



Government of the Republic of Moldova (GoRM)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM – part of UN Women)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Amendment to the Joint Project Document

Strengthening the National Statistical System of the Republic of Moldova

Period of extension: 2011-2012

November 26, 2010

COVER PAGE

Country: Moldova

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s): UNDAF Outcome 1 By 2012, public institutions with the support of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are better able to ensure good governance, rule of law and equal access to justice and promotion of human rights

Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s): Pro-poor policies, addressing development and population issues, are formulated, implemented, and monitored in a more transparent and participatory manner.

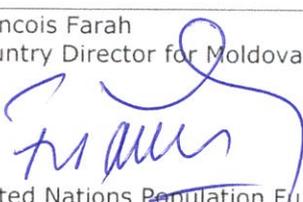
Expected Output(s)/Annual Targets: The availability, quality, and usage of disaggregated statistical data is improved (emphasis on geographic, age, and gender disaggregation)

Executing Entity: National Bureau of Statistics and other line-ministries

Implementing agencies: UNDP, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO

<p>Project Title: "Strengthening the National Statistical System"</p> <p>Project ID: 00057446</p> <p>Extended Project Duration: 2 years</p> <p>Anticipated start/end dates: 1.01.2011-31.12.2012</p> <p>Fund Management Option(s): Combination of parallel and pooled</p> <p>Managing / Administrative Agent: UNDP</p>	<p>Total estimated budget*: 1,647,051 USD</p> <p>Out of which:</p> <p>1. Funded Budget: 1,048,615 USD</p> <p>2. Unfunded budget: 598,436 USD</p> <p>Sources of funded budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government N/A • UNDP Regular 250,000 USD • UNDP BRC/MDG (pooled) 30,000 USD • UNIFEM (pooled) 313,615 USD • UNFPA (parallel) 106,000 USD • UNICEF(parallel) 327,000 USD • ILO (parallel) 22,000 USD
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Signature of participating agencies and national counterpart:

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1. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

This amendment outlines entry points for the continuation of the joint project "Strengthening the National Statistical System 2007-2010" in the period 2011-2012¹. The **objective** of the next phase of the joint project for the period 2011-2012 is to continue to support, through technical assistance, high quality and reliable statistical data production and use for evidence-based policy design and monitoring into sustainable institutional structures.

The present amendment is aimed to re-arrange the activities and inputs already/previously agreed which do not involve significant changes in the results of the Project. Last two of three components of the joint project will be merged.

In the result the Project will have two components, which are capacity development for (i) improvement of multi-dimensional disaggregated data production by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and other producers of administrative/official statistics, and (ii) improvement of data dissemination and statistical capacities of relevant national actors (civil servants at central and local levels, CSOs, media, academia) to use statistics for evidence-based policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and analysis.

The overall contribution from the joint project "Strengthening the National Statistical System 2011-2012" are the following:

- Enhanced capacities of the National Bureau of Statistics and other data producers to produce quality multi-dimensional disaggregated data in line with EU and international standards;
- Improved availability of quality disaggregated data and strengthened statistical capacities of relevant national actors (civil servants from central and local levels, CSOs, media, academia) for evidence-based policy monitoring and analysis.

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The production of reliable statistics and use of statistical data for evidence-based policy design and monitoring is fundamental to human development, the achievement of the MDGs and further approximation to EU standards for the Republic of Moldova. This development challenge has been anchored in international strategic framework documents, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF 2007-2011), and national strategic documents (NDS 2008-2011). The European Neighbourhood Programme Action Plan for Moldova², also recognizes the need for further assistance in harmonization of official statistics with European standards and to the forthcoming population and housing census.

Based on these challenges and the needs identified in the "Global Assessment of the National Statistical System" in 2007, a joint project by UNDP, UNIFEM UNFPA and UNICEF (joined in 2009) "Strengthening the National Statistical System" was implemented during 2007-2010. The joint project directly responded to gaps related to the availability, quality, and usage of disaggregated statistical data (with emphasis on data disaggregated by geographic location, age, and sex) and took into account lessons learnt from previous capacity development in this field (DFID ISAS Project). The main achievements of this joint project to date have been the following:

- Improved quality of statistical data produced by NBS in line with international standards and increased availability of multi-dimensional disaggregated data;

¹ May be extended beyond 2013 – it remains subject to further discussion as appropriate.

² EU-Moldova ENP Action Plan was approved in February 2005 for a period of three years and extended by mutual agreement from February 2008 onwards. In December 2009 it was agreed to continue guiding and monitoring the ENP Action Plan on the basis of yearly sets of priorities and schedules.

