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<b>CCA</b>	United Nations Common Country Analysis
<b>CEBS</b>	Centre of Excellence in Border Security
<b>CEC</b>	Central Electoral Commission
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019
<b>COVID-19 SERP</b>	COVID-19 Socioeconomic Response and Recovery Framework
<b>CSA</b>	Climate-smart agriculture
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organization
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>FIA</b>	Foreign Investors Association
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>HIV</b>	Human immunodeficiency virus
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technology
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>IT</b>	Information technology
<b>LPA</b>	Local Public Authority
<b>MPTF</b>	Multi-partner Trust Fund
<b>MSMEs</b>	Micro, small, and medium Enterprises
<b>NAC</b>	National Anti-corruption Centre
<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan
<b>NAP 1325</b>	National Action Plan on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
<b>NBS</b>	National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NEA</b>	National Employment Agency
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OMT</b>	United Nations Operations and Management Team
<b>OSCE</b>	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PAS</b>	Party of Action and Solidarity
<b>PEFA</b>	Public Accountability and Financing Framework
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>UNCG</b>	United Nations Communication Group
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UN PFSD</b>	United Nations Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development
<b>UN YAP</b>	Youth Advisory Panel of the United Nations in Moldova
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>WEPs</b>	Women Empowerment Principles

## FOREWORD



Dear reader,

On behalf of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the Republic of Moldova I have the pleasure of inviting you to read this 2021 United Nations Country Results Report. The report takes stock of the progress made in 2021 by the United Nations, together with its

many partners, in supporting the Republic of Moldova to achieve its national priorities and the goals set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It further outlines findings and recommendations from the final evaluation of the Partnership Framework and provides an overview of what our priorities and ambitions are for 2022.

2021 marked the second year of the global COVID-19 pandemic - another challenging year for every country in the world, including the Republic of Moldova. During the year, changes in government occurred after the July 2021 Parliamentary election and some important reforms were initiated. The Republic of Moldova ratified the Istanbul Convention, as well as the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The energy crisis, which emerged towards the end of the year, as well as rising inflation, pose significant challenges. When we wrote this report, however, we did not know just what challenges were to lie ahead in 2022. The United Nations is grateful for the compassion, generosity, and solidarity the Republic of Moldova is showing to those fleeing the violence in Ukraine. The UNCT will continue to support the Government of Moldova in its response to this crisis.

During the year, the UNCT continued to support the Government of Moldova in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To offer targeted and integrated support to the government, including on recovery, the United Nations fully integrated its offer of support to the COVID-19 response and recovery with the work under the United Nations–Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development 2018–2022 (UN PFSD).

We continued to make good progress on the implementation of the Partnership Framework, with a focus on advancing the well-being of all people in Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable. Joint United Nations support contributed to important policy achievements in 2021, which saw progress on gender equality and human rights. New partnerships were developed with academia, the private sector, civil society, young people, and development partners around the processes for the United Nations Common Country Analysis, our next strategic cooperation framework, as well as national reporting for the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights.

Furthermore, the United Nations has continued to take concrete steps to ensure our coherence, effectiveness and efficiency, and to strengthen our joint operations, consolidate our partnerships, and advance our advocacy and communication efforts.

The principle of leaving no one behind remained a priority in 2021. A theory of change was formulated to advance the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and a newly established United Nations Youth Advisory Panel will strengthen the inclusion of youth empowerment in the work of the United Nations.

The UNCT further launched the process of developing a new cooperation framework, in close collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Moldova, which will continue in 2022. This will guide the work of the United Nations in Moldova from 2023 to 2027.

All of the above and more is captured in this 2021 Country Results Report. In reading this report, I invite you to join us in celebrating our achievements, but also in reflecting on the many things that remain to be done to improve the lives of the people of Moldova.

Yours sincerely,

**SIMON SPRINGETT**

United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Moldova

# UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM IN MOLDOVA

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) is composed of representatives of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and other United Nations entities working in the Republic of Moldova and jointly supporting the country in the achievement of its national development priorities and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UNCT is chaired by the United Nations Resident

Coordinator, who reports to, and is the designated representative of, the United Nations Secretary-General for development operations in the country.

The UNCT membership has steadily increased over the years and currently stands at a total of 25 entities, each with its own area of work but all operating in a coordinated and unified fashion.

## United Nations funds and programmes, specialized agencies and other United Nations entities working in Moldova.



Resident Coordinator Office UN Moldova

The UNCT is guided in its work by the United Nation–Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development ([UN PFSD](#)) 2018–2022, which outlines four priority areas:

-  **Governance, human rights, and gender equality**
-  **Sustainable, inclusive, and equitable economic growth**
-  **Environmental sustainability and resilience**
-  **Inclusive and equitable social development**

The fundamental principles of leaving no one behind, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainability and resilience, and accountability are cross-cutting and are integrated in all priority areas, with a special emphasis placed on supporting and lifting up the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

The work of the UNCT is facilitated by several inter-agency working groups and task forces, which contribute to the effective implementation of the UN PFSD 2018–2022, as well as their associated joint workplans. In 2021, the COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan (COVID-19 SERP) was fully integrated into the joint workplans.

## KEY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN THE COUNTRY

The United Nations support to Moldova is made possible by our many valued partners. These include the government institutions at the national, regional and local levels, civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector companies, and bilateral and multilateral donors. All have made significant contributions to our joint efforts in the implementation of the UN PFSD 2018–2022.

### **Government partners**

The UNCT continued to work closely with government institutions, under the leadership of the United Nations–Government Joint National Steering Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister and the Resident Coordinator. This cross-ministerial cooperation was supported extensively by the Ministry of Finance and the State Chancellery.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in its capacity as coordinator of the national statistical system, remained a trusted partner of the UNCT and was supported to consolidate its functional and institutional capacities. As a result, the NBS strengthened its capacities in several areas (see Chapter 2 for more details).

The National Demographic Research Centre was supported to produce new population projections until 2040, which are now used by the Government to develop people-centred demographic policies.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to be one of the priority areas. For instance, the Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with the UNCT, renovated several facilities and equipped remote e-justice rooms that will prevent disruptions and delays in judicial processes and reduce exposure to infection.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Health acted as an important implementing partner in the delivery of targeted programmes, as strengthening the national health system remains an acute priority.

National human rights institutions, including the offices of the Ombudsperson and Child’s Rights Ombudsperson, as well as the Equality Council, together with CSOs, cooperated with the UNCT to deliver various projects in 2021, as well as on the implementation of international human rights recommendations.

The following paragraphs describe the concrete results

of continued advocacy and effective dialogue between public institutions and private actors, supported by the UNCT.

The Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of Gagauzia and women leaders from the Gagauzian region (56 representing ethnic minorities and five representing youth) have enhanced knowledge and skills on gender equality in general, and on gender equality principles and standards in the electoral context, due to United Nations support.

The Economic Council to the Prime Minister has a road map of interventions that are needed to improve women’s economic empowerment. Furthermore, the Government – including the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, the Parliament and the Economic Council to the Prime Minister – was supported to pursue the implementation of alternative childcare solutions, and in this way to improve women’s participation in the labour market, reduce the selection of working mothers into lower-paid jobs, support the business community and reboot the Moldovan economy.

The Labour Inspectorate, the newly mandated institution responsible for monitoring the activity of the private recruitment sector, has improved knowledge of relevant European Union (EU) best practices and promotes the concept of ethical and transparent recruitment to private recruitment agencies.

The National Employment Agency (NEA) has enhanced institutional capacity to provide quality services to migrants and jobseekers, through a comprehensive capacity support programme. Similarly, the NEA was assisted to draft a long-term communication and marketing strategy to improve targeting of and communication with beneficiaries, and to upgrade the functionalities and interface of its job advertisement portal, which will ease job-seeking.

The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development cooperated with the UNCT to align the greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for the energy sector.

The National Anti-corruption Centre (NAC) collaborated with the United Nations to deliver various capacity

development programmes. The NAC became the first anti-corruption entity in Moldova that is compliant with the ISO 37001 anti-bribery standard. Furthermore, the development of a road map for the implementation of the ISO-37001 standard across 40 state controlling bodies, to prevent, detect and address bribery, was supported. The use of the online tool for reporting on the implementation of the National Integrity and Anti-corruption Strategy got more traction, being used by 55 per cent of reporting institutions. A new e-course on integrity and anti-corruption for civil servants, piloted in three institutions (the NAC, the National Social Insurance Office, and the National Probation Inspectorate) by 306 civil servants, was rolled out for general use on the Government's e-learning platform.

### Private sector partners

Private sector companies continued to be trusted and valued actors and stakeholders for the United Nations in 2021. Several important initiatives were started with approximately 15 large private sector companies. Initiatives focused on improving gender equality and women's economic empowerment; the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market; reducing buildings' energy consumption and associated pollution; as well as combating loneliness and exclusion among elderly citizens (more details in Chapter 2.3).

