effort to reach target audience, informing them about the best available and most effective tools to sustain businesses with the provision of know-how and informational support responsive to the needs generated by COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p><i>The specific objectives</i> were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness and understanding about labour issues ensuing from the current emergency situation and support available for SME among targeted audience,</li> <li>• Advise SMEs on ways to wade through current crisis and preserve reliable employment relationship, and</li> <li>• Promoting donors support for the development of SMEs in Moldova and increasing donors, EBRD and ILO visibility.</li> </ul> <p><i>The target groups</i> of the Initiative included 1/ top management and owners of local SMEs, 2/ local business associations, and 3/ SME sector stakeholders, including Financial Institutions (FIs).</p> <p>In very practical terms, the collaboration consisted of a common planning meeting which set the division of activities and responsibilities: EBRD did the promotion of the webinars, recruitment of participants and follow-up, while ILO elaborated the agendas of the events, the ILO experts elaborated and delivered the presentations, after each event there assessment meetings to analyze what was done well and what improvements should be made for the next event. EBRD was involved more in the organization of the events, whereas ILO was more involved with content/expertise, but everything was coordinated and constantly discussed.</p> <p>Each partner supported financially their contribution.</p>
<p><b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b></p>	<p>The ILO team was appreciated as very professional and responsible and the quality of the webinars was rated as remarkably high. The feedback from the participants was very good. The level of attendance was high, over 100 participants per each event who asked many questions that ILO was able to answer. This proves that the topics chosen for the webinars were highly relevant and were considered extremely useful by the participants. Based on this positive experience of collaboration, ILO and EBRD explore the possibility to expand their cooperation in the near future.</p>

<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	<p>Despite of the fact that EBRD – ILO cooperation in Moldova was not outlined, there were discussions based on the results of the UN country report on COVID which highlighted healthcare workers as a new vulnerable group. EBRD is reporting to have many clients in this sector and is interested to address their needs from the perspective of both employees and employers, with ILO contribution. In general, it is foreseen that the continuation of cooperation will be based on needs assessment.</p> <p>In addition, EBRD is considering a multi-country intervention which will include Moldova and Ukraine, also in cooperation with ILO.</p>
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	<p>To be linked with DWCP 2021-2024 and with DWCT/CO Budapest efforts of resource mobilization.</p>
<b>Other relevant comments</b>	<p>EBRD is following SDGs especially from the perspective of the development of the financial market as the creation of a framework for the development of the private sector. In this context, EBRD cooperates with other UN agencies too, but the collaboration with ILO is perceived as being more structured and clearer.</p> <p>According to the EBRD representative: <i>“during the cooperation with ILO we have seen that everything they do is targeted and I personally appreciate it a lot, it is much better than to try to cover everything you don't actually know about as we've seen with other UN agencies. ILO works only with the right stakeholders; they do not set goals that they will never achieve. I don't know why we didn't collaborate earlier... Maybe it was because ILO was not so active in promoting their work or maybe we were not receptive enough.”</i></p>

## ANNEX 6 – Good Practice Case 2

### Project /programme Title: Review of the DWCP of Moldova 2016-2020

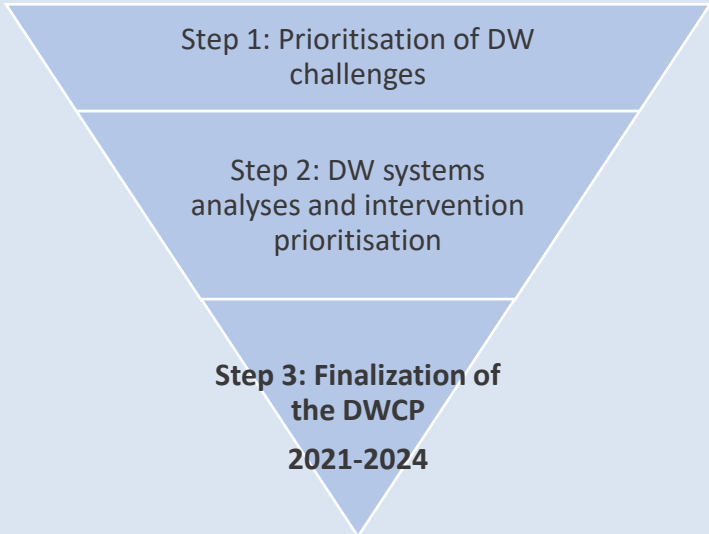
**Name of Reviewer: Roxana Irimia**

**Date: 07 December 2020**

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the review. This case complements the text which can be found in the full review report in the Section 5.4.3.