- Improved methodologies and quality of sample surveys and piloted new areas (i.e. social exclusion, violence against women in families, child labour);
- Improved dissemination tools and practices which has also been reflected by user satisfaction survey results³;
- Enhanced capacities of both, independent analytical groups to produce analytical papers, as well as line-ministries to use the official statistics in policy-making.

Although, targeted capacity development to the National Statistical System over the last three years has been generally evaluated as relevant⁴, gaps and challenges remain and further support is justified. The growing demand for quality data for evidence-based policy making calls for a project continuation. Evidence-based policy-making can only be successful if is based on a reality which is described by quality statistics. In addition, good evidence-based policies responding to the financial crisis require a good basis of statistical data as well as the literacy of users to understand, use and interpret statistical data.

Key areas that require further support in the next phase of the joint project and that have received less attention in the previous project are:

- Further harmonization with EU statistical requirements;
- Technical preparation and general awareness and acceptance of the upcoming population and housing census in 2013;
- Fostering of better cooperation, coordination and quality mechanisms between NBS and other data producers (central and local public authorities responsible for official and administrative data);
- Institutionalization of capacity building and training to continuously upgrade skills of staff from NBS, including strengthening capacities of NBS deconcentrated services to produce multi-dimensional disaggregated data, and increase statistical literacy and monitoring and evaluation skills of line ministries, local authorities and civil society organizations.

3. STRATEGY

3.1. Lessons learnt from the past project 2007-2010

The Joint Project 2007-2010 is still being implemented and therefore no formal evaluation of results has been carried out. Lessons learnt presented here are based on a review of the relevant documents, progress reports and interviews with the NBS, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF, and other relevant actors in the field of statistics (i.e. IOM and the World Bank) as well as needs identified during a workshop on social exclusion with relevant line ministries.

The *main lessons learnt* from the Joint Project 2007-2010 are:

1. UN coordination: UN coordination in an area relevant to all agencies has been appreciated and valued positively by national counterparts. The comprehensive approach of the joint project providing technical assistance in institutional development, quality management and methodological improvements of data production has been acknowledged as more productive and

³ According to the Public Opinion Poll (on data user's satisfaction with available statistical data of NBS, as of December 2008) results the majority of users would prefer to use the official web site (76,7%) to get the necessary statistical data. The fact that the majority of the users still obtain necessary data from printed issues (35,2% compared with 22,4% for the NBS site) was explained due to the fact that on the web site the statistical data is quickly spread, but it is too generalized, the printed issues offer more detailed indicators, closer to the specific of the users activity. The causes that affect the access to the NBS provided data are different for each category of users. Thus, if for LPA the main cause would be the fact that they do not dispose of technical means for consulting the web page of NBS (only 57% prefer to use in comparing with the other categories of users, where the percentage is at minimum of 80%), research institutions and NGOs perceive the lack in NBS data sources, of some more detailed statistical indicators, as limitation of the official data access. (More details see on <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&id=2746&idc=399>)

⁴ UNDP and UNFPA Moldova Institutional Development Outcome Evaluation, February 2010, by: Rupinder Singh with assistance from Igor Nedera.

efficient than single area interventions by each agency focusing on their specific niche. Further, synergies between individual activities could be established that increased the efficiency of the interventions. Therefore, the next phase of the project should clearly be multi-agency focused with transparent and well-coordinated project management among NBS and the involved agencies. The Sector Coordination Council provides a good platform for speaking with one voice and presenting the next phase joint project's overall objectives and activities also to other donors.

2. Leadership of the NBS: Taking into account the complexity of the National Statistical System and the significant number of stakeholders involved, effective coordination and leadership of NBS is a requirement for successful project implementation and achievement of meaningful results. The general acceptance of the coordinating role of the NBS within the National Statistical Systems by other governmental authorities is noteworthy⁵. Therefore, the next phase of the joint project should further provide ownership and leadership to NBS in carrying out a large part of the interventions.

3. Professionalism of the NBS: The joint project has focused intensively on strengthening the capacities, improving methodological processes and infrastructure, quality and competencies of the NBS in producing and disseminating highly qualitative multi-dimensional disaggregated data. The quality of data produced by NBS and the relationship with data users has improved. Overall NBS is now better prepared to respond to the different and increasing needs of the users (i.e. line ministries, academia, media, CSOs, businesses, etc.) and to provide seminars in specific fields of statistics, although additional concerted efforts might be needed to increasing the capacities of NBS to undertake qualitative analysis and interpretation of produced and disseminated data. Nevertheless, the professionalism of NBS should be acknowledged in the next phase of the joint project by giving this institution the opportunity for further competency and skills development and using its expertise for offering training services to users.