In this context, the UNCT started roughly 20 new initiatives and signed more than 10 new cooperation agreements. Private sector partners include Premier Energy, Orange, Moldcell, Fidesco, Asena Textil, Panilino, Apius and Ziphouse, Bayer Pharmaceuticals, Termoelectrica (a power and heating company), the Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development, the Moldovan and American Chambers of Commerce, and others.

### CSO partners

CSOs remain an important partner for the UNCT, with approximately one-third of all programme support being delivered in partnership with CSOs. In the area of human rights support, CSOs were vital in delivering programmes and initiatives to monitor and advocate for gender equality and human rights issues, including in the context of COVID-19 and on both banks of Dniester River. Our CSO partners played an important role in the Parliamentary elections, conducting efficient electoral observation and monitoring. For example, the online platform established in 2020 and run by the Gender Equality Platform was again used by 40 CSOs and

gender equality advocates to monitor the July early Parliamentary elections from a gender perspective and to report incidents of gender-based discrimination and violence, and sexist speech directed at women candidates.

CSOs were also vital in the areas of justice sector reform and the prevention of domestic violence, the delivery of support programmes to help adolescents and youth find employment, as well as the implementation of local and grass-roots initiatives on local development and civic engagement. Sustained results were achieved in empowering vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to access and demand quality services.

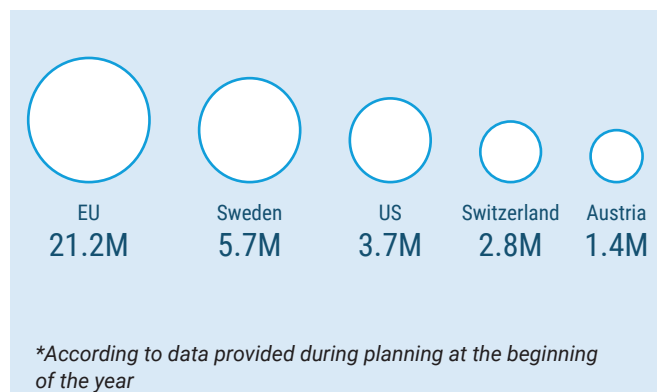
### Development coordination partners and forums

In 2021, the UNCT successfully coordinated, as well as participated in, several forums and platforms for the coordination of development assistance: the Development Partners Forum, chaired by the United Nations and the World Bank, the non-governmental organization (NGO) Task-Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights, Migration Network, the Parliamentary Women Caucus, and the interministerial council on gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence prevention.

### Financing partners

The contributions of financing partners, including bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as various global funds, are essential for the implementation of United Nations activities in the country, and the organization continued to benefit from their generous support in 2021.

### Top five financing partners of the UN PFSD 2018–2022 in 2021 (in USD)\*



# CHAPTER 1: KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COUNTRY AND THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

## Key political developments

Early Parliamentary elections on 11 July 2021, called by President Sandu following the resignation of the Government in December 2020 and a period of political uncertainty during spring, saw the Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS) win a majority in Parliament and form a Government led by Natalia Gavrilita. The new Government identified anti-corruption measures and structural reforms, including of the justice system, as well as European integration, as some of its key goals, supporting former PAS-leader and President Sandu's agenda. The continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the gas/energy crisis and rising market prices presented considerable challenges for the Government towards the end of the year.

Due to political turbulence and the fact that 2021 was an election year, the Transnistria region settlement process stalled. Official talks reached an impasse, with only occasional contacts between the sides, leading to delayed solutions to topics like the banking issue and the prohibition on Transnistria region-plated vehicles crossing the border into Ukraine imposed on 1 September 2021.

The position of the People's Advocate remained unfilled for most of the year, which had an impact on the implementation of some human rights programmes. Progress was made on commitments to meeting international human rights standards, through the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in October and the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in November, following extensive advocacy by civil society and the United Nations.

**“ I am proud that the Republic of Moldova has become the thirty fifth state in the world, which found the courage and sided with all victims of domestic violence.**

Doina Gherman, Member of Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and President of the Parliamentary Commission on Foreign Policy and European Integration

## Key economic developments

Following the 8.3 per cent contraction in Moldova's economy in 2020, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and by drought, which negatively affected the agriculture sector, the economic recovery picked up in 2021 with 13.9 per cent growth. This was helped by robust growth in agricultural production due to favourable weather conditions, which saw crop yields increase by over three-quarters compared to 2020.

However, the increase in the inflation rate (13.94 per cent), producer's prices (over 16 per cent), and the energy price increase (over 60 per cent) could push more people into poverty if targeted support is not provided – in particular, the 10 per cent of Moldova's population that spend one-third of their disposable income on utilities will face increasing challenges to cover other basic needs. The government policy aimed at supporting the population during the COVID-19 crisis led to a growth in wages in 2020. However, the inflationary pressures from high oil and energy prices and fast-growing demand for consumers goods offset this and will likely further exacerbate the negative impact of inflation on the population's real incomes.

### Dynamics of the Real Wage Index and Consumer Prices Index

(compared to the same quarter of the previous year)



The industry sector recovered to the pre-pandemic level throughout quarter 3 2021, primarily on account of growing extractives and manufacturing. External trade continued to be oriented towards the EU market (over 60 per cent of exports and 45 per cent of imports), with Romania being Moldova's main trade partner (almost



one-third of all exports and 12 per cent of imports). A quarter of all Moldova's exports are agricultural products and livestock, followed by automotive equipment. The IT sector recently became the biggest service exporting sector in Moldova.

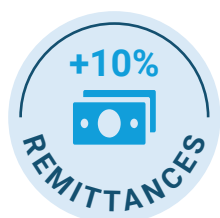
Like in previous years, Moldova's main import partners are Russia (14 per cent), Romania (11.8 per cent) and China (11.6 per cent), followed by Ukraine (9.4 per cent).

Following the jobs furlough in 2020, labour market revival in 2021 was quite modest, and saw growing occupancy in the agriculture and construction sectors. Men were found to be more proactive in seeking jobs compared to women.

During 2021, the economy witnessed resilient

remittances inflow and an increase in wages, which contributed to growth in loans – but mostly for consumption. To support the population in the face of increased prices for gas, electricity and heating, Moldova's Government increased the pension to 2,000 Moldovan Lei (\$112) subsistence minimum, expanded social assistance allocations to vulnerable population groups and subsidized gas prices for the entire population. Although it supports a minimization of the effects of the economic and political crisis on poverty and inequality, this policy carries the risk of undermining budgetary stability in the long term.

The public budget deficit is likely to have reached 5.2 per cent in 2021, while public debt is likely to have reached 37 per cent, which will rise as we move into 2022.



## PROGRESS ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION



# Chapter 2: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES THROUGH THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

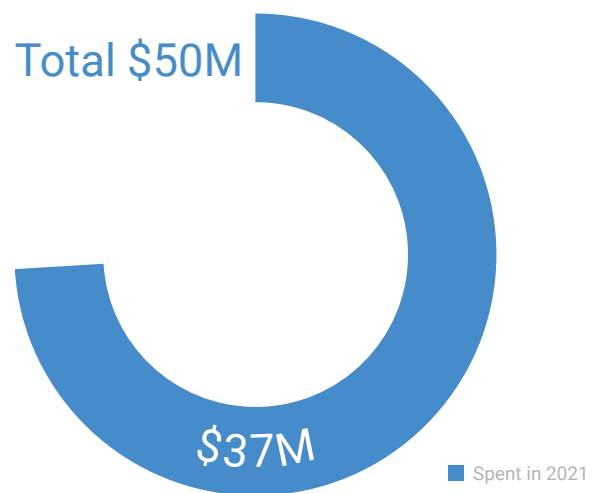
## 2.1. OVERVIEW OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK RESULTS

In 2021, the United Nations in Moldova continued to support the country in the implementation of its development priorities and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), making progress in all four strategic directions of its work, with support to national COVID-19 response and recovery efforts fully integrated, by advancing human rights and gender equality, and strengthening institutional and governance capacities, improving access to decent work and enhancing local services and infrastructure, improving the quality of education, health services, and social assistance, and promoting climate change resilient development.

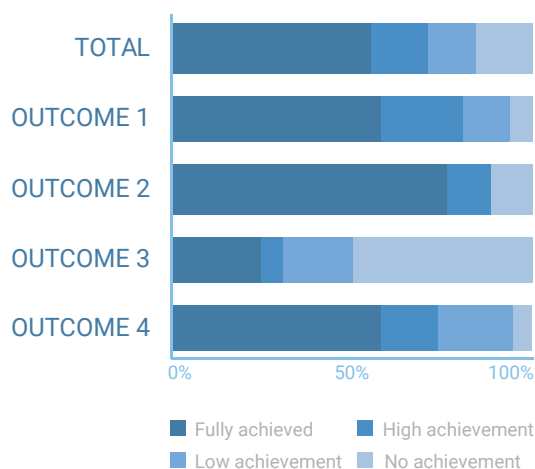
Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and a changing political context, the United Nations made good progress in meeting the results that it set to accomplish in 2021, including providing support to the national COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

At the output level, full achievement or a high level of achievement was achieved for 71 per cent of the 86 output-level indicators for which data were available in 2021.

