



Project funded by the European Union



Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova

Context

Currently numerous investments projects in local public infrastructure financed by EU and other EU member states are under implementation in Moldova. To assure that the necessary investments respond to the real needs of the citizens, it is important that they, men and women equally, vulnerable population such as youth, older persons, poor, persons with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, participate meaningfully in decision-making processes on socio-economic development and public infrastructure development.

The engagement of citizens during the planning, design, and delivery of public services shall empower them to hold public authorities accountable and curb corruption. A strong organized civil society that has the capacities to check public institutions and demand accountability and integrity from governments and public administrations is an integral part of establishing good governance. Furthermore, a strong civil society could help public authorities in identifying the need of people and communities, setting priorities and implementing the necessary actions towards development.

Moreover, citizens must be aware of related health, environmental and socio-economic issues to demand action from public authorities while fulfilling their obligations as clients of local public services. Additionally, building trust in public institutions ability to solve these issues is important in order for citizens to constructively participate in policy and decision-making. This also strengthens (local) democracy and the country as a whole.

Citizens need to be encouraged to subscribe and pay for quality services. This requires understanding the purpose of cost-recovery tariffs as well as discouragement of activities such as illegal connections, manipulation of meters, or water and waste dumping. Similarly, citizens need to understand the health and environmental impact of illegal waste sites to agree to pay for waste removal in their communities. They must also be convinced of the impact of energy inefficiency on climate change.

Key facts

Implementation period: 01/2019 - 12/2021

Implemented by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, as commissioned by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Financed by: European Union – 4.9 Mio. EUR (including 3,75 Mio EUR in grants)

Political counterpart: Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment

Target beneficiaries: Citizens (including pupils) in the development regions North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia - as the ultimate beneficiaries of the action, Civil society organizations, especially at the local level, Mass media representatives, Networks of CSO

Partners: Regional Development Agencies (North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia), Regional Development Councils (North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia); Mayors and local councils LPAs I level and raion's presidents and raion councils from LPAs II level, National Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Project objectives

The overall project objective is to empower citizens through constructive participation of CSOs in local, regional and national decision-making processes.

The specific objectives of the Project are:

- *Participatory planning:* citizens, men and women equally, are enabled to contribute in a meaningful way in participatory planning of public infrastructure by Local Public Administrations;
- *Participatory monitoring:* citizens are enabled to participate in a meaningful way in oversight activities of procurement, management and maintenance processes of public infrastructure;
- *Awareness raising:* citizens – including pupils of public schools – are informed about investments in the areas

of WSS and SWM, relevant environmental issues related to local public services and the relevance of cost-recovering tariff setting of their provision.

Approach

In order to achieve the expected results, the Project applies a holistic capacity building approach to support the development of:

- a) the necessary capacities of citizens with respect to participatory planning and decision-making;
- b) the necessary institutional capacity of CSOs to ensure they can effectively apply their knowledge within the respective decision-making processes; and
- c) the adequate networking conditions and functional mechanisms for coordination and communication between CSOs and different actors across different institutional levels.

CSOs operating on the regional and local levels are supported in identifying the capacity building needs and systematically consolidating civic engagement mechanisms in the implementation of activities related to citizens participation in decision-making, including in processes for the modernization of local public services.

Main activities include facilitating the participation of citizens in integrated planning and programming at local levels, increasing the demand for inter-municipal cooperation to benefit local citizens, facilitating the participation of citizens through local CSOs and local citizen committees in monitoring the procurement and construction of local public infrastructure, and cross-cutting initiatives to raise the awareness of citizens, including children, of environmental, socio-economic and financial issues related to local public service delivery.

For this, four regional CSOs (one per development region – North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia) signed grant agreements with GIZ, which will award sub-grants to local CSOs to implement small scale projects in their localities, which will support socio-economic and sustainable local development based on citizens' needs and contribute to improve local services in priority sectors for regional development, including water supply and sanitation, solid waste management, and energy efficiency.

Furthermore, a grant agreement is signed with a CSO with proved experience in communication.

Expected key results

- at least 1800 citizens participate in the development, monitoring and evaluation of regional and local strategic documents and plans;
- at least 1800 citizens in 25 LPAs are informed about opportunities for participatory planning and participate in respective planning of local public Services;
- at least 600 representatives of LPAs are trained on how to apply the participatory approaches during the planning processes;
- at least 25 Local Citizens Committees (LCC) are capacitated to monitor procurement, management, operation and maintenance of local public services, including WSS and SWM, and the relevance of cost-recovering tariff setting of the provision of local public services;
- at least 1800 citizens in 25 LPAs are informed about opportunities and participate in oversight activities related to procurement, management, operation and maintenance of local public Services;
- at least 3200 citizens - including pupils of public schools - have an increased awareness of issues regarding sustainable development, including WSS, SWM and energy and energy efficiency as well as the impact on climate change;
- at least 240 mass media representatives are trained to raise awareness at the local and regional levels about sustainable development and local public services, including SWM, EE, as well as the impact on climate change;
- at least 18 CSOs strengthened their capacity in participatory planning processes, monitoring of investment projects and organizing awareness raising campaigns;
- at least 4 regional networks of CSOs are created, able to communicate with public authorities for an improved and citizen-oriented provision of public services.

Contact information

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