4. Donor driven (specialized) surveys: The joint project focused its activities to a large extent on capacity development of the NBS in producing and disseminating quality multi-dimensional disaggregated statistics (Components I and II). Among those, few specialized surveys and ad hoc modules to existing surveys have been carried out, which have been partly determined by NBS and UN agencies involved based on their field of interest. While these activities have been important in terms of creating capacities among NBS to produce quality statistics in line with EU and international standards and learn new methodologies related to particular areas, they constituted to some extent an additional burden on NBS's staff and pressure on timely delivery of quality data. More importantly, the amount of new data and indicators produced could not be properly digested by data users in order to exploit the new data and indicators to the maximum for policy analysis and monitoring. Although new data produced has been presented to users in seminars or workshops and/or in publications which have been appreciated by the users, more long-term efforts are needed to make data users aware of why such data is needed, how indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators, are relevant for their respective fields, how indicators from different sources and areas can be used to formulate, implement, analyze and monitor policies, etc. Thus, the next phase of the joint project should ensure that data supply and data demand by national counterparts adequately match through better coordination, more advocacy among ministries and less donor driven (specialized) surveys. Instead, the next phase of the project should advocate for using existing instruments (Household Budget Survey and Labour Force Survey) to which ad hoc modules could be added and improving the quality of administrative statistics. In addition to the above, a special emphasis shall be put on strengthening NBS capacities of producing and disseminating sex-disaggregated indicators at national and local levels.

5. Absence of capacity development for other producers of administrative/official statistics: Capacity development in the area of multi-dimensional disaggregated data production has exclusively focused on the NBS. Administrative data is however being produced by a variety of

⁵ Daniela Stefănescu, 2008, Report on the institutional and functional analysis of the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova.

institutions (i.e. central public authorities and to some extent – local public authorities) which lacks formal quality control mechanisms and methodological consistency, including knowledge of and experience on applying statistics for evidence-based policy-making or advocacy purposes. Capacities of most of the respective data producers are weak accompanied with a lack of coordination and cooperation among institutions and the NBS.⁶ Administrative data produced from different sources is therefore not linked or fully computerized, and general users are being confused by differing figures from different sources, undermining the credibility of the National Statistical System in Moldova. The next phase of the joint project should therefore fill this gap and focus specifically on mechanisms fostering the capacities and cooperation between various data producers and target quality issues in a few selected areas as pilot activities.

6. Little focus on data use: As mentioned above, a large part of activities within the joint project have focused on capacity development of the NBS in producing and disseminating disaggregated quality statistics. Supporting users (central and local public authorities and CSOs) in understanding, interpreting and applying the data for policy monitoring and analysis has received fewer attention. Activities focused on seminars, roundtables and small research projects that generally supported data dissemination but could not always contribute to the wider result of increased statistical literacy among data users and more competencies among ministries to use data for evidence-based policy making. The next phase of the joint project should therefore address this gap and put equal emphasis on strengthening capacities of data users, fostering dialogue between NBS and users, enhancing the understanding, trust and credibility and thereby increasing the data use.

7. Weak ownership of the line ministries (CPAs) in activities on data use: Overall, the participation and interest in topical seminars on data and indicators relevant for policy monitoring has been low or passive. The knowledge and publications provided have not necessarily been shared and exchanged within the ministries. Often the heads (top/medium) of CPAs have sent lowest level staff that are not necessarily responsible for monitoring, or are not fully informed. Recognizing that the day-to-day business is often a barrier to make use of learning opportunities, the next phase of the project should find new mechanisms for ensuring ownership and accountability of line ministries in learning and applying M&E skills.

8. Scope and sustainability: The joint project addressed a wide field of thematic areas, such as gender statistics, demographics, labour market, social exclusion, agriculture, environment, e-development, etc. which were largely based on requests of NBS and partly reflect donors' interest in particular issues. However, analysis of gathered and disaggregated data is a challenge, because NBS does not view itself as one of the bodies that should be analyzing data to contribute to evidence-based policy making. Furthermore, the insufficient financial and human resources in NBS represent a challenge in terms of data dissemination to various stakeholders and users. Further, interventions were not designed specifically as institutional capacity development activities. Institutional capacity development was seen as a spin off from technical assistance. With the risk of staff rotation and lack of opportunities for human resource development, some of the project's achievements may be undermined if not embedded institutionally. Therefore, the next phase of the joint project should make efforts towards developing institutional mechanisms for providing training and skills development courses for NBS staff (to upgrade skills in line with a human resources policy) and for data users (basic training and courses). Given the high professionalism of NBS staff these could co-participate in the provision of the trainings on topics related to statistical fields (including gender statistics) and methodological issues. Further, the scope of activities should reflect priority thematic areas relevant for monitoring human development and the achievements of the MDGs in the Republic of Moldova (socio-economic statistics with particular focus on data disaggregation to build evidence on equity and reduce disparities).

