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MOLDOVA



MOLDOVA PARTNERSHIP LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

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**PARTNERSHIP
ACCELERATOR**

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER
PARTNERSHIPS AND
ENGAGEMENT FOR
THE 2030 AGENDA

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2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator

The 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator is a collaborative initiative by the Division for the Sustainable Development Goals of UN DESA, carried out with its implementing partner, The Partnering Initiative.

The Partnership Accelerator seeks to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by enhancing capacities of all stakeholders in developing effective multi-stakeholder partnerships and engaging meaningfully with SDG related processes. Direct partnership training support and advisory services are offered to member States and UN entities/Resident Coordinators/country teams wishing to foster stronger collaboration between stakeholders and sectors and enhance their capacities in forging new multi-stakeholder partnerships and partnership platforms.

More at: <https://partnershipaccelerator.org>.

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Abbreviations

AmCham	American Chamber of Commerce	ODA	Organization for Entrepreneurship Development
CCI	Chamber of Commerce and Industry	RC	Resident Coordinator
CSDDD or CS3D	Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations	SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	SOEs	State-Owned Enterprises
EBA	European Business Association Moldova	UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECPMM	Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova	UN RCO	UN Resident Coordination Office
ESG	Environmental, Social, and corporate Governance	UN	United Nations
EU	European Union	UNCT	UN Country Team
FIA	Foreign Investors Association	UNOP	United Nations Office for Partnerships
NDS	National Development Strategy	UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework



Executive summary

The Moldova Partnership Landscape Assessment aims to examine the multifaceted ecosystem of partnerships, focusing on the efficacy and potential to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The Moldovan partnership ecosystem is distinctly multi-stakeholder and collaborative, incorporating government and UN agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and academia. Moldova is strategically leveraging these partnerships with a unified recognition that attaining the 2030 Agenda is contingent upon synergized efforts from all societal sectors.

The report identifies engagement with the private sector as the essential focal point, recognizing that it presents more challenges and is less explored, but its potential as a catalyst in the realization of SDGs in Moldova is significant. The emphasis is also on the integration and collaboration with academia.

UN Moldova faces a number of challenges in fostering partnerships with the private sector due to a scarcity of companies prepared and eligible for partnerships and the prevailing economic and geopolitical context that emphasizes companies' focus on their bottom line. However, Moldova's aspirations for EU accession and the evolving EU legislative landscape provide a conducive environment for integrating corporate responsibility and sustainability within its private sector.

The identified core problem in engaging the private sector is in finding appropriate ways to spark of interest and motivation in smaller companies to adopt sustainable practices without the allure of immediate, sizable profit opportunities. There is a critical need for innovative approaches and strategies to harmonize business interests with societal and environmental objectives in such a complex landscape.

To navigate the identified challenges and hasten the attainment of the SDGs, the report advocates for:

- Leveraging Moldova's EU accession aspirations, the increasing role of EU markets as destination for Moldovan exports and recent advancements in the EU supply chain due diligence legislation.
- Targeting specific segments of the private sector to shape a community of sustainability-minded entrepreneurs.
- Using online/mobile platforms for wider reach and engagement.
- Exploring various opportunity areas related to the increasing pressure on targeted companies to align with more sustainable and responsible business practices.

The recommendations provide insights for shaping the future partnership landscape in Moldova, aiming to align economic growth with the realization of SDGs. It emphasizes the role of innovative and collaborative approaches in ensuring a harmonious blend of corporate responsibility and sustainable development.

9 INCLUSIUNE, INOVAȚIE ȘI INFRASTRUCTURĂ



10 INEGALITĂȚI SOCIALE



8 MUNCĂ DECENTĂ ȘI CREȘTERE ECONOMICĂ



6 APĂ CURATĂ ȘI IGIENĂ



7 ENERGIE ACESIBILĂ ȘI CURATĂ



5 EGALITATE DE GEN



3 SĂNĂTATE ȘI STARE DE BINE



4 EDUCAȚIE DE CALITATE



2 ZERO FOAME



1 FĂRĂ SĂRĂCIE



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Introduction

Moldova, like many other countries, has embraced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizing it as a vital commitment to address the pressing challenges of our time. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a roadmap for Moldova's development journey. The United Nations System (UN) has been actively involved in supporting Moldova's progress towards achieving these goals.

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Moldova 2023-2027 is a strategic framework that aligns with both the 2030 Agenda and the Moldova National Development Strategy 2030. It identifies four key areas of support: Just and Inclusive Institutions and Equal Opportunities for Human Development; Participatory Governance and Social Cohesion Enhanced; Enhanced Shared Prosperity in a Sustainable Economy; and Green Development, Sustainable Communities, and Disaster and Climate Resilience.

Recognizing that effective implementation of the UNSDCF requires strong partnerships, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator, and the UN Resident Coordination Office (UNRCO) in Moldova have collaborated to develop a comprehensive national partnership landscape assessment for Moldova.

This assessment, conducted through interviews and desk research, explores Moldova's partnership ecosystem, focusing on the challenges faced by the country, with the chief aim being to identify and analyse one principal sector or area. This analysis is not only to understand its current state but to pinpoint opportunities for its future enhancement, all with the vision of accelerating the attainment of the SDGs in Moldova. By doing so, the assessment uncovers possibilities to forge new partnerships or strengthen existing ones, concentrating collective efforts on enhancing the selected area or sector for the faster realization of the SDGs.

For the purpose of this report, partnerships for the SDGs in Moldova are defined as ongoing collaborative relationships among organizations from diverse stakeholder groups. These partnerships align their interests around a common vision, leverage their respective resources and expertise, and share risks to maximize value creation towards the SDGs.





Partnership ecosystem for the SDGs

The United Nations and the Government of Moldova have signed a new United Nations – Republic of Moldova Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027 (UNSDCF). The Cooperation Framework was developed with development partners, government and the civil society based on broad consultations involving over 4,000 people, including young people, the diaspora and migrants, the general population (of which 50% represented vulnerable groups), representatives of Roma, persons living and affected by HIV, LGBTQI+ persons, persons in or released from detention, and unemployed persons.

The Cooperation Framework aims to expand joint cooperation and scale up the results of the previous framework to help address the country's development challenges and barriers to more inclusive social and economic development in line with the national priorities outlined in the National Development Strategy (NDS) "European Moldova 2030". The implementation of the Cooperation Framework is expected to aid the achievement of results in several thematic areas – including education, health, food systems, migration, governance, decent work, social services, labour productivity, the competitiveness of the economy, energy, environment and climate change, connectivity and trade, and statistics – which will facilitate the

integration of the Republic of Moldova into the European Union and help improve living standards.

The SDG partnership ecosystem in Moldova is characterized by its collaborative and multi-stakeholder nature. The ecosystem includes government agencies, UN agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and academia. Achieving the 2030 Agenda requires concerted efforts from all sectors of society, and Moldova has been leveraging these partnerships to progress towards its targets.

UN entities

The UN in Moldova remains a key partner in supporting Moldova's SDGs nationalization and implementation process. There are over 20 UN agencies with offices in Moldova, each with its own mandate and areas of expertise. UN agencies in Moldova coordinate their efforts through several mechanisms and frameworks, aligned with global practices of the United Nations system to coordinate their activities and ensure that they are aligned with the government's priorities and national SDGs framework. The main such mechanisms in Moldova are regular meetings of the UN Country Team (UNCT), the Resident Coordinator (RC) System and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), supplemented by thematic working groups, joint initiatives information and knowledge sharing.

Civil society organisations

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) hold a crucial position within the SDG ecosystem in Moldova, serving as connectors, advocates, and implementers of the goals. Their proximity to grassroots communities allows them to bridge the gap between policy intent and on-the-ground needs, ensuring that SDG initiatives are responsive and tailored.