The United Nations in Moldova secured over \$50 million in resources for the implementation of its joint workplans in 2021, including for joint work on the COVID-19 response and recovery. Out of this, 74 per cent was spent, with the remainder being rolled over to 2022. The funds were directed towards programmes and projects that span across all SDGs, with the largest share of expenditures being directed towards SDGs 3, 16, 8, 11, and 5, which received nearly 80 per cent of the funding.



### Output indicator progress



Largest share of expenditures went to:



Effectively implementing and fully achieving the results set in the UN PFSD 2018–2022 will be the priority for the United Nations in 2022, along with efforts to improve coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency in programme implementation, operations and communication. In addition, in 2022 the UNCT will finalize its next cooperation framework, which will set the direction for the work of the United Nations in the country for the years 2023–2027.

## 2.2. COOPERATION FRAMEWORK PRIORITIES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

### OUTCOME 1: GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

**10 UN entities: FAO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNECE, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women**  
**Expenditure 2021: \$ 5,925,995**

The United Nations achieved several notable results in the field of governance, human rights and gender equality, despite the challenging political situation and the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Consolidating data capacities for the SDGs**

The United Nations support to the national statistical system contributed to increased availability of SDG indicator data, advancing preparations for the upcoming population and housing census, and the development of a new information system for population and migration statistics. Support to the NBS resulted in the following results: a new draft National Strategy on Statistics 2030; continued digital modernization, creating the ability for data collection using modern statistical methods and processing of large data sets; improved calculation methods for population and migration statistics; increased capacity for data visualization; improved data protection; strengthened capacity for inter-institutional cooperation; and moving towards a register-based data system.

Moldova's statistical system was supported to improve crime and justice data and statistics, and to align with international standards. Importantly, the NBS was supported to apply a human rights-based approach to data and statistics. After the drought in 2020, support was given in 2021 to increase the capacity for the collection, processing and dissemination of agricultural statistics.

#### **Strengthening the capacities of human rights institutions and civil society to protect human rights**

The United Nations continued to support institutional capacity-building efforts for CSOs from both banks of the Nistru river, contributing to the strengthening of an effective and vibrant civil society in Moldova. CSOs and private citizens, including youth, were supported to monitor and advocate for gender equality and on other human rights issues, including in the context of COVID-19.

The UNCT worked with media representatives and journalists from both banks of the Nistru river to improve

monitoring and reporting on human rights and gender equality issues, including GBV in elections and politics, applying a human rights and dignity-based approach, and ethical reporting on child rights issues. Support was also provided to state institutions on applying human rights-based approaches, mainstreaming the rights of minorities, and human rights monitoring and reporting. The production of the Moldova Universal Periodic Review report was supported with the participation of 89 CSO representatives during 10 inclusive consultations conducted by the Permanent Human Rights Secretariat (State Chancellery). Furthermore, capacity development was provided for the state report to the Convention Against Torture. State institutions are now better able to prevent and monitor violence against women in elections and politics, as well as to mainstream the rights of minorities, and to apply a human rights-based approach to policy development. Continued capacity-building and advocacy efforts by the UNCT resulted in Moldova committing to joining the European Network of Child Rights Ombudspersons. Furthermore, caseworkers, judges and public defenders involved in refugee status determination now have increased knowledge and skills, which will result in a strengthened asylum procedure.

Notable progress was made on developing a human rights framework for the Transnistria region. Due to the United Nations' work, the de facto authorities agreed to a draft framework, based on recommendations by Thomas Hammarberg and United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the inputs of 10 CSOs from the left bank of the Nistru river. The UNCT will continue to support this process in 2022.

#### **Consolidating the capacities of national institutions to advance integrity, gender equality and human rights**

Support was provided to enhance institutional capacities in order to advance integrity, by providing evidence to support the Government's anti-corruption reforms. The NAC is the first entity in Moldova that is compliant with international anti-bribery standards (ISO-37001). Anti-corruption awareness activities, reaching over 500,000 people, nurtured a strong integrity spirit among the youth and contributed to a positive tendency in reporting corruption.

Support to two modernized community police stations resulted in 48,000 citizens from Cahul and Falesti regions having access to people-centred police services.

Upgrading the training capacity of the General Inspectorate for Border Police's Centre of Excellence in Border Security (CEBS) contributed to the implementation

of more efficient, human rights and gender-sensitive operational border management practices, including identifying persons in need of protection. This included supporting the Ombudsperson's Office to train 21 border police personnel and 79 students of the CEBS. Further, the Moldovan customs and border authorities were supported to enhance inter-agency cooperation with their Ukrainian counterparts, which has contributed to human rights-based services.

The UNCT continued to work with all national institutions to advance gender equality. A total of 2,124 public servants, including 1,813 women, can now apply gender-based planning and budgeting, and contribute to secure workplaces that are free of gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment.

Due to long-term advocacy efforts by civil society, supported by the UNCT, a new classification will come into force in 2022 that contains feminine equivalents for 80 per cent of functions. In the context of the elections held in 2021, the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training, as well as the CEC, have strengthened capacities on gender equality in electoral management, as well as the ability to conduct a gender analysis after each election. Furthermore, the UNCT continued to support the Parliamentary Women's Caucus as a platform for advancing gender equality in Parliamentary activity.

The drafting of the second National Action Plan on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (NAP 1325) was supported, which involved broad consultation, including with CSOs. As part of NAP 1325, an awareness-raising campaign on gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual abuse reached over 5,000 personnel of the National Army. The UNCT partnered with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), to support 16 women members of the working groups for the Transnistrian settlement process in gender-sensitive conflict analysis, mediation and negotiation.

A comprehensive digital course on gender equality and HIV/AIDS has ensured that service providers, civil society, rights-holders, and specialists working on the prevention, treatment and provision of psychosocial assistance have adequate knowledge of international and national standards and norms relating to combating gender-based stereotypes and discrimination.

### ***Strengthening civic engagement and participation in democratic governance***

The Parliamentary elections in July 2021 were assessed as "well-administered" by the OSCE. The support of the United Nations was crucial to ensure transparent and

inclusive electoral processes, for example through the updated Elections e-System. The preliminary registration app, which was used by nearly 40,000 voters in 89 countries, helped the Government determine the number of out-of-country polling stations, while the election app for the diaspora supported users in locating the nearest polling station. The efficiency of electoral operations abroad was improved, facilitating the voting of over 212,000 persons (52 per cent of whom were women). Support to awareness-raising initiatives, reaching over 1 million voters, contributed to increased participation in elections and allowed for safe voting with respect to COVID-19 (92 per cent of respondents in the post-electoral survey felt safe to vote).

Previous support provided to the electoral legal framework aided in the historic achievement of 40 per cent of those elected as members of Parliament being women.

Chisinau Municipality and five rayons (Balti, Glodeni, Ungheni, Cantemir, Dubasari and Nisporeni) were supported to develop strategies on youth development, with costed action plans. Further, 78 young people, including 70 women, eight persons with disabilities, and three Roma women, representing the youth wings of political parties, now have strengthened capacities on several gender and inclusion issues. Through continued support to Youth Centres, exchanges between Youth Centres, youth councils, schools and Local Public Authorities (LPA) were enabled, which resulted in 29 community initiatives, involving 3,425 young people (1,994 girls and 1,431 boys), of whom 1,734 were from urban areas and 1,691 were from rural areas.

A diverse and energetic Youth Advisory Panel of the United Nations in Moldova (UN YAP) was established, which includes members from vulnerable groups. UN YAP will advise the UNCT on youth issues and will act as a liaison point with local youth organizations.

Furthermore, children and youth from 150 educational institutions participated in the third edition of the creative contest "Human rights are yours and mine", for which a total of 1,105 pieces of art were submitted from both banks of the Nistru river.

### ***Improving the capacity of the justice system***

The support of the United Nations in 2021 helped Moldova's justice system to become more accessible with. The National Legal Aid Council was given technical support to develop standards on legal assistance for persons with disabilities. As a result, staff at six residential institutions for persons with disabilities were empowered to support residents to have improved access to legal aid services.

Through support to the Joint Law Enforcement Training Centre, 741 police officers from central and local levels can now respond to incidents of GBV, in line with national legislation. Within the same initiative, a gender-sensitive Practical Guide for Paralegals was developed to enhance access to justice for victims of domestic violence. The guide covers practical aspects of intervention and referral and includes an updated list of support organizations for referrals. The national GBV response framework was also enhanced through new Standard Operating Procedures, which will help ensure the forensic medical service provide gender-sensitive support in domestic violence cases and foster justice remedies for survivors in line with the Istanbul Convention. Together with the NGO Women's Law Centre, the UNCT also assessed the coordinated response of the justice system to domestic violence in four regions and developed tailored training in this area, which was used to train 71 justice professionals.