⁶ "Institutional co-ordination mechanisms (co-operation protocols signed at management level by the NBS and the main sectorial partners of this institution) do not always work. Due to this reason but also due to insufficient resources, the co-ordinating role of the National Bureau of Statistics is only partially fulfilled". (Daniela Ștefănescu, 2008, Report on the institutional and functional analysis of the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova).

3.2. Project strategy

The next phase of the Joint Project will continue to contribute to achieving the overall UNDAF outcome: "pro-poor policies, addressing development and population issues, are formulated, implemented, and monitored in a more transparent and participatory manner". The specific objective of the next phase of the joint project is to embed technical assistance for high quality and reliable statistical data production and use for evidence-based policy design and monitoring into sustainable institutional structures. Because last two of three components of the Joint Project (data dissemination and data use) will be merged, the project will further consist of two components, which are capacity development for (i) improvement of multi-dimensional disaggregated data production by the National Statistical Bureau and other official/administrative data producers, and (ii) improvement of data dissemination and statistical capacities of relevant national actors (civil servants, CSOs, media, academia) for evidence-based policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and analysis.

Since the joint project's phase for 2011-2012 is a continuation of the joint project 2007-2010, the project components proposed build on the achievements and the lessons learnt from the previous project's phase and will address those areas where gaps and challenges remain and have been identified as described above. Specifically, this implies that the next phase of the Joint Project will propose a mutually reinforcing combination of institutional capacity development and technical assistance for the improvement of methodologies and practices of data production (gender-sensitive, high quality). On the one hand the Joint Project continues, with targeted support to NBS, to ensure multi-dimensional disaggregated data production in conformity with international and EU standards (focusing particularly on further harmonization with EU statistical requirements and preparatory assistance to the Population and Housing Census in 2013). On the other hand, the joint project will introduce a set of new elements that will sharpen the focus and scope and make the project more sustainable:

- Improvement of the quality of administrative data and strengthening of the cooperation between NBS and other data producers (in particular line-ministries) in few selected areas;
- Institutional mechanisms for providing training and skills development courses for NBS staff and for data users (civil servants, CSO, media, academia) for different purpose (in particular for evidence-based policy monitoring and analysis).

The Joint Project will have two components focusing on improvement of multi-dimensional disaggregated (i) data production; (ii) data dissemination and use. The project will also include a project evaluation at the end of the Joint Project.

Component I. Improvement of data production

Activities under this component will address three major sets of gaps identified, namely (i) continuous need to harmonize the statistical infrastructure and methodologies of NBS, and other data producers, with international and EU standards; (ii) technical and political preparatory needs for the population census 2013; (iii) low quality of administrative data. Key activities will include the following:

Activity 1: Alignment of the official statistics infrastructure to the "acquis communautaire" in statistics and other international standards

1.1 In-depth assessment of the Domain 1 "Demographic and Social Statistics" in line with the EU Statistical Requirements Compendium⁷: This comprehensive assessment will identify gaps and

⁷ This yearly publication serves as a reference document for the "acquis communautaire" in statistics. The Compendium is a tool for producers of **official statistics**, which summarises the key reference information for European statistical production. Eurostat updates this Compendium every year to take into account new legislation and other developments relevant for European official statistics. For each theme and module that belongs to a specific domain and that is relevant for European official statistics producers, the 2010 edition of the Compendium provides: description of statistical theme, relevant legal basis, data requirements, methodology and international cooperation issues. (Statistical Requirements

need for technical assistance (including costing) in this domain with regard to the EU data requirements and standards related to official statistics methodologies. Based on the assessment, the identified needs will be prioritized by the Steering Committee and a list of technical assistance projects to be implemented through the joint project will be identified (*depending on funding availability*).

1.2 Provision of technical assistance in selected areas to align the official statistics infrastructure to the requirements of the acquis: The technical assistance to be provided can be organized through twinning. In this approach a donor nation (EU country) – with expertise in a particular area – provides this expertise to Moldova. Moldova provides a complimentary set of experts to work with the experts from the donor.

1.3 Improvement of socio-economic statistical infrastructure relevant for monitoring of human development and the achievements of MDGs.

The lack of complete, accurate and reliable statistical data makes the promotion of relevant and efficient policies in different fields hard to accomplish and impossible to follow the progress towards the achievement of MDGs. It can be changed through the elimination of methodological differences in estimation of MDGs indicators and ambiguity /uncertainty of definitions and concepts used by (different) data producers. Also, revision of some MDG targets, or the corresponding MDG indicators, in case that the data source has changed over time or the values used in the base-year have been previously wrongly estimated (over or underestimated), could also help to secure the future conducting of MDG review, assessment and monitoring. The lack of internationally comparable data in specific sectors also remains a challenge in Moldova.