A primary function of CSOs is advocacy and awareness-raising as well as serving as implementing partners for the UN among others. They actively promote understanding of the SDGs, influence public opinion, and lobby for policy reforms in alignment with global targets. Furthermore, their hands-on involvement in project implementation means they deliver essential services, particularly in areas often overlooked or underserved by broader governmental initiatives. By doing so, they ensure marginalized communities and vulnerable groups are represented and supported.

In addition to grassroots work, CSOs play a vital role in holding both the government and private sectors accountable. They monitor SDG progress, provide feedback, and ensure transparency in how goals are pursued. Their research, data collection, and reporting offer an independent perspective, adding

depth and rigor to national assessments. Lastly, their collaborative nature makes them instrumental in forging partnerships, ensuring a cohesive and holistic approach to SDG achievement in Moldova.

Here is a reflection of the diverse CSOs operating in Moldova (UNCT partners):

- **Gender equality and women's empowerment:** La Strada International, Women's Law Center, Partnership for Development Center, Women's Resource Center Moldova, Women's Organization Pro-Femina, Center for Feminist Initiatives;
- **Human rights:** Promo-LEX Association, Human Rights Center, Center for the Protection of Human Rights, Legal Resources Center, Moldovan Youth Organization for Human Rights, Amnesty International Moldova, Human Rights Watch Moldova;
- **Democracy and governance:** Transparency International Moldova, Association for Participatory Democracy ADEPT, Institute for Public Policy, Center for Policy and Reforms, Expert-Grup, Institute for Development and Social Initiatives VIITORUL, Center for Independent Journalism;





- **Education:** Educational Center PRO DIDACTICA, Center for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Support (CEDA), National Youth Council of Moldova;
- **Healthcare:** National Association for Public Health, Center for Health Policies and Studies, Institute of Mother and Child, Caritas Moldova;
- **Social services:** Caritas Moldova, IDIS “Viitorul”, Partnerships for Every Child, Association for Community Development;
- **Environmental protection:** Eco-Dava, ECOVISIO, CapaMol, Association for Waste Recovery (AVD), BIOTICA Ecological Society etc.

This is just a sample, far from exhaustive, of the many CSOs working in Moldova. They work in a variety of areas, including human rights, education, healthcare, social services, and environmental protection. Some of the main areas of cooperation between UN entities and Moldovan CSOs include:

1. **Human Rights:** Collaborating on initiatives that promote and protect human rights, especially the rights of vulnerable and marginalized populations.
2. **Gender Equality:** Working together to enhance gender equality, promote women’s rights, and counteract gender-based violence.
3. **Health:** Partnering on health projects, especially in areas like maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS prevention, and non-communicable diseases.
4. **Environment and Climate Change:** Cooperating on projects that address climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.
5. **Governance and Rule of Law:** Strengthening institutions, enhancing transparency, fighting corruption, and promoting participatory governance.
6. **Emergency Preparedness and Response:** Working with CSOs to enhance national capacities in disaster risk reduction, and responding effectively to emergencies and crises.
7. **Social Protection:** Collaborating on programs that offer support to vulnerable populations, including the elderly, children, and people with disabilities.
8. **Migration and Development:** Addressing issues related to labour migration, human trafficking, and integrating returned migrants.
9. **Youth Engagement:** Initiatives that empower the youth, promote their active participation in civic activities, and address youth unemployment.
10. **Civil Society Strengthening:** Building the capacities of CSOs, fostering an enabling environment for their operation, and enhancing their engagement in national development processes.

The role of CSOs in Moldova’s SDG ecosystem is complex and integral to the country’s sustainable development journey. They operate at multiple levels, from grassroots implementation to high-level advocacy, and their work complements and often challenges other stakeholders in the system. By doing so, they contribute to a more robust, inclusive, and effective approach to achieving the SDGs in Moldova.



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Government

The government of Moldova plays a central role in the ecosystem for the SDGs. It is the main driver of SDG implementation in the country and has a responsibility to create the conditions necessary for success. After extensive consultations, the Government has integrated the SDGs into its National Development Strategy, "Moldova 2030". The government is also working to mainstream the SDGs into sectoral strategies.

Backing the collective efforts of the national government and the United Nations, the Moldova SDG Partnership Fund provides financial support to projects that resonate with the Moldovan-UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and their combined annual agendas. These financed initiatives play a pivotal role in advancing the SDGs through five key thematic areas. The Phase II of the Moldova 2030 SDGs Partnership Fund serves the execution of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 and to bolstering Moldova's efforts in its EU accession journey.

Even when the spotlight might be on partnerships with other sectors, the foundational support and cooperation of the government remain indispensable. Such a tripartite model of collaboration - the UN, various sectors, and the government - accentuates the belief that sustainable development is best achieved through collective effort, ensuring all initiatives are anchored in national priorities and realities. By partnering directly with governmental bodies, UN projects can tap into existing infrastructures, gain better insights into the local landscape, and bolster the sustainability and impact of their interventions. Here are some main areas of cooperation between the Government of Moldova and UN entities:

- 1. Sustainable Development Goals:** UN entities, particularly UNDP, have worked closely with the Moldovan government to integrate and implement the SDGs at national and local levels, focusing on both policy and practice.
- 2. Governance and Public Administration:** Efforts, primarily led by UNDP, have been geared towards strengthening public administration, enhancing transparency, promoting e-governance, and building institutional capacities.
- 3. Health:** The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF have collaborated with the Moldovan Ministry of Health on various health initiatives, ranging from maternal and child health to addressing non-communicable diseases and strengthening the healthcare system.
- 4. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:** UN Women and other UN entities have worked with the government to promote gender equality, combat gender-based violence, and enhance women's participation in political and economic spheres.
- 5. Agriculture and Rural Development:** FAO and other related UN agencies have engaged with the Moldovan government to boost agricultural productivity, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and improve food security.
- 6. Migration and Labor:** The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have partnered with the government to address issues related to labor migration, human trafficking, and workers' rights.

7. Environment and Climate Change: In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, UN entities like UNEP and UNDP have worked on initiatives related to environmental conservation, biodiversity, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

8. Education and Youth: UNICEF, UNESCO, and other UN agencies have cooperated with the Ministry of Education to promote inclusive education, bolster technical and vocational training, and empower the youth.

9. Human Rights and Justice: The UN has worked with the Moldovan justice sector and other related governmental bodies to strengthen the rule of law, enhance the protection of human rights, and improve the functioning of the judiciary.

10. Economic Development: UN entities have collaborated with the Moldovan government on initiatives aiming to diversify the economy, boost innovation, and attract foreign investment.

These areas represent a snapshot of the multifaceted collaboration between the UN entities and the Moldovan government. Specific projects, outcomes, and the depth of these collaborations are detailed in official reports and communications of both the UN agencies active in Moldova and relevant government ministries and departments.





Private sector

The private sector in Moldova has been increasingly engaged in SDG efforts, recognizing the mutual benefits of sustainable development for both business and society. Several companies have adopted sustainable practices, partnered with NGOs or government bodies for community projects, or integrated the SDGs into their corporate strategies. Orange Moldova, Moldcell, Kaufland, Purcari Winery, Linella, StarNet, Mobiasbancă, Premier Energy, MAIB being notable mentions. However, the involvement of private companies remains limited, with a preponderance of these being foreign investments and representatives of the banking sector. This skewed participation is a concern for multiple reasons.

In Moldova's quest to achieve the SDGs, one of the notable challenges is the limited presence of mature local companies that are prepared and equipped for meaningful partnerships, especially in comparison to their foreign-invested counterparts. While foreign companies often come with built-in SDG-aligned strategies, robust frameworks, and international best practices, many Moldovan businesses may lack the resources, expertise, or organizational maturity to effectively engage with and contribute to the SDGs.