The United Nations continued to strengthen child-friendly justice approaches through promoting alternatives to detention, developing behavioural programmes, piloting e-learning, and building the capacity of law enforcement and justice professionals as well as advocating for specialized services for child victims and witnesses of crime. In 2021, this resulted in 84 children being interviewed in child-friendly interviewing rooms, 24 child offenders being included in the mandatory initial probation programme (which offers them a real chance of social reintegration and avoiding reoffending), and a total of 56 probation counsellors being supported to work with children. A new behavioural programme for children who have committed sexual offences was developed and a total of 78 National Penitentiaries Administration professionals were trained to implement it. Support continued to be provided to child-friendly justice in the Transnistrian region through proposing an evidence-based package of legal and normative amendments to the de facto authorities for approval, with the aim of further adjusting the Transnistrian Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes.

Local justice dialogue platforms continued to facilitate local solutions to the barriers hampering access to justice for vulnerable groups, and the UNCT further supported the implementation of identified solutions relating to access to justice and legal remedies. Access to justice was improved through the provision of four e-justice rooms, which make it possible to prevent disruptions of and delays to judicial processes due to COVID-19, and reduce exposure to infection. Over 1,000 prisoners have benefited from these e-justice rooms. The multipurpose rooms were further used for

short-term visits with relatives and lawyers, providing complete confidentiality, as well as for online education purposes by detained minors.

## KEY RESULTS UNDER OUTCOME 1



**63 per cent** of SDG indicators with fully or partially available disaggregated data



**40 per cent** women in Parliament reached and **violence against women in politics** monitored during Parliamentary elections



National report for **Universal Periodic Review** produced and **58 per cent** of human rights recommendations implemented



**500,000** people reached with messages on integrity issues



Anti-Corruption Centre became first entity in Moldova to be **compliant with ISO 37001 Anti-bribery standards**



**48,000** people benefited from people-centred police services



**4** electronic justice rooms improved access to justice



Source: UNDP Moldova

Vasilisa and Raisa challenged the prejudices and the stereotypes deeply rooted in society. They got involved in defending the rights of Roma, of women and children. They guide people with disabilities in the process of obtaining identity documents, social allowances, and employment. Recently, they became the first women mediators for the Roma community on the left bank of Nistru river.

## OUTCOME 2: SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

10 UN Entities: FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, ITU, UNDP, UNECE, UNICEF, UN Women

**Expenditure 2021: \$ 14,097,082**

In 2021, with United Nations support, several advancements were made in the field of sustainable, inclusive and equitable growth.

### **Improving policies and services relating to sustainable economic growth and productive employment**

Using recommendations from an analysis provided by the United Nations, the Ministry of Economy enacted a gender-responsive National Action Plan (NAP) for COVID-19 Recovery, with the aim of mitigating the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women. The Economic Council to the Prime Minister also developed a road map to improve women's economic empowerment and guide the implementation of the NAP for COVID-19 Recovery.

Legislative amendments to the Educational and Labour Codes were supported and advanced by the responsible Parliamentary commissions. These will enable employers to create alternative childcare services for children aged zero to three years, and will support women's participation in the labour market. Moreover, legal gap reviews and awareness-raising campaigns informed decision-making with respect to preschool education.

The first comprehensive gender assessment conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry was supported by the UNCT and contributed to mainstreaming a gender equality perspective and mainstreaming gender disaggregated data in the draft Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (2022–2027).

More than 6,500 Moldovan migrants benefited from the regulatory reform enacted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, including a bilateral protocol signed with the German Employment agency, and the recruitment services offered by the private sector.

More than 300 returning migrants were supported in their professional reintegration and productive engagement, thanks to a new service for the validation and certification of informal skills gained abroad which

is being established under the coordination of the Ministry of Education.

The United Nations assisted the NEA to improve the quality of service delivery, to enhance client segmentation practices (including remotely), and to smoothly match the unemployed with appropriate employment services and programmes. In addition, communication with unemployed jobseekers and employers was improved, including by making the job advertising portal more user-friendly. The NEA further piloted two Active Labour Market Programmes, which helped ten unemployed people to start their own business and ten employers to expand their enterprises and create jobs at local levels. The United Nations further supported enterprise development in Moldova. 778 micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) benefited from financial and advisory assistance in green recovery, which helped them develop or extend their operations. Private–public partnerships helped 131 local and six international companies expand and 42 start-ups to launch. This resulted in 678 new jobs, of which 435 for women. Additionally, women from rural areas now have increased capacities in agribusiness and eight young entrepreneurs have received loans with favourable conditions.

### **Improving the access of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to resources and sustainable jobs**

During the year, vulnerable groups were assisted to develop skills and knowledge, as well as to gain access to resources and employment opportunities. Approximately 600 persons, of whom 240 were women, started new or maintained their current formal employment as a result of the launch of/acceleration of/support provided to 210 MSMEs, which thereby avoided bankruptcy and efficiently navigated the challenges of the pandemic. Twenty women-led start-ups also enhanced their IT knowledge and digital technology skills, resulting in 15 of them generating their first sales within one month of enrolment.

More than 120 teachers and students from every school in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, including from vulnerable groups, embraced digital pedagogy techniques to boost learning outcomes.

The United Nations continued to provide cash-based support to 73 (24 women, 49 men) newly registered asylum seekers and refugees with specific needs and without any other source of assistance.

A youth dialogue platform was established and fostered communication and cooperation aimed at improving

mutual trust and understanding, as well as reducing tensions and lessening misperceptions among 30 young leaders from both banks of the Nistru river.

In addition, around 1,900 entrepreneurs, of whom 420 were from the left bank of the Nistru river, increased their entrepreneurial skills and knowledge regarding the opportunities provided by trade agreements with the EU and the UK, as well as recovery solutions for exporters affected by the COVID-19-induced economic recession. In terms of connectivity, the United Nations strengthened the capacity of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova to digitize their information exchange along multimodal transport corridors and the Caspian Sea.

### **Supporting adolescents and youth to transition from school to gainful employment**

The UNCT supported young women and men in their transition from school to work. For example, 438 youth (320 from rural communities, of whom 218 were women) who were not in education, employment or training were assisted by the employment offices with career counselling and employment programmes. More than 20,000 young people were also reached through a social innovation and entrepreneurship programme for youth from socially disadvantaged families and local business incubators.

### **Improved local public services and access to income-generating opportunities and jobs**

LPAs in Causeni and Cantemir districts rolled out Local Employment Partnerships, which enabled women and men in rural areas to benefit from income-generating activities. Thus, 65 businesses were assisted to start up in sectors like beekeeping, handicraft, the production of pasta and thermal insulation boards, and design services for buildings and landscapes. 54 new jobs were also created (27 for young women), and 10 young women who are survivors of domestic violence launched their own business in light industry, construction and cosmetic services.

Furthermore, over 208,000 people benefited from enhanced access to public infrastructure, communal services, and retrofitted social and cultural facilities. This result was achieved through community mobilization methods, including by engaging the diaspora, more than 200 young people, and four Local Action Groups.

Finally, over 78,000 people now have improved living conditions in Cahul and Ungheni regions, as a result of two large-scale infrastructure projects that incorporate environmentally friendly elements.

## KEY RESULTS UNDER OUTCOME 2



**First comprehensive Gender Assessment** conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture



~**1,900** entrepreneurs now aware of trade opportunities and COVID-19 recovery solutions for exporters



**778 MSMEs** benefited from financial and advisory assistance on green recovery



>**286,000** people benefited from enhanced public infrastructure



**1,332** jobs created or maintained, of which **682** for women



>**20,000** young people reached through social innovation and entrepreneurship programme



> **6,500** Moldovan migrants benefited from regulatory reform and the offer of recruitment services



Source: FAO Moldova

Aliona Turcanu, manager of a small cheese plant and a cow herd from Pelinia, Drochia has recently launched her business. Though only at the beginning she already thinks of transforming her farm into a touristic attraction, while the high-quality cheese would be her business card for buyers and tourists. Her family farm has been already introduced in the local tourist route.

## OUTCOME 3: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

**8 UN Entities:** *FAO, IFAD, IOM, UNDP, UNDRR, UNECE, UNIDO, UNOPS*

**Expenditure 2021: \$ 3,522,183**

In 2021, the United Nations made considerable progress on improving national and local capacities for increasing energy efficiency, applying sustainable natural resource management practices, and integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation priorities into Local Development Plans. The achieved results increased the preparedness of the Government and the people to face climate change challenges.

### **Boosting energy efficiency in rural and urban areas**

Developing renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency remained a priority for the United Nations and became more relevant in the context of the energy crisis emerging in late 2021. As a result of 43 LPAs now having a better understanding of the social, economic and climate advantages of using renewable energy sources, 19,548 people from three districts now have access to clean and more efficient energy, of which 100 are female-headed households. Furthermore, national stakeholders have increased knowledge of implementation gaps in regard to the energy efficiency standards for buildings, thanks to new guidelines and best practices for MSMEs in Moldova relating to delivering energy-efficient products, and thanks also to a national study that provided a detailed analysis of the gaps between the performance objectives of the Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings and the actual implementation of current building energy efficiency standards.