The main implementer and beneficiary of this activity will be NBS that will ensure the consultation and coordination with the CPA as data producers and the main users of official statistics.

Activity 2: Preparation of the population and housing census

The population and housing census that will take place latest in 2013 is the most important and most costly statistical activity undertaking in Moldova in the upcoming years. The census provides the fundamental baseline information on population and housing that is needed for any planning of policies as well as for future sample survey designs. Technical preparation for such a huge undertaking usually takes 2-3 years. Preparatory assistance in this project will be of technical and advocacy nature, cooperating with regional actors, such as Eurostat and UNECE.

2.1. Advocacy for the population and housing census: The census is not only a statistical data collection exercise but requires wider social acceptance. The general society, political actors and donors must understand the benefits and relevance of the census for Moldova. The multi-agency joint project provides a good platform for raising awareness and public debates about the census. Advocacy campaigns, public roundtables and targeted media outreach at national and local levels informing about the benefits of the census for Moldova will be carried out.

2.2. Technical assistance to the preparation of the 2013 Population and Housing Census:

In cooperation with NBS, the main gaps and needs for technical assistance in census preparation will be identified and prioritized on the basis of the evaluation of the 2004 census. Besides the preparation of the census toolkit and methodology, a survey on evaluation of the non-responses could be carried out. New issues, such as how the nationality/ethnicity identity question can capture multiple forms of identity as well as new disability questions according to the Washington Group on Disability Statistics to provide baseline information for monitoring the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability could be raised.⁸ Based on the prioritized needs, resource mobilization efforts with bilateral donors as well as with the EC should be pursued. Technical

Compendium, 2010 edition, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-RA-10-007-EN/EN/KS-RA-10-007-EN-EN.PDF)

⁸ See 'Monitoring the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability'.

assistance in selected areas will be provided in partnership with regional actors, such as Eurostat and UNECE and through twinning modalities (depending on funding availability).⁹

Activity 3: Implementation of a Quality Management System and sample surveys

Continuous support to improve the quality of statistical processes and introduce new sample surveys' methodologies is needed. In practice, the NBS is making efforts to place its entire activity in the framework of quality. Nevertheless, a systematic approach to quality management in the context of the European Excellence Framework for Quality Management (EFQM) does not yet exist in the organisational structure of the NBS, or other participants to the National Statistical System, or as far as documented reference procedures are concerned.

3.1 Implementation of Quality Management System in statistics:

This includes the introduction of a system of quality reports and quality self-evaluations (including quality indicators) which is absolutely necessary with a view to measuring the progress of quality in the national statistical system of the Republic of Moldova over time.¹⁰ Thus, the NBS will be assisted to use a systemic, procedural, documented, periodic, and systematic approach to quality management.

3.2 Implementation of new sample surveys: Based on the lessons learnt, the joint project will support a reduced number of specialized surveys and promote ad hoc modules that can be attached to the HBS and LFS. Two specialized surveys will be carried out within the joint project, the Time Use Survey, where preparatory work has already been carried out during the previous project, and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). The project will further support the development of a new module on transition from employment to pensioner's system in line with EU standards that will be attached to the LFS. The development of the methodology for the calculation of the gender pay-gap, would be benefic for the improvement of MDGs and gender equality monitoring, but also as a first contribution to the preparation of the survey of 'Structure of earnings'. Also, to meet international and EU standards, external methodological and consultative assistance becomes a necessity when revision of the statistical sampling/inference methodologies or evaluation of field work is required during the implementation of a series of new or improved gender-sensitive statistical surveys.

Activity 4: Strengthening of administrative data collection processes

4.1 Assessment of data collection methodology for selected areas (i.e. social protection, education, labour/employment, business/SME) in the line-ministries: This assessment will review existing data sources (official and administrative statistics) and data collection methodologies in the selected areas of statistics. Specific focus will be placed on other official/administrative statistics data producers' capacity in multi-dimensional disaggregated data collection, processing and storing in another (one) or a few other statistical areas. On the basis of the analysis of data quality, mechanisms of data flow, methodological aspects and practical procedures gaps and needs for technical assistance will be identified and discussed with respective institutions involved. Selected technical assistance to fill the gaps to improve the quality for meeting official statistics criteria will be provided (i.e. through twinning).

4.2 Ensure demand-driven characteristic of administrative data production: The process of the technical review of administrative statistic's quality in the selected areas is being supported by continuous dialogue with the users of respective data. Data needs in these selected areas will be identified in technical workshops and debates/workshops on applying and using data from different sources (administrative and official statistics) will be carried out under coordination of

⁹ Census preparatory materials from UNECE/Eurostat can be found on:
<http://www.unece.org/stats/archive/01.01a.e.htm>

¹⁰ Plan of the National Statistical System of Republic of Moldova for the development of quality in statistics.