Key areas of collaboration between UN entities and the private sector encompass:

- 1. Economic Resilience and Recovery:** In the wake of challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, UN entities collaborated with the private sector in Moldova to support economic recovery, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- 2. Innovation and Technology:** The UNDP, for instance, has partnered with tech companies and startups in Moldova on various innovation challenges and initiatives aimed at addressing development problems through technology.
- 3. Environmental Sustainability:** Collaborations have been made with businesses in Moldova to adopt environmentally friendly practices, from green technologies to sustainable agriculture. This is often under the umbrella of climate action and environmental responsibility initiatives.
- 4. Women's Economic Empowerment:** UN agencies have engaged with the private sector to promote gender equality within the workplace, focusing on areas like women's leadership, equal pay, and gender-responsive sourcing.
- 5. Family-friendly workplace policies:** Agencies like UNICEF and UNFPA have partnered with Moldova businesses to introduce a range of family-friendly policies to make it easier for women and men to reconcile career and family duties.

- 6. Anti-Corruption Initiatives:** Given the challenges posed by corruption to development and business, the UN has sought partnerships with Moldovan companies to advocate for transparency, integrity, and accountability.
- 7. Agricultural Development:** Agencies like FAO have collaborated with agribusinesses and other entities in the private sector to promote sustainable agricultural practices, improve value chains, and boost food security.
- 8. Health Initiatives:** In response to health challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN has worked with pharmaceutical companies, health tech firms, and other private sector entities to bolster the health response, from vaccine distribution to health information systems.
- 9. Tourism and Culture:** To promote sustainable tourism and cultural preservation, there have been collaborations with travel agencies, hospitality businesses, and cultural entities.
- 10. Energy and Infrastructure:** Collaborations with companies in the energy sector have taken place to promote renewable energy solutions and improve infrastructure.

In addressing the challenges and gaps within the private sector's engagement in SDGs, the role of businesses and business associations in Moldova is essential. By representing the collective interests of businesses, they can play a pivotal role in promoting SDG-aligned corporate strategies, facilitating knowledge transfer, and advocating for favourable policies and regulations that encourage sustainable business practices.

Associations like the Foreign Investors Association (FIA), American Chamber of Commerce in Moldova (AmCham), the European Business Association Moldova (EBA) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) have been notably active. They work to create conducive environments for businesses to thrive while emphasizing corporate responsibility, ethical business practices, and sustainability.

These associations, through their activities, help in mitigating the imbalance between foreign and local companies in SDG participation. They can be instrumental in facilitating the maturation process of local companies, equipping them with the requisite tools and knowledge to effectively participate in and contribute to the realization of the SDGs.





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Academia

Despite discernible constraints, academic and research institutions in Moldova play a significant role in advancing the understanding and realization of the SDGs. They endeavour to contribute through research, data compilation, education, and partnerships with diverse entities. Despite the challenges, educational bodies are making efforts to integrate sustainability and concepts related to the SDGs into their learning modules, aiming to cultivate a population that is informed and sensitive to these critical dimensions of development.

The United Nations entities often collaborate with academic institutions to tap into research expertise, promote education, and shape policies. In Moldova, such collaborations have taken various forms. Here are some of the main areas of cooperation between UN entities and Moldovan academia:

1. Research and Data Collection: UN agencies often partner with academic institutions to conduct research on various topics, ranging from economic development to public health. These

research projects provide valuable data for policy formulation and program design. Also, these are used to emphasize to policymakers the importance of grounding public policies in empirical and statistical evidence, rather than basing them on isolated incidents, mere assumptions, or exclusively on practices from other countries.

2. Capacity Building: The UN entities organize training sessions, workshops, and courses in collaboration with universities and colleges to strengthen capacities in areas like sustainable development, human rights, and gender equality. Also, the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Moldova has seen collaborations with UN entities, particularly in areas related to public administration, governance, and civil service training.

3. Curriculum Development: In efforts to align educational content with global standards and priorities, UN agencies have collaborated with academic institutions to develop and revise curricula, especially in areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- 4. Conferences and Seminars:** UN entities host events, workshops, and conferences in partnership with Moldovan universities, facilitating dialogue on various topics from climate change to gender equality.
- 5. Joint Publications:** The UN entities and academic institutions collaborate on joint publications, ranging from research papers to policy briefs, offering insights into various development challenges and solutions.
- 6. Health and Well-being:** The World Health Organization, in its efforts to bolster health systems and understand health dynamics in the country, has partnered with medical universities and institutions in Moldova for research and capacity-building initiatives.

One of the primary limitations for academia is the scarcity of resources and infrastructure to support advanced research and innovation. Many academic institutions in Moldova lack the necessary financial and technical means to conduct research and to disseminate this knowledge effectively, hampering their contributions to SDG-related solutions.

Beyond classroom education and research, Moldovan academic institutions are engaged in multi-stakeholder collaborations and participate in dialogue and consultations on national policies and strategies related to sustainable development, ensuring that these are rooted in scientific evidence and research.

More details

The existing collaborations and partnerships between UN entities and other stakeholders are well documented and accessible for public review and insights. Interested parties can refer to the official UN Moldova website [<https://moldova.un.org/en/sdgs>] for comprehensive information and details regarding UN entities' partnerships. In addition to the website, a wealth of knowledge and data about these partnerships is available in various reports and through the UN INFO system.





Assessment focus areas

An initial scoping review was undertaken amongst UN entities in order to determine the primary focus areas for our assessment.

The findings indicated a general satisfaction among UN entities with the present partnerships across all sectors. While there is acknowledged potential for improvement, no immediate need for extensive changes was noted. Several concerns were recognized within each sector:

- **Government:** The findings revealed a notable willingness within the government sector to embrace partnerships and collaborations, seemingly more than in prior times. This openness holds significant potential for new initiatives and projects. However, the actualization of such collaborations is significantly hampered by the evident lack of staffing in the government and its agencies. Addressing these limitations in human resources is vital for optimizing the impact of collaborations and ensuring the efficient realization of mutual objectives within the government sector.
- **CSOs:** The partnerships involving CSOs generally exhibit fewer issues, as CSOs predominantly assume the role of recipient-partners. However, concerns were raised by CSOs regarding what is perceived as the inflexibility of UN entities in resource allocation and re-allocation. This rigidity potentially hampers the adaptability and responsiveness of partnerships to evolving needs and circumstances, possibly affecting the overall effectiveness and relevance of initiatives. A more dynamic and flexible approach to resource management within partnerships involving CSOs could maximize the impact of collaborative efforts.
- **UN entities:** Current collaborations and partnerships between UN entities and with other donor-funded projects tend to focus more on linking existing initiatives rather than creating new ones together from the inception. This tendency towards connection rather than co-creation from the outset may limit the synergy and cohesion achievable within projects. A shift towards more integrative and collaborative approaches from the inception of projects could foster more coherent initiatives, allowing for the realization of shared visions and goals more effectively and efficiently.
- **Private Sector:** The engagement with the private sector brings forth substantial potential to drive impactful changes and advancements in sustainable development. However, the inherent contrast between the predominantly social focus of UN entities and the profit-oriented nature of businesses presents a significant challenge. This divergence in core objectives necessitates thoughtful dialogue and strategic alignment to bridge the differing mentalities effectively.

- **Academia:** While the contributions of academia are invaluable, the partnerships formed with them would likely not essentially differ from those with the CSOs, following the recipient-partner dynamic, which might require more time and resources to bring tangible results in sustainable development.

A prevalent consensus was that engaging with the private sector, and to a lesser degree, academia, presents more challenges or is less explored compared to other sectors in the current partnership landscape.

Given the above considerations and the primary goal of this assessment to expedite the implementation of the SDGs, the private sector was identified as the essential focal point for this report and subsequent efforts to enhance partnerships, due to its potential to serve as a catalyst in the realization of SDGs in Moldova.

To provide more contextual depth and a broader perspective, Annex 3 elucidates international examples of successful partnerships between UN entities and private sector companies. These examples serve as illustrative models showcasing the variety of ways in which synergies between the UN and the private sector have been leveraged to achieve shared objectives and mutual benefits, highlighting the feasibility and the transformative potential of such collaborations.