During the year, the UNCT supported the promotion of smart energy efficiency and renewable technologies in the towns of Cantemir and Ungheni, and in Festelita community, in line with their local Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans. As a result, more than 3,500 people, including children and youth, now benefit from cleaner and safer energy, better indoor and outdoor conditions, and more efficient street lighting, linked to both public and residential buildings.

To reduce the energy consumption of buildings and

associated pollution in the capital city, demonstration projects involving three multistorey residential buildings were piloted using a net metering system with an investment payback mechanism. This will result in reductions of 8.5 kt CO<sub>2</sub> eq over the next 20 years. As a result of United Nations support, 518 children (448 students and 71 pre-schoolers) and 46 employees in Gratiesti school, Chisinau Municipality, now benefit from modern and energy-efficient lighting in study rooms, which will further reduce energy costs.

### **Improving capacity to apply sustainable natural resource management practices**

The UNCT contributed to strengthening the enabling environment for land degradation neutrality and the sustainable management of natural resources. Relevant national and local authorities received extensive technical support in preparing strategic documents on agriculture and the environment. Issue-specific (quality control) guidelines were developed to complement the existing national guidance documents on Strategic Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments.

The UNCT further contributed to the new Programme on Green Economy and its Action Plan 2022–2024, through generating new evidence and information, as well as providing technical support.

In collaboration with LPAs, a mapping of existing locations with demonstration potential for climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices was supported, with over 300 such locations identified in the pilot area. At the same time, an extensive public awareness and training campaign was launched on land degradation prevention, including the publication of the Guide on CSA Practices in Moldova.

United Nations efforts to promote integrated waste management practices resulted in increased use of waste segregation practices by 6,015 households that were connected to the centralized waste collection system. The Museum of Lost Things was also established within the premises of the Chisinau waste sorting company. The museum showcases goods with economic and cultural value that have been found while processing waste. This will increase awareness regarding how to improve waste management.

### **Improving capacities for climate change adaptation and mitigation**

Support to the national adaptation planning process



continued and the development of a national programme kicked off with a series of relevant assessments for six key sectors (agriculture, transport, energy, water, forestry, and health).

Building on these findings, the Climate Change Capacity Development Plans for the six sectors respond to the institutional weaknesses identified and lay the ground for strengthening climate change mainstreaming capacities. With the Climate Change Knowledge Management Road Map in place, there is now a better understanding of the national capacities needed to develop an effective response and ensure buy-in by key stakeholders. As a result of this exercise, the UNCT started to develop the capacities of the national stakeholders in climate change adaptation in agriculture, as well as in mainstreaming migration and climate change nexus considerations into the national adaptation planning.

At the local level, the United Nations supported the development of six climate-sensitive Local Development Plans in four districts, the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, and the Transnistria region. This increased the number of districts applying climate-resilient practices from 23 in 2020 to 26 in 2021. Another six LPAs are now better able to apply climate and environment-related legislation in the design and implementation of local policies, conducive to the sustainable management of local resources. Furthermore, six farmers were

supported to establish water storage basins: this is a climate change adaptation solution that responds to the increasing frequency and severity of droughts. Finally, a newly established consortium called Green City Lab, in Chisinau, is poised to become a leading platform for participatory planning, partnerships, co-creation, and innovations in low emissions and green urban development.

### KEY RESULTS UNDER OUTCOME 3



**Policy and institutional framework** in the field of environmental sustainability and resilience **strengthened**



**19,548 people** from three districts now benefit from access to clean and more efficient energy



The **proportion of districts applying climate-resilient practices increased** from 23 in 2020 to 26 in 2021



Institutional Capacity Assessment and **Climate Change Capacity Development Plans** developed for six key sectors



Source: UNDP Moldova

**“ Moving from conventional farming to organic farming requires you to wish it, to take a decision in this regard and then you will find the methods to put into practice. Crop rotation is one of these methods. We cannot plant only profitable crops because we deplete the land, and we leave this problem as legacy to the younger generation. We try to lead by example and inspire other peers to opt for the only right and rational way of doing agriculture. We never intend to go back to growing crops with fertilizers. It’s inefficient and unhealthy.**

Nicolae Micu is an ambassador for organic farming and has been practising farming for 63 years.

## OUTCOME 4: INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

9 UN Entities: IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, WHO  
**Expenditure 2021: \$ 13,493,053**

### **Improving the capacity of the health system to provide quality health services**

With the United Nations’ technical and policy support, citizens now have enhanced access to, and ensured continuity of, health services, including essential health services, perinatal, sexual and reproductive health services, and the emergency care system. Around 1,500 persons from key populations also benefited from HIV prevention services, including pre-exposure prophylaxis and web outreach prevention. Furthermore, patients suffering from cancer now have improved health outcomes after the first high-performance radiotherapy device was installed at the Oncological Institute.

The UNCT further supported important policy development and processes that ensure evidence-based and inclusive planning, such as development of the draft National Health System Development Strategy for the period up to 2032, the revised list of Essential Medicines, the National O2 Scenario, and the institutional development strategy of the National Health Insurance Company.

Staff and institutional capacities in the health sector were further strengthened through a number of initiatives: providing support to the electronic platform for human resources for health; aligning the national professional classification to international standards; initiating the strategic process on digital health; as well as providing support to the planning of distribution of the health workforce.

Around 3,000 health professionals now have updated knowledge and improved skills to provide qualitative health services, including 300 health professionals who are now certified to provide family planning services, and six e-learning courses are now available for 100 per cent of health staff involved in HIV treatment and control.

### **Empowering vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to access and demand quality services**

The United Nations continued its commitment to

empowering vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to access quality social services. In 2021, 98 persons with disabilities and their relatives accessed community-based services in Slobozia district in the Transnistria region, including through 161 consultations on legal support, psychological counselling or assisted employment.

The empowerment of survivors of violence remains paramount; during the year, 30 survivors of violence were trained to conduct peer-to-peer support and awareness-raising activities. An additional 20 survivors of domestic violence also raised the awareness of lawmakers on this issue through an art therapy workshop in Parliament during the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

Across Moldova, 14,816 adolescents and youth received offline peer-to-peer education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, including GBV prevention and bullying, mental health and psychological well-being. Another 113,646 adolescents and youth up to 24 years of age were reached through social media with information on healthy behaviours. Moreover, 311 parents of vocational school students can now better support their children in a safe transition to adulthood.

The establishment of a Roma community mediators’ institution in the Transnistria region was supported,



Source: Feminism.md

**“ When you see that somebody uses derogatory words about a woman or a girl, it is important to intervene, saying that it’s not ok.**

considers Milena Rusu, 17 years old, one of the founders of Feminismd, a platform dedicated to gender equality, uniting youth interested in creating a community for educating themselves and generating educational activities.

including through the receipt of a commitment of the de facto authorities that they will support this institution in the future. The first seven Roma mediators have now been trained and are working in six localities with large Roma communities. As a result, 387 Roma received 491 consultations and services from the Roma community mediators, and improved their access to education, social assistance, labour, documentation, and health. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNCT supported elderly residents to learn new IT skills, in order to counteract loneliness arising due to their limited access to social support. In partnership with the Moldcell Foundation, 300 older persons from 15 villages received necessary equipment and technical support from youth in their communities to use smart phones. This also gave these elderly persons more direct access to online government services.

### ***Increasing the capacity of the education system to deliver quality and inclusive education***

The United Nations continued to support the development of the new Education Sector Plan. Once approved, the plan will inform the revision of the early learning and general education curricula, standards, and learning assessments, as well as serving to better coordinate partners and mobilize additional domestic and external resources to ensure access to inclusive education services for all children and youth. Around 10,000 educators (80 per cent) were supported with digital skills, and 3,000 strengthened their ability to report via the new educational management information system. These skills will support digitalized learning methodologies and provide real-time information on the situation in pre-schools. Moreover, a total of 1,163 children, including children with disabilities and Roma, had access to continuing learning through the provision of educational kits, cognitive toys and IT equipment. Overall, 85 schools also received innovative didactical materials on health courses, which will enable around 2,000 young people to adopt healthier lifestyles. In addition, about 420 teachers and psychologists can now facilitate sustainable social change, apply mechanisms of resilience, combat gender discrimination and stereotypes, and deliver parenting programmes. Around 10,000 educators (80 per cent), 12,466 schoolteachers (65 per cent) and 30,000 non-didactical staff also have greater knowledge and better skills on the prevention of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. All of these efforts helped to keep all pre-schools and schools open in 2021 and ensure access to continuing learning for around 134,158 preschool aged children (100 per cent) and 336,700 children/youth.

As a result of established cooperation links and training provided to representatives of nine businesses, these companies can now address GBV in the workplace and use family-friendly policies.