NBS. This will contribute to the promotion of dialogue between users and producers of administrative data.

Component II. Improvement of data dissemination and data use

Activities under this component will address three major sets of gaps identified, namely (i) insufficient cooperation and trust between data producers and users; (ii) weak capacities among national and local authorities, CSOs and academia to use statistical data for evidence-based policy making, analysis and monitoring, as well as advocacy; (iii) lack of quality training capacities and institutionalized systems for statistical skills development. Key activities will include the following:

Activity 5: Strengthening of data dissemination practices

Improvement of data dissemination tools and practices as well as targeted capacity development on statistical literacy represents an absolutely necessary step to achieve the final objective of the project, the use of multi-dimensional disaggregated data for evidence-based formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies, and addressing development issues in a more transparent and participatory manner.

5.1 Ensuring universal access to statistical data: Continuous support to improve universal and user-friendly access to statistical data of users through the web and printed tools. This includes the production of quarterly bulletins of statistical sample surveys, improvement of statistical metadata system and development of thematic notes and materials on specific topics aimed to improve the statistical literacy of data users and to promote statistical principles and products.

5.2 Regular consultation and evaluation of user satisfaction on NBS's products: The implementation of the quality management system in official statistics is accompanied by the NBS effort to further continue to gain data users' confidence and meet their needs in a timely and professional manner. The user satisfaction survey in 2008 has provided useful information on perceptions of the users on the quality and relevance of the statistical data provided by NBS in the previous project. Carrying out the survey a second time will also allow measuring the change of perceptions over a longer period of time. Monitoring and analysis of the use and misuse of official statistical information (e.g. in media) will help NBS to identify new data users' needs in training on statistical skills and dissemination issues to be fine-tuned/improved.

5.3 Enhancing capacity of Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluations units in the line ministries in elaboration of policy-monitoring framework in to-be agreed upon specific areas through usage of evidence based data. Prior to providing such support, a Needs assessment will be undertaken and specific areas for technical assistance (in review and elaboration of policy monitoring framework with equity focus) will be discussed and agreed upon in full consultation with the Line Ministries, NBS and all other relevant partners.

Activity 6: Development of institutional mechanisms for training and statistical skills development

Until recently, the staff of the Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Units (PAMEU) in the line ministries, whose main responsibility is to coordinate the national/sectorial policy elaboration, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting¹¹, had neither access nor an obligation to pass basic courses on M&E, evidence-based policy cycle or statistics. However, in May 2010, a series of training modules¹² aimed at strengthening the capacities of public servants from CPAs to

¹¹ Government Decision no. 168 as of 9.03.2010 and the enclosed Regulation framework for the functioning of Public Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Units.

¹² The respective training modules concern: public management, management abilities, development and evaluation of public policies, strategic planning, management of public funds and budgetary process, project cycle management.

elaborate qualitative public policies were designed by the State Chancellery of RM which were introduced into the curricular of the Academy of Public Administration.

On the other hand, understanding and interpreting disaggregated data, including gender-sensitive indicators, for evidence-based policy making (including formulation, monitoring and evaluation) is a key objective of strengthening the national statistical system. At the moment, there is no institutionalized system of training on statistical literacy within the process of policy monitoring and evaluation for civil servants (from PAME units and/or internal divisions of CPAs responsible for the direct elaboration and implementation of separate policies) or other categories of data users. It would therefore be important to also improve the statistical skills and abilities of this target group in view of the ongoing effort to strengthen the national public policies-making capacities.

The project will undertake the following activities to promote data use for evidence-based policy making:

6.1 Establishment of a Training Unit sub-ordinate to NBS: A Training Unit sub-ordinate to the NBS will be established to support statistical skills development for NBS staff and provide training courses on statistics tailored to the needs of the different user communities. The target group will be NBS staff and CSOs, media, think tanks and civil servants. Training Unit's legal basis and areas of responsibilities will be developed based on the experience and best practices of other national statistical offices. The Training Unit's structure and functions should be already part of the assessment of the organizational structure of the NBS that is carried out within the 2007-2010 project in order to determine the most feasible entry points for such a Training Unit. The option of expanding the existing Sampling Unit/Division (which is carrying out training for the interviewer's networks) could be considered in this assessment. On the other hand, for statistical literacy trainings of civil servants, another option of introducing an additional module to the Academy of Public Administration could be considered (*see sub-section below*).