By expanding the adoption of sustainable business practices and enhancing the readiness of local companies for partnerships and SDG-aligned ventures, Moldova can ensure a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to its development goals, driving economic growth in a balanced and sustainable manner that benefits all sectors of society.

Private sector challenges and opportunities

According to the latest IFC's report on the private sector of Moldova, "Creating Markets in Moldova: Country Private Sector Diagnostic"¹, Moldova stands at a significant economic crossroads, grappling with the dissipating efficacy of its past growth engines, coupled with the residual repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and heightened by the geopolitical tumult stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The economic tapestry of Moldova is woven with threads of high volatility and productivity drops, shadowed

¹ <https://www.ifc.org/en/insights-reports/2023/cpsd-moldova>

by rampant outmigration and the overshadowing presence of unreformed, omnipresent state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

Moldova's private sector is primarily a conglomerate of struggling micro and small enterprises, wading through a sea of economic and geopolitical adversities. The overshadowing footprint of SOEs in the country acts as a bottleneck for private initiatives, fostering a landscape riddled with innovation deficiencies and overshadowed by monopolistic structures, thereby limiting the scope and growth of private entities.

In this turbulent landscape, Moldova wrestles with deeply entrenched governance roadblocks, corruption, and frail institutional frameworks, creating a business environment that is more of a maze than a fertile ground for the blossoming of new and existing companies. This governance deficit, combined with the suffocating influence of SOEs, has created a skewed competitive arena that stifles private initiatives, leading to a dampening of innovation spirits, productivity, and formal job creation.

As Moldova navigates through the ripples caused by the invasion of Ukraine, the country is pressed against the wall with a multitude of economic disruptions, including trade imbalances, plummeting remittances, and high prices of energy and food. The breakdown of crucial trade and transport linkages, the heavy reliance on imported energy, and a surge in financial uncertainty have put Moldova on a tightrope, with its private sector seeking balance and stability.

Because of the above disparities, the private sector in Moldova faces a significant alignment challenge with the socially driven SDGs. Most SMEs, which are contending with sustaining their operations to stay solvent, typically focus on immediate profits and business development. This mindset tends to conflict with the goals of entities focused on 'social' SDGs, as the immediate and tangible benefits of such goals are not always apparent to businesses primarily concerned with their bottom line.

A very limited number of enterprises, predominantly foreign investments, exhibit the requisite maturity to embrace long-term goals and socially responsible conduct, positioning them as suitable partners for UN entities in joint initiatives where brand association is involved. To compound this, the potential partnerships with the Moldovan 'business diaspora'² remain largely

² the 'business diaspora' refers to the Moldovan individuals or business entities situated globally who engage or can potentially engage in activities, investments, or initiatives that can

unexplored. Because of this, there is a tangible risk of UN entities vying for the attention of the same, ready-to-partner businesses, potentially leading to a saturation of interest.

Despite these challenges, there are windows of opportunity. Moldova's evolving relationship with the EU, its candidate country status, and the increasing importance of the EU as an export destination are favourable tailwinds for the private sector.

Legislative advancements in the EU, known as the Directive on corporate sustainability due diligence ("the CSDDD" or "the CS3D", also "The EU Supply Chain Act³") , are building bridges for companies to manage their supply chains' social and environmental impacts. The CS3D has entered trilogue⁴ negotiations with the aim of adopting the directive by 2024. Various EU Member States have either enacted or are in the process of enacting legislation supply chain due diligence (such as the German Act on Due Diligence in Supply Chains). These legislative frameworks demand obligations from companies to oversee and address human rights and environmental violations within their supply chains.

All companies within its scope will have to implement due diligence measures to identify, end, prevent, mitigate and account for negative human rights and environmental impacts of their actions. For instance, due diligence would imply developing and implementing "prevention action plans", obtaining contractual assurances from direct business partners, and subsequently verifying compliance. Companies covered by the directive would need to ensure due diligence not just regarding their own operations, but also regarding the activities of all entities in their value chains with which they have direct and indirect business relationships.

Notably, the CS3D would achieve senior-level responsibility for sustainability. Directors of EU companies would be responsible for setting up and

promote economic growth and development within Moldova. It is important to acknowledge that there have been numerous and meaningful efforts to involve the Moldovan diaspora in a variety of developmental initiatives, including economic ones. However, the 'business diaspora', specifically, is seldom targeted for the SDGs' implementation.

3 https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/doing-business-eu/corporate-sustainability-due-diligence_en

4 Trilogues are informal tripartite meetings on legislative proposals between representatives of the EU Parliament, the Council and the Commission.

overseeing the implementation of due diligence, as well as integrating due diligence into the corporate strategy. The CS3D adds consideration of human rights, climate change and environmental consequences to the existing fiduciary duty of directors to act in the best interests of the company.

Given these advancements, Moldovan companies are poised to be directly influenced by this legislative evolution, finding themselves under pressure to align with more sustainable and responsible business practices. This impact is particularly pronounced for banks, which are already experiencing this pressure, and exporters to the EU—especially exporters to countries that have already enacted due diligence legislation, such as France, Germany, and Portugal.

Moldovan companies must adapt to this shifting landscape by embracing sustainability and responsible business conduct to continue enjoying access to lucrative EU markets. This adaptation involves not just compliance with legal requisites but also the proactive integration of sustainability into their business models and operations, fostering a corporate culture that values responsibility and transparency. These endeavours are not just ethical imperatives but strategic necessities in a global business environment increasingly characterized by conscientious consumption and responsible production.

Considering these developments, companies in Moldova will need to embark on a journey of transformation, reevaluating and restructuring their operations, supply chains, and business relationships to ensure alignment with the high standards of human rights and environmental responsibility set by the EU.



Conclusions and Recommendations

Core problem

UN Moldova is confronted with a significant dilemma in fostering partnerships with the private sector. On one hand, there is a pronounced scarcity of companies that are prepared and eligible for partnerships, and on the other hand, the prevailing economic and geopolitical context intensifies the focus of companies on their bottom line. The essence of the dilemma is finding a way to ignite a spark of interest and motivation in smaller companies to adopt sustainable practices and work towards the achievement of SDGs, without the allure of immediate, sizable profit opportunities.

Addressing this issue is paramount for harmonizing business interests with societal and environmental objectives, and it necessitates innovative approaches, insightful strategies, and, perhaps, a reimagining of what fruitful collaboration entails in such a complex landscape.

Thankfully, Moldova's EU accession aspirations, the increasing importance of the EU as an export destination and the evolving legislative landscape in the EU offer Moldova a fertile ground to integrate corporate responsibility and sustainability within its private sector, aiming for a harmonious blend of economic growth and development in alignment with the SDGs.

Target specific segments

In drawing conclusions from the various facets of this assessment, it is important to acknowledge that the elucidated dilemma or core problem is seemingly non-existent for certain segments of the private sector, notably banks and exporters to the EU, particularly those dealing with those countries where due diligence legislation has already been instituted.

For these entities, aligning with the requisites and expectations of their clients is not just a matter of ethical conduct; it directly influences their financial viability and sustenance. Their commitment to adhering to due diligence standards and adopting sustainable practices is inherently intertwined with their pursuit of economic stability and profitability.

Thus, starting with companies that already feel the need or pressure to align with sustainability principles is a logical initial target, that can later be extended, for SDGs-related endeavours and for enlarging the pool of ready-to-partner entities.

For these companies, that do have a motivation to comply with new sustainability standards, the main stumbling block often is simply not knowing where to start. Many companies lack the information and tools they need to meet these standards, and they struggle to find clear, practical advice on how to integrate sustainable practices into their day-to-day operations.