### ***Addressing poverty through effective social assistance***

Support was given to the NBS to recalculate data on the situation of children. Unfortunately, the results showed a worsening trend. Thus, the Ministry of Health Labour and Social Protection was supported to increase the coverage of social assistance for households with three children and above, single parents, and households with persons with disabilities.

United Nations support contributed to the institutionalization of training on applying a human rights-based approach to disability, in the form of an initial pool of 23 trainers from the National Agency for Social Assistance and Temporary Placement Centres for persons with disabilities.

### ***Addressing violence against women and children***

With UNCT support notable achievements were made in 2021 to increase protection from violence against women and children. The 2022–26 National Child Protection Programme and its costed Action Plan was developed, resulting in increased protection for over 550,000 children in Moldova. A milestone achievement after many years of advocacy supported by the UNCT was the Parliament's ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Elimination of Violence against Women (Istanbul Convention) in October 2021. Support to the Government has now begun to align national laws and policies to support its implementation.

Support continued in relation to efforts to end bullying in schools. More than 2,000 teachers and school staff now have increased knowledge and skills that allow them to identify, address and refer cases of bullying and violence, and over 600 adolescents are more aware of bullying and how to report it. Several behavioural change campaigns were supported that address stigma and discriminatory stereotypes relating to gender equality and combating GBV, including against women and girls with disabilities. These campaigns reached millions of people.

To strengthen the response to GBV, 20 CSOs from both banks of the Nistru river were supported to advocate for better respect of women's rights at local and national levels, and to deliver efficient essential services to those in need. In Ungheni district, the authorities initiated

the first ever specialized service for victims of sexual violence. Across the country, 3,317 service providers now have increased capacities to better intervene in cases of GBV and human trafficking. As a result, over 2,347 adolescents are equipped to identify, report, prevent and address all forms of violence in all settings, and are empowered to act as agents of change in addressing negative social norms and gender stereotypes. Furthermore, 100 victims of trafficking (47 women, 18 girls, 34 men and one boy) received tailored assistance to contribute to their rehabilitation and reintegration, and 17 male victims of trafficking received assistance in the form of a new rehabilitation service for male victims, in a pilot supported by the United Nations.

## KEY RESULTS UNDER OUTCOME 4



~**3,000** health professionals increased their knowledge in different fields



~**1,500** people benefited from HIV prevention services



**128,462** youth reached with comprehensive information on sexual and reproductive health and rights and healthy behaviours



**First Roma community mediators' institution** established in Transnistrian region



**All** schools kept open in 2021, providing access to learning for **100 per cent of preschool students and 336,700 children/youth**



**Social assistance coverage** of vulnerable households with children increased



**>100** victims of human trafficking received assistance



**Istanbul Convention** ratified by Parliament



**> 3 million** persons reached with messages on negative gender stereotypes and GBV



Source: UNFPA Moldova

Victoria, 32 years old, from Chişinău, participated in Moldova Fashion Days 2021 as a model. She was born with hypoplasia of the right foot, meaning her right leg is 25 cm shorter than her left leg. Victoria and other women with disabilities were empowered by the United Nations to present the new clothing collections of local designers, combatting stigma with style, and promoting equal rights and choices in the fashion industry.

## SUPPORT TO COVID-19 RESPONSE

In 2021, the United Nations continued to provide significant support to COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, including in the following ways:

- Improved evidence-based decision-making and emergency planning: improved access to qualitative data via an electronic platform for epidemiological surveillance, including necessary IT equipment for regional public health departments; as well as the identification of capacity gaps and the development of scenarios to inform policy formulation and emergency planning.

An assessment was carried out of the impact of COVID-19 across 10 human rights areas. This involved consultations with state institutions, civil society and national human rights institutions, and resulted in a strong set of recommendations that now guide United Nations planning and programming.

An assessment was also conducted of the impact of COVID-19 on the continuity of essential health services, including sexual and reproductive health, in order to support national health authorities in decision-making.

- Ensuring access to essential equipment and supplies: procurement planning and supply management were improved, and there was capacity-building on handling and administering COVID-19 vaccines.

- Support to COVID-19 vaccination deployment, including capacity-building, technical support, providing necessary IT and “cold chain” equipment, and national immunization information campaigns. This resulted in 1,811,729 doses being administered in 578 vaccination centres, and more than 1 million vaccination certificates being downloaded.

- Increased access to, and quality of, testing: there was an increase from four to seven in the number of PCR public health laboratories, and capacities regarding the number of tests that can be conducted increased significantly, from ~450 tests per day to 15,000 tests per day. In 2021, a total of 1.8 million tests were performed

and 231,340 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed. Furthermore, capacity-building and necessary equipment were provided in relation to carrying out the first ever microorganism genome sequencing method, and in regard to making the data globally available.

- Case management and mental health: clinical case management protocols and guidelines were developed and trainings were rolled out; a United Nations awareness campaign was also conducted on mental health and the impact of the pandemic.

- Improved infection prevention and control procedures were put in place, in line with international best practices, and these were institutionalized as part of the continuous education programme, resulting in 15,000 professionals being trained to date.

- Strengthening of capacities for COVID-19 prevention at points of entry.

- 455 staff and volunteers of 55 organizations from both banks of the Nistru river, who are members of the NGO Task-Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights, can now provide direct social support services in response to the immediate needs of people in vulnerable situations. 4,835 persons in vulnerable situations from both banks of the Nistru river received care packages and thus have increased resilience to the effects of the pandemic.

- Bringing together development partners and the Government under the leadership of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in monthly meetings to ensure a shared understanding of the evolving epidemiological, vaccination, and response priorities. This included sharing 27 epidemiological and programme updates throughout the course of 2021 on the dedicated United Nations Moldova COVID-19 platform: <https://covid19response.un.md/en>



Alexandru Botizatu, head of the Anesthesia and Intensive Care Department of the Republican Clinical Hospital «Timofei Moşneaga», is the first doctor from the Republic of Moldova to be vaccinated against COVID-19. He took the vaccine without hesitation because he knows that it is the only way to defeat the virus, which during the peak of the crisis kept him away from his family. In the first months of the pandemic, in order to protect his two daughters and his wife, he isolated himself from them. He saw his children only at distance, communicating with them from the other end of the street. Doctor Botizatu says he never wants to live through such times again, so each of us must be aware of the health situation and get the vaccine.

## 2.3. UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA

In 2021, the United Nations in Moldova further consolidated and diversified its partnerships to help accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. Several innovative partnerships, particularly with the private sector, were established and have already produced notable results. South-South and triangular partnerships were also advanced, as were partnerships focused on strengthening financing for SDGs.

### *Innovative partnerships with the private sector*

- The UNCT signed a Declaration of Interest with the Foreign Investors Association (FIA) in regard to cooperation on meeting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This important document recognizes the critical importance of partnerships with the private sector to promote the achievement of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

The Declaration provides the basis for partnerships between FIA members and UNCT entities to further explore additional possibilities for developing activities that support Moldova's sustainable development.



Source: RCO Moldova

- An innovative programme was implemented by the UNCT with the support of the private sector, the Government, young people and older citizens, with the aim of creating bonds between generations through the expansion of digital skills. The programme focused on the most vulnerable older people in rural areas and engaged young girls and boys as agents of digitalization: these young people helped older women and men to overcome the social and digital isolation

they face by gaining digital skills. A private sector company (Moldcell Foundation) donated mobile phones to these older people, while the UNCT mobilized young people and older ones to develop digital skills in regard to seeking social and health support. Public institutions – such as the National Social Insurance House and the Agency for Electronic Governance – also stepped in to present the online services they provide to older people, while development partners, such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, contributed with financial resources to scale up the programme across more towns and villages.

- Bayer, a global pharmaceutical company, started a partnership with the UNCT in the fields of sexual and reproductive health and rights, population, and development. Through this partnership, Bayer will cooperate and contribute, through information activities, to expanding the population's access to life-saving information in order to ensure better health of the population of all ages.



Source: UNFPA Moldova

- Effective partnerships were established by the UNCT with a series of “champion” private sector companies in order to promote the implementation of family-friendly policies, encourage fathers to be more involved in childcare activities, combat violence against women and promote gender equality, as well as to promote the rights, inclusion and labour market integration of people with disabilities – especially girls and women.



Source: ILO

- In this context, five companies will champion the implementation of family-friendly policies in the workplace. This will cover about 5,000 employees, of whom over 64 per cent are young people aged 19–39. A flexible work schedule, fathers’ involvement in raising children, health programmes for employees, breastfeeding spaces and recreation rooms for children are just a few of the family-friendly practices that are now being implemented in these workplaces. At the same time, the initiative is promoting the adopting of family-friendly policies by the Parliament at the legislative level.
- Four private Moldovan companies joined the Global Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Platform, after fulfilling the required procedures, namely: self-assessment, capacity-building, and developing an action plan for the implementation of the seven principles. The WEPs are a set of principles relating to promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community.