6.2 Provision of statistical skills development opportunities for NBS staff and tailored training to relevant data users

While the final objective is that the Training Unit sub-ordinate develops and provides the below mentioned courses/trainings in partnership with NBS staff, academia and other international experts tailored to the needs of the different user communities, this sub-activity will be carried out in close cooperation with NBS in parallel to the process of establishing the Training Unit. These will include:

- NBS staff is being provided with opportunities to develop new methodologies, statistical papers (and participation) for international events, and providing methodological guidance to researchers on statistical tools and analysis. The future Training Unit would also offer room for in house research, learning and skills development for NBS staff and could offer internship possibilities for students in the field of statistics.
- Developing modules on statistical literacy (multi-dimensional disaggregated data, data sources, indicators, and their calculation and interpretation, including gender sensitivity and equity), evidence-based policy planning, monitoring and evaluation (in alignment with the series of newly introduced training modules by the State Chancellery), using of data dissemination tools (with specific focus on DevInfo etc.). These modules could potentially be provided to the representatives of central and local public authorities through the Academy of Public Administration with specific focus on staff from the Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Units and other implementation divisions from line ministries. The feasibility of such an option, as well as institutionalization of this course and its sustainability will be explored in a consultative manner with the participation of the relevant parties (State Chancellery, line-ministries and the Academy representatives, other partners).
- Developing training modules on statistical literacy and disaggregated statistical data analysis for civil society organizations and media. The respective trainings will be

conducted on the basis of both, the training courses on statistical literacy previously developed by UNDP¹³, which could be modified and partners who have been trained in the past could be involved, or new modules will be developed, including the Training of Trainers component. These courses should be provided with the clear aim that further trainings at national and local level are being carried out by the newly trained trainers, in particular consisting of NBS staff. Local level trainings can be provided in close cooperation with the NBS's regional branches and UN's regional and local level projects.

- CSOs are supported in developing small research papers on themes relevant for current policy discussions.

4. RISKS

A number of potential risks which could occur in the extended period of Project implementation were identified.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Risk mitigation
Potential change of Government after elections in 2010 could adversely affect project implementation and consistency	Medium	Low	Project should build strong team on technical level to smooth potential changes on higher level.
Limited national expertise in the area of statistics	Medium	Medium	Thorough dissemination of calls for proposals and combination of national and international expertise.
Limited capacities of NBS (limited number of staff of the NBS and overloaded production pressure) many issues get insufficient attention	Medium	Medium	Close coordination of project activities by Project Manager and National Project Coordinator and balancing project implementation schedule.
Activities envisaging structural /infrastructural changes could fail because of refusal of approving authorities (e.g. establishment of the Training Unit) or insufficiently addressing/ development because of short Project duration	Medium	Medium	Prior risk and/or cost-benefit analysis of proposed solutions and advocacy for adequate causes/functions and reasonable resource allocation, as well as ownership on final results.
Limited involvement of secondary/satellite stakeholders (line ministries to work with on administrative data) in project activities because of Project's running through NBS	Medium	Medium	Involvement of stakeholders in the process of development the project its self and further more in project activities and sharing benefits of improved statistical system.

¹³ A ToT on statistical literacy for CSOs in Moldova was provided in 2008. The training package aims to strengthen civil society actors to understand and use the information collected to support country achievement of the MDGs through evidence-based policy making and planning. The training course was designed for basic and advanced level of statistical literacy. More information: <http://europeandcis.undp.org/uploads/mdqtraining/>

Risk	Probability	Impact	Risk mitigation
			Technical assistance to other than NBS data producers (to improve the quality of their data for meeting official statistics criteria) being provided by Project partners should be coordinated and provided as part of the Joint Project.
Presence of very diverse data users with various specific needs could affect capacity building efforts	Low	Medium	Data users' analysis and design of appropriate training events for each group of data users.
High staff turnover in data users undermines capacity building efforts	Medium	High	Enlarging the group of data users (especially academia) receiving training and participating in policy making and policy monitoring activities. Establishment of "Policy Research Program" and/or Training Unit would represent a risk transfer.
Uncoordinated assistance to statistics undermines sustainability and coherence of results	Medium	High	NBS will play the key role in the aid coordination in the area of Statistics. Also, Donors Group in Statistics (or Sector Coordination Council) will be called regularly to improve coordination efforts.

5. MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Project **implementing agency** is the National Bureau of Statistics, as the main implementer of the majority of Project's activities and as the coordinator of the national statistical system. The National Bureau of Statistics will appoint a National Project Coordinator, who is a senior or mid-level official (at the level of deputy director of NBS) and will be able to support the project as necessary that the project activities are coordinated and implemented successfully. The National Bureau of Statistics will offer for the project team office space free of charge, representing the Government contribution towards the project implementation. The offices will be located in close proximity to the NBS, as relevant for the work of the project. The NBS will collaborate with other relevant Ministries to secure their involvement and ensure effective implementation of the Joint Project.