Shape a community of sustainability minded entrepreneurs

It is therefore imperative for UN entities in Moldova to establish a robust and nurturing network of entrepreneurs and businesses with a shared commitment to sustainability. By doing this, UN entities can help companies move beyond just doing the minimum to comply with requirements, to fully integrating sustainability into every aspect of their business. This goes beyond just tackling immediate concerns—it's about constructing the underlying structure for a future where the achievement of business goals and sustainability are mutually inclusive.

Creating this kind of supportive environment means giving companies clear, straightforward information about sustainability requirements, offering real-world opportunities to put these into practice, and providing tangible incentives to encourage the adoption of sustainable practices. UN entities have, over time, crafted numerous tools and resources available for immediate use or adaptation to meet these objectives. Several examples of such tools and resources are presented in Annex 4 to this report.

The focus should be on building a proactive and informed community of businesses and entrepreneurs, who can actively drive forward sustainability initiatives. By providing the right support, information, and opportunities, UN entities can help to establish new standards for sustainable business in Moldova, supporting the achievement of SDGs and building a

more stable, fair, and sustainable future for everyone.

The main objectives for nurturing such a business community would be to:

Promote sustainable business practices. Encourage private companies to adopt sustainable and responsible business practices that align with the SDGs, leading to positive social, economic, and environmental impacts through:

- providing resources (tools, forms, guides etc.) and support to aid companies in adopting and implementing sustainable business models and practices.
- developing awareness campaigns and training sessions to educate companies on the importance and benefits of sustainable practices.
- establishing recognition and reward mechanisms to acknowledge and celebrate companies exhibiting exemplary commitment to sustainability.

Drive inclusive growth. Ensure that SDG implementation efforts benefit all segments of society, including vulnerable groups, by promoting inclusive and equitable business models:

- Advocate for business models that emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusiveness, ensuring the representation and participation of marginalized groups.





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- Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and address barriers hindering inclusivity in business operations and models.
- Foster partnerships between companies and community organizations to promote inclusive growth and development at the grassroots level.
- Establish mechanisms for the exchange of insights, expertise, and innovative approaches between the private sector and UN agencies.
- Develop support frameworks to assist in the formulation and implementation of SDG-oriented projects and initiatives.

Foster collaboration. Create a conducive environment for private companies and UN agencies in Moldova to collaborate and work towards achieving the SDGs:

- Cultivate platforms and initiatives that foster dialogue, cooperation, and mutual learning between private sector entities and UN agencies.
- Facilitate the identification and formation of strategic partnerships aimed at achieving common goals related to the SDGs.
- Encourage and support joint ventures and collaborative projects that contribute to the advancement of SDGs.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact and progress of implemented projects, using insights gained to optimize future initiatives.

Enhance SDG implementation. Facilitate the exchange of resources, expertise, and innovative ideas between private companies and UN agencies to accelerate the implementation of SDG-related projects and initiatives:

- **Steadily grow the pool of local SDGs aware businesses,** who would be willing and ready to partner on various SDGs related action calls/projects:
- Create opportunities for businesses to engage in SDG-related projects, fostering a culture of responsibility and contribution to SDGs.
- Develop support structures to guide and assist businesses in aligning their operations and strategies with the SDGs.
- Implement educational and awareness-raising initiatives aimed at enlightening businesses about the SDGs and their significance.

Endeavor for mutual benefits

Building a strong relationship between UN entities and Moldova's Private Sector would bring mutual benefits. UN entities can broaden their impact and get more help in achieving SDGs, while businesses can access resources and knowledge to improve their sustainability and responsibility. This collaboration can significantly advance the achievement of SDGs, creating a better and more equitable environment in Moldova.

The **table below** summarizes the key benefits for both UN entities and the Private Sector, showcasing the shared value of working together.

Flow direction	Expected Results	Means
UN -> PS	<p>Awareness & Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced sustainability and responsibility in business practices. Improved, inclusive, and sustainable business models. Increased awareness and alignment with SDGs. Strengthened capacity for sustainable business. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information dissemination through various platform and channels. Training and Workshops. Conferences & Events Advisory Services.
UN <--> PS	<p>Partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative project and initiative development. Co-created Sustainable Solutions. Shared expertise, knowledge and best practice. Mutual Learning and Development Enhanced Market Access 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community companies' profiling. Targeted meetings. Collaboration Agreements. Collaborative Research. Business Matchmaking
UN <- PS	<p>Data+, Innovation & Reach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Data Availability for SDG Tracking. Enhanced UN support for SDGs Increased Advocacy for SDGs Innovative solutions and insights for SDG-related endeavors. Enhanced reach and impact of UN projects. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Business-led (ESG/CSR) Initiatives. Data Sharing Agreements. Direct Funding. Advisory Services.



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Leverage online/mobile platforms

Establishing a thriving, sustainability-focused business community necessitates sustained dialogue and interaction amongst its constituents. In this modern era, online platforms and especially mobile ones emerge as one of the most effective conduits for such engagements, breaking down geographical and time constraints and offering a space where ideas, knowledge, and collaborations can flourish.

Utilizing mobile platforms brings forth several strategic advantages that can significantly enhance the approach to establishing and nurturing partnerships. Such platforms can enable the precise identification of companies whose profiles align well with the partnership objectives, ensuring a synergistic match between involved entities. They allow the instantaneous dispatch of notifications containing news, updates, or crucial information directly to companies, ensuring timely and efficient communication.

Moreover, these platforms can facilitate the execution of surveys and polls, allowing for the seamless collection of valuable information and feedback from companies. This feature provides real-time insights into the companies' perspectives, preferences, and responses, which is important for refining strategies and aligning initiatives more closely with the needs and expectations of potential partners. In essence, the interactive and dynamic nature of mobile platforms can foster a more responsive, informed, and efficient partnership ecosystem.

Online and mobile platforms also provide a structured environment where resources, insights, and best practices can be shared readily, enabling businesses to integrate sustainability into their operations more seamlessly and effectively.

Two predominant options for leveraging online platforms were put forth and evaluated, based on developed concept notes (see Annexes 1 and 2), in discussions with various stakeholders:

1. Establishing a dedicated online platform (see Annex 1);
2. Adapting and using existing platforms (such as the BizRadar app, ODA website, Economic Council website etc.; see Annex 2).

These valuable conversations provided insights into different beliefs, necessities, and objectives, enabling a more knowledgeable and balanced selection of the most appropriate option.

The **table on the next page** presents the factors considered for each option, providing a clear view to support informed decisions on which approach best aligns with the intended goals and the needs of the UN entities and the business community.

Factors	Establishing a Dedicated Platform	Adapting Existing Platforms
Customization & Control	Allows for extensive customization to meet specific needs and objectives. Offers greater control over content, user experience, and functionalities.	Limited scope for customization and adaptation. Restricts control over user experience and functionalities.
Community Engagement	Creates a specialized community with a shared interest in sustainability. Offers a more targeted approach to user engagement and content delivery.	Benefits from established user base and community.
Brand Identity	Promotes distinct brand identity and presence in the sustainability space. Enhances visibility and recognition.	Shares space with other brands and communities, diluting distinct identity.
Resource Intensity	Requires significant resources for development, maintenance, and updates. Requires dedicated personnel for support.	Utilizes existing infrastructure, reducing development time and costs.
User Acquisition	May face challenges in initial user acquisition and community building. Requires extensive promotional efforts.	Leverages established user base, allowing quick testing of concepts and ideas.
Brand Presence	Enhances brand visibility and recognition with a distinct identity.	Diluted brand presence due to shared space with other communities.
Scalability & Flexibility	Offers the potential for scalability and flexibility to introduce new features as needed.	May offer limited scalability and flexibility due to restrictions of existing platform's functionalities.

Opt for a cost-effective approach

When contrasting the two approaches, a dedicated platform emerges as a more powerful tool for creating a focused and engaged community, offering customization, control, and brand visibility, albeit with higher resource investments and potential challenges in user acquisition.