#### GP Element: Systemic approach in the design of the DWCP 2021 -2024

<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<p>This new approach consists of piloting the ILO concept/instrument of Market System Analysis (MSA) to decent work as a means of identifying and targeting initiatives for Moldova's DWCP 2021-2024 strategy and for future fundraising opportunities. Originally, this instrument started as a systemic analysis for the private system but proves to become an instrument for analysis for decent work as well.</p>
<b>Relevant conditions and context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>In the overall context of the UN reform and the analysis of the ILO's ability to adjust to the changes brought by it, the approach of the new DWCP design in Moldova is different. The general context of the programme becomes more complex and more competitive in terms of access to resources for implementation. Therefore, it requires a combination between learning from robust evidence resulted from the implementation of the previous decent work programme with a more strategic orientation of the next programme. ILO recently developed a complex instrument which manages to capture accurately such a complex picture. The implementation of MSA for the design of the next DWCP involves all constituents and prioritizes the analysis of the target groups, which is different from the previous practice of DWCP design which began with the political and institutional framework analysis. This complex endeavor received full support from both HQ and DWCT/CO levels and received funding for implementation because it requires high expertise. This may become a limitation in the implementation of this instrument in the absence of such resources. In case of Moldova, there were three priorities selected (youth employment, social dialogue, and safety and security of work) but resources were available only for two system analysis (addressing youth employment and safety and security of work). It was considered that social dialogue is a key mechanism in advancing both priority areas and it was mainstreamed in the two analyses during step 2 (see figure below). Furthermore, it will be assured that sufficient coverage of social dialogue is included in the DWCP.</p>

<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	<p>According to the ILO “Concept Note for a Systemic Approach to DWCP 2021-2024 in Moldova” (2020), the process started broad by objectively identifying and then prioritising the key DW challenges in country and then drilled down, through analysis, to the underlying causes to the respective DW challenges. Once the underlying causes were better understood, the interventions that can be feasibly implemented by the ILO were identified along with some of these key underlying causes. The above mentioned Concept Note captures the whole process in the following visual manner:</p> 
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	<p>The whole process of MSA for the design of the DWCP and its’ result (a national programme based on robust evidence and wide participation of the stakeholders) are in fact elements of an ex-ant evaluation for the next DWCP which will ensure high level of relevance and coherence of this programme and proves to be a modern process of policy cycle in line with the existing practice in the EU. Thus, the next DWCP will gain more visibility for both the country’s decent work agenda and the ILO and its’ national social partners, as well it will strengthen ownership on behalf of the national social partners.</p>
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	<p>This process will help the ILO DWT/CO-Budapest as well as Moldovan constituents prioritise areas where they will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibly maximize “high potential” initiatives;</li> <li>• Address constraints to real decent work challenges in a way that can have long-term, sustainable impacts;</li> <li>• Have a competitive advantage vis-à-vis other UN agencies and carve a niche within the UNDAF strategy; and</li> <li>• Approach donors with targeted concept notes, which can generate funding for future, larger initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>If successful, the process could be refined for future use in scoping opportunities for other countries within the region, and perhaps in the ILO more globally.</p>

<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	The process lasts up to six months and involve close collaboration between ILO staff, i.e. National Coordinator (NC) in Moldova, CO-Budapest DWT specialists, and the Lab project in the SME Unit.
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO (2020): "Concept Note for a Systemic Approach to DWCP 2021-2024 in Moldova"</li> <li>• ILO (2020): Moldova Decent Work Country Programme (2021-2024) - Selection of DWCP Priority Area Background Report</li> <li>• ILO (2020): Moldova Decent Work Country Programme (2021-2024) DWCP Priority Area Selection: Final Report</li> <li>• ILO (2020): "Youth Employment: A Systems Analysis for Moldova's Decent Work Country Programme 2021-2024"</li> <li>• ILO (2020): "Safety and Security at Work: A Systems Analysis for Moldova's Decent Work Country Programme 2021-2024"</li> </ul>