### **Partnership with the World Bank**

- The UNCT, in cooperation with the World Bank, conducted a joint gender assessment to provide an integral and comprehensive understanding of the root causes and impacts of the pronounced inequalities faced by women and girls in Moldova. The results of this assessment are now feeding into several key strategic and analytical documents: the new World Bank Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of Moldova, the United Nations 2021 Common Country Analysis, and the future Republic of Moldova–United Nations Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development, which is expected to be developed by the middle of 2022, as well

as a number of country programme documents that will be developed by individual UNCT entities by the end of 2022.

- The UNCT, in cooperation with the World Bank and the EU, supported the Ministry of Finance in conducting the Public Accountability and Financing Framework (PEFA) assessment, including the supplementary PEFA gender assessment. The PEFA assessment aims to provide the Government of the Republic of Moldova with an objective, up-to-date diagnostic of the national-level public financial management performance, and the extent to which it addresses the different needs of men and women, and different subgroups of these categories, and the extent to which it promotes gender equality.

## **KEY RESULTS OF INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**



**5** private sector companies are promoting family-friendly working conditions for about **5,000** employees



Declaration of Interest signed with the Foreign Investors Association



**20,000** households supported to make more sustainable electricity consumption decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic



**8** health institutions continued to benefit from much-needed medical equipment during the pandemic



**PEFA** assessment, including supplementary gender assessment, undertaken



**20** new partnership initiatives, and **>10** new cooperation agreements signed

## 2.4. RESULTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS WORKING MORE AND BETTER TOGETHER: UNITED NATIONS COHERENCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

### ***Results of the repositioning of the United Nations Development System***

In 2021, the implementation of the United Nations development system reform progressed steadily. UNESCO joined the team in 2021, contributing to the strengthening of the integrated support that the United Nations can provide to the country.

The UNCT further increased collaboration across agencies. The Joint Resource Mobilization and Partnership Strategy was approved, which has already contributed to the establishment of new and innovative partnerships. A comprehensive 2021 update to the Common Country Analysis (CCA) was conducted, based on wide consultations with various stakeholder groups, including people from vulnerable groups, migrants, youth, older persons and women and girls. To make the CCA insights widely accessible, an online dashboard was finalized in early 2022. Further, the UNCT successfully undertook the evaluation of the UN PFSD, which is informing the development of the next cooperation framework. The UNCT also initiated the development of the next United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which will further strengthen our ability to deliver joint results for the achievement of the SDGs.

Leaving no one behind remained a priority in 2021. The UNCT, together with the World Bank, undertook a joint gender assessment that will allow for increased coordination of efforts, greater efficiency in the support provided to the country, and the strengthening of joint work in the field of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Furthermore, the UNCT increased its cooperation and strengthened inter-agency mechanisms to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, ensure disability inclusion and youth engagement. A theory of change was formulated in order to advance the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The implementation of joint projects and programmes continued in 2021. The UNCT jointly implemented 13 programmes and projects, of which five were initiated in 2021. Nearly \$4 million in new resources was mobilized during the year for joint programmes on strengthening the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on vulnerable groups, on support to the NBS in developing the new strategy for the statistical system, on helping

address climate change through innovative financing, and on advancing gender equality as well as disability inclusion.

### ***Results of Communicating as One***

2021 United Nations communication efforts were based on the four main objectives of the United Nations Moldova Communication Strategy 2018–2022 and the Communication Plan for 2021, aligned with the UN PFSD. The United Nations Communication Group (UNCG) successfully implemented five awareness-raising campaigns, as well as a range of communication activities. This included well-established United Nations campaigns, such as “16 days of activism against GBV” and the sixteenth edition of the Human Rights Awards.

The UNCT launched a new campaign “Stand for the inclusion of persons with disabilities”, which aimed to raise awareness of the discrimination and challenges met by the most marginalized and vulnerable groups within Moldovan society. The campaign called on the community and each individual to take a stand for increased social inclusion in the society, reaching over 1 million adults in just three weeks. This will become another signature campaign for the United Nations in Moldova, and will focus on different groups and aspects of vulnerabilities each year.

Our communication efforts during the year were further focused on leaving no one behind by standing up for the rights of LGBTQI+ individuals during PRIDE month.

Furthermore, by actively working with the newly established UN YAP, the UNCG engaged youth in promoting the key messages of United Nations campaigns, and values and standards, as well as promoting the SDGs among young people via social media platforms.

With the aim of supporting the country to tackle the climate crisis and build resilience to climate change, over 230 trees were planted in the Gagauzian region on United Nations Day. This should motivate other private and public entities to follow suit and to “green” their localities, and underlines the importance of climate actions and the need to implement them now.



## Results of Operating as One

In 2021, the UNCT continued to implement our Business Operations Strategy 2.0, collaborating effectively in the areas of human resources, procurement, finance, administration, and ICT services.

Efficient collaboration in procurement, administration, and ICT service lines resulted in \$107,899 cost-savings from joint operational activities. Fourteen Long-Term Arrangements were extended or established in 2021 with local companies and individual consultants for repeated procurement of goods and services.

With the aim of streamlining accessibility principles in all dimensions of work, the United Nations Operations and Management Team (OMT) undertook a mapping exercise in three areas: physical accessibility of premises, digital and web accessibility, and inclusive human resources services. The assessments informed several activities implemented that were in 2021 to address identified gaps. An additional assessment was undertaken on the extent to which the procurement policies respond to the United Nations principles on business and human rights, as well as a report on the accessibility of venues hosting events.

Efforts to mainstream human rights in procurement and operations were continued. For example, the procurement solicitation forms were adapted so as to mainstream human rights. The non-discrimination employment clause was updated to encourage applicants from under-represented groups (persons with disabilities, Roma and other ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities, persons living with HIV, refugees, and other non-citizens).

Efforts to promote environmentally friendly practices were continued. Photovoltaic panels were installed

on the roof of UN House in March 2021. UN House's medium self-sufficiency is now 46 per cent, out of its total electricity consumption.

## KEY RESULTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS WORKING MORE AND BETTER TOGETHER



**25** entities form the UNCT



**4** key documents developed: 2021 CCA, Final UNPFSD Evaluation, joint workplans, and the UNCT joint Resource Mobilization Strategy



**\$3.95** million mobilized for **five** new joint programmes and projects, with a total of 14 joint programmes and projects being implemented



**5** large joint communication campaigns implemented



National **COVID-19** risk communication efforts **supported**



**\$107,899** in cost-savings achieved due to joint operational activities



UN House's **sustainability and accessibility improved**

## 2.5. FINAL EVALUATION OF PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

In 2021, the UNCT in Moldova conducted a final evaluation of the UN PFSD 2018–2022, in close collaboration with the Government of Moldova, with the State Chancellery acting as the key government counterpart in the process. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the degree of achievement of the expected results and the extent to which the contribution of the United Nations to national development under the UN PFSD 2018–2022 has been relevant, effective, efficient, coherent, and sustainable. The evaluation was conducted by two independent experts using a participatory approach and involving a wide range of stakeholders, including United Nations staff, government officials, development partners, and civil society and private sector representatives. All in all, the views of approximately 150 people informed the final evaluation report.

### *Overview of the evaluation findings:*

#### **Relevance:**

The UN PFSD 2018–2022 remained relevant throughout its implementation. Multiple key policy documents were developed with United Nations support during its implementation, in the fields of human rights, justice, labour, disaster risk management, health, social protection, and many others, proving its continuous relevance. The UN PFSD 2018–2022 was also flexible enough to meet the unforeseen needs arising from the COVID-19 crisis.

#### **Effectiveness:**

Noting the complexity of the results matrix, the evaluators found that various degrees of progress were achieved under the four UN PFSD 2018–2022 outcomes. By the end of 2020, approximately 60 per cent of the UN PFSD 2018–2022 outcome indicators had been exceeded, met or partially met, and the same was the case for about 75 per cent of the output indicators. In practical terms, these results have translated into stronger public institutions, increased compliance with human rights standards, greater women's political empowerment, a considerable number of companies benefiting from improved business advisory support, large groups of the population experiencing enhanced livelihoods, strengthened local resilience to climate change, and a more inclusive education system (the list could continue). However, further progress is required in regard to bridging the gender pay gap, creating new employment opportunities, addressing the adolescent

birth rate, increasing vaccination coverage rates, and expanding access to social protection, among others.

#### **Efficiency:**

The costs incurred to achieve the described results totalled \$87 million by the end of 2020, representing about 56 per cent of the total expenditure envisaged under the UN PFSD 2018–2022. This roughly corresponds to the 60 per cent of the programme timeline that had elapsed between the start of the UN PFSD 2018–2022 implementation and the time of the evaluation.

#### **Coherence:**

Agencies are keen on ensuring stronger coordination and cooperation, and multiple examples of well-coordinated programmes, projects and initiatives at the level of the UNCT are available, including the COVID-19 response and the support provided in the nationalization of the 2030 Agenda, including the SDG indicators. The number of joint programmes and initiatives implemented by the UNCT – 21 in total – is also impressive. However, the performance of inter-agency coordination mechanisms has been mixed and requires further strengthening.