Nonetheless, adapting existing platforms presents a more cost-effective, risk-averse alternative with quicker market entry and proven functionality even though it may be lacking in terms of customization, control, and brand presence.

Therefore, considering the relative benefits of each, the prevailing agreement is to initially make use of existing platforms. This approach not only maximizes the utility of currently available resources but also allows for a swift and efficient initiation of our engagement strategies.

Once we would be able to ascertain that the existing platforms have reached their optimum capacity and can no longer accommodate the expanding needs and scope of our initiatives, transitioning to a dedicated platform, which can offer tailored solutions and enhanced functionalities, would be the logical progression to sustain momentum and amplify impact.

Explore opportunity areas

As we venture into fortifying the collaboration between UN entities and the private sector in Moldova, several areas hold promise and relevance in the context of the upcoming EU due diligence legislation. These areas not only align with the overarching sustainable development goals but also resonate with the immediate needs and growth aspirations of the private sector in Moldova. Here are a few examples of such areas:

- Supply Chain Transparency and Certification Programs.
- Developing Ethical Supply Chains for Moldova - EU Trade;
- Digital Platforms for Due Diligence Compliance;
- Risk assessment tools for businesses to identify and assess the human rights and environmental risks in their business and supply chains;
- Technology and Data Collaboration (ex. To allow small-scale farmers to access real-time market prices, weather forecasts, sustainable farming tips etc.)
- Training Moldovan Entrepreneurs on Supply Chain Compliance;
- Enhancing Labor Rights in Moldova's Export-Oriented Industries;
- Empowering Women-led Sustainable Export Enterprises in Moldova;
- Renewable Energy Transition for Moldovan Exporters;
- Building Climate Resilience in Moldovan Export Businesses;
- Facilitating Impact Investment for Sustainable Moldovan Exporters.

The exploration these example areas will inevitably lead to the discovery of more tailored, impactful avenues for collaboration. It will allow for refining focus, strategizing with precision, creating meaningful impacts and promoting a symbiotic environment where both UN entities and the private sector in Moldova can thrive and contribute to the realization of a sustainable, inclusive future.

Annex 1: Concept Note for establishing the dedicated platform Moldova Sustainable Business Network

Accelerating SDG implementation through partnerships with the private sector in Moldova

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) has set forth the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address the world's most pressing challenges by 2030. Achieving these goals requires collaboration and cooperation among various stakeholders, including private companies and UN agencies. The private sector has a key role to play in achieving the SDGs. Businesses can contribute to the goals by:

- Creating jobs and opportunities for inclusive development
- Investing in sustainable practices
- Providing access to essential services
- Supporting social and environmental initiatives

This concept note outlines the idea of establishing a platform in Moldova that facilitates partnerships between private companies and UN agencies to accelerate the implementation of SDGs in the country. The platform would provide a space for businesses to learn about the SDGs, to find opportunities to partner with UN agencies, and to share their expertise and resources.

Objectives

The main objectives of the proposed platform are as follows:

1. Promote sustainable business practices: Encourage private companies to **adopt and invest** in sustainable and responsible business practices that align with the SDGs, leading to positive social,

economic, and environmental impacts.

2. Steadily grow the pool of local SDGs aware businesses, who would be **willing and ready** to partner with UN agencies on various SDGs related action calls/projects.
3. Drive inclusive growth: Ensure that SDG implementation efforts benefit all segments of society, including vulnerable groups, by promoting inclusive and **equitable business models**.
4. Foster collaboration: Create a **conducive environment** for private companies and UN agencies in Moldova to collaborate and work towards achieving the SDGs.
5. Enhance SDG implementation: **Facilitate the exchange** of resources, expertise, and innovative ideas between private companies and UN agencies to accelerate the implementation of SDG-related projects and initiatives.

Key Features of the Platform

This platform is designed to serve as a comprehensive hub offering a myriad of resources, tools, opportunities, and insights focused on sustainability and partnership development. It's bifurcated into major sections, namely 'Be Sustainable' and 'Find Opportunities', each housing a variety of sub-pages designed to cater to diverse needs and interests of the users.

1. Be Sustainable:

Under this section, users can explore resources and information aimed at fostering sustainability in both social and environmental dimensions.

- **Social Sustainability Toolkit:** Provides resources, guides, and tools to help entities integrate social sustainability principles and practices into their operations and strategies.
- **Environmental Sustainability Toolkit:** Offers resources, strategies, and tools focused on promoting environmental sustainability and responsible business practices.
- **Success Stories:** Features narratives of successful sustainability implementations, aiming to inspire and guide users by showcasing real-world examples.

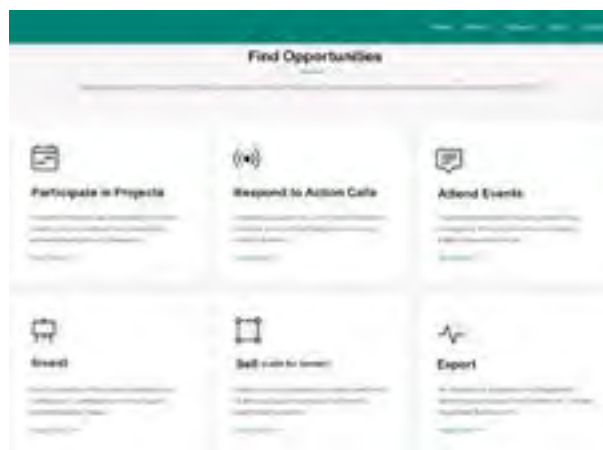
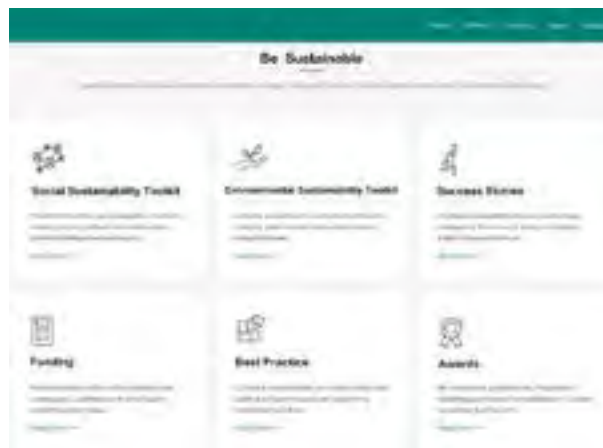
- **Funding:** Lists available funding opportunities, grants, and financial resources to support sustainability initiatives.
- **Best Practice:** Highlights exemplary models, methodologies, and strategies in sustainability, offering practical insights and guidelines.
- **Awards:** Showcases recognitions and awards in the realm of sustainability, acknowledging outstanding contributions and achievements.



2. Find Opportunities:

This section is tailored to present various opportunities spanning from projects to events, catering to a range of interests and pursuits in sustainability.

- **Participate in Projects:** Lists available projects open for participation, providing details and entry points for interested entities.
- **Respond to Action Calls:** Presents calls to action from various organizations, allowing users to respond and contribute to diverse initiatives.
- **Attend Events:** Displays upcoming events related to sustainability, offering users the opportunity to learn, network, and collaborate.
- **Invest:** Provides investment opportunities and information, focusing on sustainable and responsible investments.
- **Sell (calls for tender):** Features calls for tender and procurement opportunities, enabling users to explore and respond to selling prospects.
- **Export:** Lists opportunities and resources to facilitate sustainable export, catering to businesses aiming to expand their reach in an environmentally responsible manner.



Expected Outcomes

1. Increased collaboration: Encourage a significant number of private companies and UN agencies to form partnerships and actively engage in SDG implementation efforts in Moldova.
2. Enhanced SDG implementation: Accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs in Moldova through the collective efforts of private sector entities and UN agencies.