For a series of activities envisaged in the AWP, implemented by the partner agencies in collaboration with other national institutions (e.g. the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Education, etc.), but in coordination with NBS, the role of *implementing partners* will be assigned to these institutions.

The Project Administrating Agency is UNDP. The activities under this project will be coordinated by Project Team financed/hired by UNDP. As Administrating Agency, UNDP through Project Team/manager will assume the responsibility of coordination, of the implemented activities, as well as reporting with technical input from other participating agencies. The Project Team/manager shall prepare consolidated progress and financial reports for all activities within the Project, and shall provide these quarterly and annually to the Steering Committee and all stakeholders.

The project has a Project Steering Committee, including the National Project Coordinator, representatives of other state institutions (State Chancellery, line-ministries), donor agencies and non-governmental organizations working in the area. The PSC will meet as a rule every three months or out of its regular schedule at the request of its members and will examine and discuss the project work plans and reports, and will provide recommendations on the project activities.

The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project. The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document and amendment to it, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The project manager is responsible for reporting on all project activities, including those financed through parallel funding modality. Project manager must coordinate project activities with Programme Officers of participating agencies and reflect in reports activities and results supported through parallel funding modality.

6. FUND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The project will be financed through combination of **pooled and parallel funding**, provided by UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF and ILO. Fundraising activities will be undertaken to close the identified financing gap. The UNDP will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the participating UN organizations which choose to have their funds administrated through pooled modality. Each UN organization participating in the joint project will programme and manage activities and funds in line with its established regulations and rules.

Taking into account the results of the Joint Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Assessment¹⁴, the results of HACT Micro-Assessments carried out for a number of Ministries and authorities¹⁵, and the National Bureau of Statistics (in 2009), as well as on-going discussions on procurement regulation in Moldova, it was agreed to also practice, for certain activities, the **Direct Payment Cash Transfers Modality**, under which direct payments to vendors and other third parties will be done by the Agencies, for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partner in support of activities agreed in AWP.

Participating UN organizations which decide to pool funds under UNDP, selected as a Managing Agent, for those parts of a joint programme to be managed jointly, while other parts of the joint programme would be managed through parallel funding, within the overall framework of the joint programme.

The decision to select the described combination of fund management options for the Joint Project is based on how to achieve the most effective, efficient and timely implementation, and to reduce transaction costs for national partners, donors and the UN.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring occurs throughout the year and culminates at the annual review of the common work plan. Each individual agency will do monitoring and evaluation according to its operational policy.

The Project Manager in consultation with the National Project Coordinator and stakeholders will be responsible for preparing and submitting to Annual Program Review meeting the Project Progress Report. The Project Manager, under the direction of National Project Coordinator will also prepare quarterly work plans, quarterly reports and other necessary documentation in accordance with

¹⁴ Republic of Moldova PEFA Assessment and PFM Performance Report [EN], June 2006

Document available on-line from Ministry of Finance website http://www.mf.gov.md/common/raportinfo/Raport_PMFP-EN.pdf

¹⁵ HACT Micro-Assessments carried out for: Parliament (2007), Ministry of Health and Center of Preventive Medicine, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (2010), Ministry of Economy (2007), Ministry of Justice (2007), Ministry of Interior (2009), Ministry of Information Technologies (2009), Chisinau Municipality (2009)

the existing procedures with inputs from all participating agencies. A participatory monitoring mechanism will identify the progress achieved towards intended results.

Taking into account complexity of the area, Steering Committee of the Project remains an important forum for coordinating of related activities and projects with other donors active in the area.

At the end of the described Project's phase an assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency and impact of the project with respect to its stated objectives and expected results will be carried out by external evaluators.

8. LEGAL CONTEXT

This document constitutes an amendment to the existing Project Document (also including the CPAP signed by the Government and UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF) in line with the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement for UNDP, which also applies to UNFPA, Basic Cooperation Agreement for UNICEF, all CPAP provisions, and other applicable agreements for other participating UN organizations.

The following types of revisions may be made to this Project document amendment with the signature of the UN Resident Coordinator, provided that he/she is assured that the signatories of the Project Document amendment have no objections to the proposed changes:

- (a) Revisions in, or addition of, any of the annex/es to the Project document,
- (b) Revisions which do not involve significant changes in the results of the Project, but are caused by the re-arrangement of inputs already agreed to or by increases in costs due to inflation, and
- (c) Mandatory annual revisions which re-phase the delivery of agreed inputs, increase experts cost and other costs due to inflation, or take into account expenditure flexibility.

9. ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET SHEET

Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet is attached under separate Excel file, Annex.

A revised work plan and budget will be produced subsequent to the decisions of the annual/regular reviews and approved by the joint project Steering Committee.

ANNEX: ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET SHEET