#### **Sustainability:**

Bringing about changes in formal policies and laws is important for sustainability and the United Nations support has been substantial in this regard. However, the sustainability of funding may become a challenge. Hence new opportunities for funding need to be explored. Government capacity for policy implementation and scaling up development initiatives is also a concern and needs to be further strengthened moving forward.

### *Key recommendations:*

- Streamline the intervention logic and the results framework.
- Strengthen inter-agency cooperation.
- Enhance programmatic efforts moving forward.
- Step up resource mobilization.
- Step up engagement with civil society and the private sector.
- Strengthen the tracking of pilots and the focus on policy implementation.

## UNCT response

The evaluation recommendations have already informed the development of the next cooperation framework, particularly in regard to the new strategic priorities and the development of a streamlined intervention

logic and results matrix. The implementation of the recommendations is being ensured through the Evaluation Management Response endorsed by the UNCT, which includes a range of actions, with corresponding timelines and responsible parties.

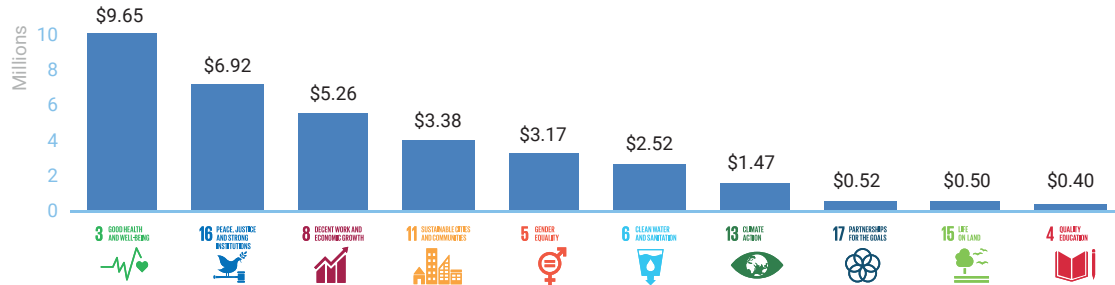


Source: ILO Moldova

Due to severe weather conditions, practically all bee families at the monastery apiary perished this spring. Consequently, the 60 nuns and 55 young girls of the theological seminary were left without one of the most important foods on their daily menu: honey. Honey is also a secure source of income for them, and is thus vital for the monastery. The help provided to save the monastery's apiary therefore came just in time and from a source they least expected: the head mother found out from the leader of the local beekeepers' association about a project within the Local Employment Partnership in Causeni district for the development of beekeeping businesses. As one of 25 selected beneficiaries, the monastery received 10 beehives and as many bee families for free. Furthermore, the nuns of the monastery participated in training in beekeeping and entrepreneurship, which helped them to improve their business plans, to register their business and to obtain the necessary sanitary-veterinary certificates and passports for the apiary.

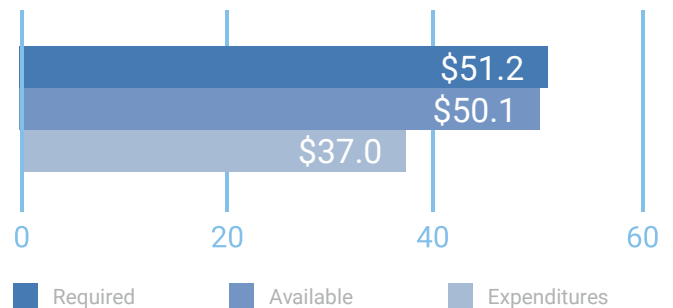
## 2.6. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION\*

### Expenditures under UN PFSD 2018–2022 in 2021 by top 10 SDGs



As reflected in the UNCT’s annual joint workplans for 2021 developed under the UN PFSD 2018–2022, including planned activities under the SERP 2020–2021, the planned budget of the United Nations in Moldova for the year amounted to \$51.2 million, out of which \$50 million was available resources. The delivery rate reached 74 per cent. The budget execution performance is explained by the programme and project implementation challenges posed by political changes and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

### Total required, available\*, and spent resources in 2021 (in \$ million)



### UN PFSD 2018–2022 delivery rate in 2020 by outcome



### Required, available\*, and spent resources in 2020 by outcome (in \$ million)



The total amount delivered by the United Nations stands at \$37 million. This exceeds what was originally estimated as required for the implementation of the UN PFSD 2018–2022 and reflects additional resources mobilized under the COVID-19 SERP to the tune of \$7.6 million in 2021.

Continuing in 2021, an important vehicle for mobilizing resources was the Moldova 2030 SDGs Partnership Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), and specifically its COVID-19 window and the Moldova Towards Unity in Action MPTF. Through these two MPTFs, the UNCT mobilized and implemented projects in the amount of \$1.8 million relating to urgent support for the COVID-19 pandemic response, as well as human rights projects. The main donors to the MPTFs are the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland.

\*Based on the information included in and reported under the joint workplans for 2021.

\*Figures for “required” and “available” are based on the data at the beginning of the cycle.

## Chapter 3: UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM KEY FOCUS FOR 2022

### ***Continue advancing the achievement of the SDGs in line with the UN PFSD 2018–2022 and joined-up United Nations development system planning to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Moldova:***

In 2022 the UNCT, in collaboration with the Government, will finalize the formulation of the next cooperation framework. This will guide the United Nations development activities at the country level in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for the coming five years, starting in 2023. The new plan will fully take into account the changing context and socioeconomic impacts due to the crisis in Ukraine. The process started in 2021 and includes the finalization of the theory of change and its result matrix, as well as the elaboration of the UNCT configuration. The new cooperation framework is expected to be signed by the Government and the UNCT in June 2022.

The UNCT will ensure the recommendations from the UN PFSD 2018–2022 are taken into consideration and addressed in the formulation of the new cooperation framework.

### ***Improve and coordinate business innovations that can generate greater efficiencies, synergies and coherence within United Nations Moldova:***

During 2022, the UNCT is expected to update its Business Operations Strategy to promote common business operations (including through the establishment of common premises and a common back office), gender balance in staffing, and disability inclusion. The analysis on cost efficiencies for a common back office will be initiated to further reduce operational expenses.

The UNCT will also accelerate the implementation of its plan on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The implementation of the plan will ensure the strengthening of mechanisms for protection from harassment, sexual exploitation, and abuse.

### ***Listen to and engage with the population, particularly those left furthest behind:***

Listening to the voices of different stakeholders will ensure that the United Nations in Moldova remains responsive to the needs of the people that it serves. To maintain fluid communication with young people, the UNCT will ensure consultations and engagement with the established UN YAP, and will conduct frequent consultations with CSOs, NGOs and national human rights institutions.

### ***Promote innovative financing tools and effective partnerships that accelerate the achievement of the SDGs:***

In 2022, the UNCT will develop a funding framework and resource mobilization strategy for the implementation of the new cooperation framework. Additionally, to promote multi-stakeholder engagement in achievement of the SDGs, a funding and partnerships landscape mapping will be conducted, and new partnerships will be developed with academia, the private sector, CSOs, young people and development partners.

### ***Promote and advocate for the fundamental values, standards and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for and protection of human rights and gender equality and advocacy to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first:***

The UNCT will carry out communication and awareness-raising campaigns and activities that increase the level of information and actions towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs (“We Stand for Inclusion”, “16 days of Activism against GBV”, “Human Rights Awards 2022” and “Climate Action”).

In addition, the UNCT will contribute to implementing the [United Nations Youth Strategy 2030](#) and [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#), particularly in the areas where further work is required.

### ***Promote an integrated United Nations analysis with the aim of anticipating, preventing and managing risks relating to internal and external shocks in the country:***

The UNCT will continue producing analytical documents to identify and manage social and economic risks and possible emergencies. This includes the formulation of joint programmes to build national and local resilience and rapid response.

The UNCT will continue with the implementation of the COVID-19 SERP and its existing projects in the field and will also seek to mobilize additional resources to strengthen the response.

## ANNEX I: LIST OF KEY FINANCING PARTNERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN THE COUNTRY IN 2021

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- ❖ Australia
- ❖ Austria
- ❖ Denmark
- ❖ Endava
- ❖ Estonia
- ❖ European Union/European Commission
- ❖ Germany
- ❖ Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI)
- ❖ Global Environment Facility
- ❖ Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- ❖ Global Partnership for Education
- ❖ Green Climate Fund
- ❖ India–UN Development Partnership Fund
- ❖ International Atomic Energy Agency
- ❖ Japan
- ❖ Moldova
- ❖ Netherlands
- ❖ Norway
- ❖ Republic of Korea
- ❖ Romania
- ❖ Russian Federation
- ❖ Slovakia
- ❖ Soros Foundation
- ❖ Sweden
- ❖ Switzerland
- ❖ UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework
- ❖ UNICEF Thematic Child Protection Fund
- ❖ UNICEF Thematic Education Fund
- ❖ United Kingdom
- ❖ United Nations Secretary-General's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Trust Fund
- ❖ United States
- ❖ Universal Health Coverage Partnership