3. Sustainable business practices: Encourage private companies to integrate sustainable practices into their operations, contributing to the long-term socio-economic development of Moldova.
4. Increased innovation: The platform would encourage businesses to innovate and develop new ways to contribute to the SDGs.
5. Knowledge sharing and capacity building: Foster a culture of learning and knowledge exchange, enabling private companies and UN agencies to enhance their understanding and implementation of sustainable development practices.

Implementation Strategy

- 1. Establish a dedicated platform.** Create a web-based platform that serves as a central hub for private companies and UN agencies to connect, collaborate, and access relevant resources and information.
- 2. Outreach and awareness.** Conduct outreach activities to raise awareness about the platform among private companies, UN agencies, and other relevant stakeholders in Moldova. Utilize various communication channels, such as social media, workshops, and conferences, to promote the benefits of partnership for SDG implementation and encourage businesses' self-registration on the platform.
- 3. Partnership facilitation.** Develop clear guidelines and criteria for private companies and UN agencies to participate in the platform. Streamline the partnership process and establish mechanisms for ongoing support and guidance.
- 4. Monitoring and evaluation.** Implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress and impact of SDG-related projects facilitated through the platform. Regularly assess the effectiveness of the partnerships and identify areas for improvement.

To stimulate and motivate private companies to participate in the platform:

1. Highlight the opportunity for private companies to tap into the **expertise and resources** of UN agencies. Emphasize that partnerships with UN agencies can provide access to specialized knowledge, best practices, technical assistance, and funding opportunities that can enhance their overall business operations.
2. Showcase the platform as a **networking hub** that connects private companies with like-minded organizations, facilitating collaboration and potential business partnerships. Highlight the value of networking with other private companies, UN agencies, and relevant stakeholders to exchange ideas, share experiences, and explore joint ventures that can lead to mutual growth and expanded market opportunities.
3. Participating in the platform can contribute to a company's **reputation and brand image**. Emphasize

that aligning with the SDGs and partnering with credible UN agencies demonstrates corporate social responsibility, sustainability commitments, and a dedication to making a positive impact on society. This association can enhance the company's reputation and appeal to socially conscious consumers, investors, and business partners.

4. Showcase the potential for private companies to **access new markets and gain a competitive advantage** by actively engaging in SDG-related projects. Emphasize that the platform can serve as a platform for market intelligence, identifying emerging trends and business opportunities related to sustainable development. Highlight success stories of companies that have leveraged their SDG efforts to expand their market share and differentiate themselves from competitors.
5. Highlight the platform's role in **advocacy and policy dialogue**. Explain that participating companies can contribute to shaping policies and regulations that create a more favorable business environment for sustainable development. Stress the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue with government entities and influence policy frameworks that align with the SDGs, thereby ensuring long-term business sustainability and growth.
6. Emphasize that participation in the platform can strengthen a company's **CSR initiatives**. Engaging in partnerships with UN agencies demonstrates a commitment to addressing social and environmental challenges, which can enhance a company's CSR profile and build trust with stakeholders, including customers, employees, and investors.
7. Highlight the platform's focus on **knowledge sharing, capacity building, and training programs**. Communicate that participating companies can access valuable learning resources, workshops, and seminars that enhance their understanding of sustainable development practices, enabling them to implement more effective strategies, improve efficiency, and reduce costs.

By showcasing these benefits and demonstrating the potential positive impact of private companies' participation in the platform, it can stimulate and motivate their active engagement in SDG implementation efforts.

Annex 2: Concept Note for the collaboration with the Economic Council of the Prime Minister of Moldova

Accelerating SDG implementation through partnerships with the private sector in Moldova

Introduction

The member states of the United Nations (UN) have set forth the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address the world's most pressing challenges by 2030. Moldova, as a committed member of the United Nations, has incorporated the SDGs into its national development strategy. Despite progress in several areas, Moldova still faces significant challenges, including economic vulnerabilities, social inequalities, and environmental degradation. The private sector, comprising a diverse array of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as larger corporations, plays a pivotal role in Moldova's economic and social fabric. Engaging this sector effectively is crucial for Moldova's progress towards the SDGs.

Moldova's European Union accession agenda and the significant trade relationship with the EU are of utmost importance. The EU's upcoming Supply Chain Directive, along with Germany's Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, already in force, represent significant regulatory shifts that will affect the Moldovan exporting companies. These laws are aimed at ensuring that companies operating in the EU are accountable for social and environmental standards in their supply chains. Moldova, as a key trade partner, must proactively respond to these shifts.

This concept note, presented by the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Moldova, proposes a strategic collaboration between UN entities and the Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova (ECPMM). The proposal seeks to leverage the BizRadar business community app and ECPMM's website as platforms to engage and guide the private sector towards practices that are in line with the SDGs, leveraging EU supply chain regulations as a key framework.

Objectives

The main objectives of the proposed collaboration are as follows:

1. Promote sustainable business practices: Encourage private companies to **adopt and invest** in sustainable and responsible business practices that align with the SDGs, leading to positive social, economic, and environmental impacts.
2. Steadily grow the pool of local SDGs aware businesses, who would be **willing and ready** to partner on various SDGs related action calls/projects.
3. Drive inclusive growth: Ensure that SDG implementation efforts benefit all segments of society, including vulnerable groups, by promoting inclusive and **equitable business models**.
4. Foster collaboration: Create a **conducive environment** for private companies and UN agencies in Moldova to collaborate and work towards achieving the SDGs.
5. Enhance SDG implementation: **Facilitate the exchange** of resources, expertise, and innovative ideas between private companies, UN agencies, government, academia, and civil society to accelerate the implementation of SDG-related projects and initiatives.

Key uses of the BizRadar app in the proposed collaboration

The BizRadar app and the website of the ECPMM, under the envisioned collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator Office and the Economic Council, are poised to serve as a digital nexus for sustainable business practices and SDG-aligned initiatives in Moldova. This will pave the way for a more engaged, informed, and collaborative private sector. Here are the pivotal roles these platforms (app and website) are set to play:

1. Information and Knowledge Sharing Hub

The app and the website will feature a dedicated section (tab, sub-page) for sustainability where businesses can access:

- Comprehensive details about sustainable business practices.

- Self-evaluation forms to help businesses gauge their alignment with sustainability benchmarks.
- Best practices, guidelines, and success stories, serving as a repository of inspirations and learnings.
- Timely updates, news, and calls to action related to sustainable endeavours.
- Information about current and upcoming sustainability projects, providing clear avenues for involvement.
- Investment opportunities spotlighting sustainable sectors, bridging businesses with prospective ventures.

2. Polls for Dynamic Feedback and Engagement

Integrated polling features in the BizRadar app will be employed to:

- Solicit feedback, refining the design and direction of various sustainability projects.
- Mobilize resources by gauging interest in backing specific initiatives.
- Monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of ongoing projects, ensuring their alignment with stipulated objectives.
- Gather opinions on potential sustainable initiatives, ensuring businesses have a say in the ideation phase.

3. Refined User Profiling for Precise Targeting & Monitoring:

The BizRadar app, with its established footprint in Moldova's business landscape, is optimally positioned to evolve as a dynamic facilitator for SDG-oriented collaborations. To harness its full potential, the following enhancements are necessary:

- Enhancements to the app's existing user profiling system are necessary to capture a broader array of data points from registered businesses. This should encompass details like the firm's size, operational sector, export potential, prior sustainability efforts, and other relevant metrics.
- With an enriched profiling mechanism, it becomes feasible to undertake precision targeting,

pinpointing companies that perfectly align with specific projects and initiatives.

Through this collaboration, we envision a seamless intertwining of technology, business aspirations, and the overarching objectives of the SDGs.

Expected Outcomes

1. Increased collaboration: Encourage a significant number of private companies and UN agencies to form partnerships and actively engage in SDG implementation efforts in Moldova.
2. Enhanced SDG implementation: Accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs in Moldova through the collective efforts of private sector entities and UN agencies.
3. Sustainable business practices: Encourage private companies to integrate sustainable practices into their operations, contributing to the long-term socio-economic development of Moldova.
4. Increased innovation: The platform would encourage businesses to innovate and develop new ways to contribute to the SDGs.
5. Knowledge sharing and capacity building: Foster a culture of learning and knowledge exchange, enabling private companies and UN agencies to enhance their understanding and implementation of sustainable development practices.

Implementation Strategy

1. Stakeholder Alignment Meeting:

- Convene representatives from UN entities, the Economic Council, and BizRadar/website administration.
- Clarify objectives, timelines, and responsibilities.

2. Technical Assessment & Upgrades:

- Evaluate the current BizRadar app and ECPMM website infrastructure.
- Prioritize enhancements: user profiling, database updates, and analytics integration.
- Review security and data protection measures.

3. Content Creation & Integration:

- Collaborate with UN entities to source content.
- Design user-friendly forms and guidelines.
- Integrate content for easy navigation within the app and website.

4. User Outreach & Engagement:

- Announce the updated features to Moldova's business community.
- Organize webinars and workshops showcasing the new functionalities.
- Solicit user feedback for continuous improvement.

5. Monitoring, Feedback & Iteration:

- Track user engagement metrics and gather feedback.
- Update features based on user insights.
- Ensure alignment with SDG objectives through feedback loops.

6. Periodic Reviews & Scalability:

- Host regular review meetings to assess the collaboration's impact.
- Consider scalability options and future expansion.

Annex 3: International examples of partnerships between UN entities and private companies

1. Technology and Data Collaboration:

Partner with tech companies to develop and deploy digital solutions that track and measure SDG progress. These solutions could include data analytics tools, mobile applications for data collection, or blockchain technology for transparent and secure records.

Examples:

- The UN Global Pulse initiative collaborates with various tech companies like Twitter and mobile phone operators. This initiative analyzes public data to detect crises in real-time and provide insights for policy action on issues ranging from epidemics to food security.
- UNICEF and Microsoft: In 2020, UNICEF and Microsoft expanded their partnership to support the COVID-19 response, which included ensuring children's continued learning through the Learning Passport, a digital remote learning platform.

2. Renewable Energy Initiatives:

Collaborate with energy companies to develop and scale renewable energy projects that both contribute to clean energy goals and stimulate local economies.

Examples:

- The UN Development Programme (UNDP) partnered with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and a private company in Belarus to retrofit multi-story buildings for energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption.
- UNDP and Baidu: In 2015, UNDP in China and the internet company Baidu launched a joint initiative named "Baidu Recycle," which leverages Baidu's technology to make electronic waste recycling facilities easy to find for consumers.

3. Sustainable Supply Chains:

Partner with manufacturing and retail companies to design, implement, and monitor ethical and sustainable supply chains, helping businesses to transition to more responsible sourcing practices.

Examples:

- UNDP and Unilever: UNDP partnered with Unilever under the "Enhancing Livelihoods Investment Initiative" to explore and scale up market-based solutions that tackle development challenges, thereby contributing to the creation of more inclusive markets and sustainable business models.
- UNICEF's partnership with H&M Foundation works on building a sustainable global supply chain for recycled textiles, aiming to reduce the environmental footprint of fashion.

4. Financial Tools for Sustainability:

Work with banks or financial institutions to create new financial products (like green bonds, sustainable loans, or impact investment funds) that encourage investments in sustainable businesses and projects.

Examples:

- UNEP FI and Global Banks: The UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) is a partnership between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the global financial sector to mobilize private sector finance for sustainable development. Banks like BNP Paribas, ING, and Standard Chartered have collaborated under UNEP FI for the implementation of various projects.
- UNEP partnered with BNP Paribas and other banks to launch the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles, which promotes the sustainable use of ocean resources.

5. Education and Skills Training:

Collaborate with educational institutions and corporate training providers to develop sustainability-focused curricula and training programs for entrepreneurs and business professionals.

Examples:

- The UN's International Telecommunication Union (ITU) partnered with Cisco to enhance digital skills and provide training to people around the world,

promoting lifelong learning.

- UNESCO and SAP: SAP partnered with UNESCO to launch the “Skills for Work” initiative, aimed at developing curricula and providing training in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills for secondary students in several countries.

6. Circular Economy Models:

Partner with companies to develop and promote business models that reduce waste through reuse, recycling, and regeneration.

Examples:

- UNIDO and HP: UNIDO partnered with Hewlett-Packard (HP) to develop and implement projects that create jobs through the environmentally sound management of electronic waste.
- UNEP partnered with Renault and other companies in the “Africa Eco Race” to raise awareness about circular economy principles, emphasizing vehicle recycling.

7. Health and Well-being Programs:

Collaborate with healthcare companies to develop and implement community health and well-being programs, particularly in underserved regions.

Examples:

- WHO and Gavi with Vaccine Companies: WHO and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, have partnered with various vaccine producers, like AstraZeneca and Pfizer, under the COVAX initiative to distribute COVID-19 vaccines globally.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Foundation have teamed up with companies like Facebook to combat misinformation about COVID-19 and promote credible sources of information.

8. Climate Resilience Infrastructure:

Engage with construction and engineering companies to design and build infrastructure (like resilient housing, water systems, and transportation networks) that can withstand the impacts of climate change.

Examples:

- UNDP and Insurance Companies: UNDP has been working with the insurance sector to develop products that can help to increase resilience against climate risks for vulnerable communities.
- The UNDP and the Global Environment Facility collaborated with private companies in Uzbekistan to build energy-efficient homes that can withstand the extreme temperatures associated with climate change.

9. Agri-business Partnerships for Sustainable Agriculture:

Work with agriculture companies to adopt and promote sustainable farming practices, potentially through the use of innovative agricultural technologies.

Examples:

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) teamed up with Danone, a global food company, to improve the sustainability of dairy supply chains in developing countries.
- FAO and Rabobank: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Rabobank signed a partnership agreement to help targeted rural communities benefit from more inclusive, sustainable food systems.

10. Inclusive Employment Initiatives:

Collaborate with corporations to develop hiring practices and workplace policies that promote diversity and inclusion, aligning with the goal of reducing inequalities.

Examples:

- The UN’s International Labour Organization (ILO) has partnered with multinational companies like The Coca-Cola Company to create job opportunities and vocational training for youth.
- ILO and The Adecco Group: The International Labour Organization (ILO) has a partnership with The Adecco Group to promote decent work and employment opportunities for young people.

11. Art and Culture for SDG Awareness:

Partner with creative and cultural industries to produce art, media, and events that raise awareness of the SDGs

and inspire action towards sustainability.

Examples:

- UNESCO and Google Arts & Culture: UNESCO partnered with Google Arts & Culture to launch an online platform for the world's cultural heritage sites, raising awareness of the importance of preserving them.
- The UN's UNESCO partnered with Google Arts & Culture to create an online platform for world heritage sites, educating the public on cultural and natural significance.

12. Innovative Financing for Gender Equality:

Collaborate with financial institutions to develop investment products and services that specifically support women entrepreneurs and promote gender equality in the business world.

Examples:

- UN Women and BHP Billiton: UN Women partnered with BHP Billiton, the world's largest mining company, for a program focused on promoting gender equality through public advocacy and women's leadership programs.
- The UN's HeForShe initiative, aimed at gender equality, has attracted partnerships from global corporations such as Barclays, which committed to launching a HeForShe gender analytics tool.

These partnerships demonstrate how the UN leverages the strength, reach, and innovation of the private sector to make considerable strides in advancing the SDGs. These topics aim to foster collaborations that are mutually beneficial: they allow private companies to integrate sustainable practices into their operations and strategies while contributing to the broader societal goals encapsulated by the SDGs.

**MOLDOVA
PARTNERSHIP
LANDSCAPE
ASSESSMENT**

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