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Moldova Country Gender Action Plan

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I. Background

The expectation in the IDA18 and World Bank Group's Corporate Scorecard's targets is that all country strategies should promote equitable gender outcomes, and include targeted actions to this end. The approach requires that objectives be set at the country level and respond to the local context. According to the Bank's operational policy, country strategies should draw on and discuss the findings of gender diagnostics, including Systematic Country Diagnostics, which starting in FY16 are required to incorporate gender in their analytical frameworks. In practice, recent gender evaluations show that while Country Program Frameworks often discuss gender-related issues in the country context, they do not present a logical chain that links background analysis with actions, pillars, and indicators.

The World Bank Group Gender Strategy: FY17-FY23, approved by the Board in December 2015, seeks to deepen country engagement on gender, shifting the focus to measurable results, and addressing four strategic objectives: (i) improving human endowments, as reflected in health and education outcomes; (ii) removing constraints for more and better jobs, including a focus on enabling factors, such as policy frameworks for care services, infrastructure and transportation, skills and occupational segregation; (iii) removing barriers to human ownership and control of assets with a focus on land, housing, financial services, and agricultural supply chains; and (iv) enhancing women's agency and voice, including support for gender diversity in leadership positions, and efforts to prevent and reduce gender-based violence.

The Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Region is preparing a Regional Gender Action Plan in FY17. The RGAP envisions deepening of the Bank's engagement and impact on gender through upstream and Country-level Gender Action Plans (CGAP). A CGAP builds on the Bank's comparative advantage as it seeks to leverage the Bank's lending, analytical work, policy dialogue, and Bank resources (staff and financial) to address agreed specific priority gender outcome(s). The CGAP is therefore an instrument to help the country team articulate what the Bank is doing to advance gender equality outcomes, identify concrete actions, and describe the contribution of the country portfolio to the Bank's strategic objective and corporate goals on gender. The CGAP will preferably be consistent with the CPF in terms of timeline. The CGAP priority actions will also be chosen in the framework of CPF negotiations with the Government.

II. Objectives and Structure

This document presents a Country Gender Action Plan for Moldova.¹ The objective of the CGAP is to synthesize priority gender issues in the Moldova context, and identify entry points through which the WBG country program can be both more gender-responsive, and contribute in advancing gender equality goals. It proposes to do this by identifying priority action areas that can be pursued through knowledge work, projects, and programs in the upcoming Country Partnership Framework FY18-22 between the WBG and the Moldovan Government.

Specifically, the CGAP seeks to:

¹ One of two pilot CGAPs in ECA region along with Armenia.

- (i) Propose interventions and outcome indicators within the WBG’s policy, operational, and/or analytic program that can advance key gender equality outcomes in the country;
- (ii) Propose mechanisms and indicators for effective mainstreaming of gender in the portfolio, i.e., to ensure that gender analysis, actions, and monitoring are consistently incorporated in the country program and progress on agreed gender targets is systematically recorded.

The CGAP is organized as follows:

- *Key gender issues in Moldova*: a succinct diagnostic of the gender challenges in the country and their relevance to pursuing the WBG’s twin goals².
- *Gender in the World Bank portfolio*: an overview of progress on gender mainstreaming in the WBG portfolio in Moldova as well as ongoing and intended future actions by project teams;
- *Proposed actions for the Moldova CGAP*: an action matrix identifying selected gender issues, causes, and potential interventions where gender analysis or activities can have the greatest impact.

III. Key Gender Issues in Moldova

By global and regional standards, gender equality is high in Moldova. The most recent Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum (2015) ranks Moldova 26th out of 145 countries, behind only Latvia and Estonia among East European and former Soviet states.³ The country has close to universal primary and secondary education completion rates that are equal for boys and girls, and a high university completion rate with 58% of university graduates being female. Gender discrepancies in labor force participation are relatively low and women are slightly more likely than men to hold secure, albeit less well-paid, public sector jobs.

Table 1: Global Gender Equality Gap Index, ECA states, 2016

Rank	Country
18	Latvia
22	Estonia
26	Lithuania
26	Moldova
30	Belarus
38	Poland
41	Bulgaria
48	Serbia
51	Kazakhstan
62	Albania
68	Croatia
73	Macedonia
75	Russian Federation
76	Romania
77	Czech Republic

² A more detailed analysis of gender issues in Moldova is presented in Annex. World Bank. (2014a) is the latest comprehensive Country Gender Assessment conducted by the World Bank in Moldova.

³ World Economic Forum, 2016. Moldova ranks 26th on gender equality overall, 15th on Economic Participation and Opportunity; 52nd on Educational Attainment; 40th on Health and Survival; and 58th on Political Empowerment. Moldova’s ranking has declined from the previous year – from 18 to 26th.

http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR16/WEF_Global_Gender_Gap_Report_2016.pdf

81	Kyrgyz Republic
83	Bosnia
86	Azerbaijan
89	Montenegro
90	Georgia
93	Tajikistan
94	Slovak Republic
101	Hungary
102	Armenia
130	Turkey

Source: World Economic Forum (2016)

In terms of legislation, Moldova has also made substantial progress. Gender equality provisions exist in the Constitution and in the Law on Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (2006). As of 2016, Law 71 introduced a 40% quota for women in political party lists, and lists for cabinet nominees. Another recent Law (# 196, approved in July 2016) has strengthened protection mechanisms for victims of gender-based violence.⁴ In December 2016 Moldova signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence as a condition under Moldova’s EU Association Agreement. A National Action Plan on this topic is under preparation. Moldova has an established government-led mechanism (the Gender Equality Coordination Council) to mainstream gender equality in policy. This body has recently completed a new National Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2020 (the specific elements of this policy are discussed in section IV below).

However, according to both the Global Gender Equality Index and the National Gender Equality Index developed by the Moldova Partnership for Development Center, the level of gender equality on key indicators is declining. The Moldova National GEI⁵ was developed in order to measure progress of the Government’s new National Gender Equality Strategy. It is based on 31 indicators in 6 areas: (i) labor market; (ii) politics; (iii) education; (iv) access to resources; (v) perceptions and stereotypes, and (vi) health. During 2009-14, 4 out of 6 areas registered declines, with deterioration being most evident in the labor market where the index score decreased from 70 to 63.⁶ The same center conducted an assessment of 25 policies adopted by Parliament between 2012 and 2014 concluding that none have specifically considered gender issues.

Evidence indicates that gender discrepancies persist within important areas of social and economic life.⁷ The Moldova Country Gender Assessment of 2014 (Moldova: Gender Disparities in Endowments and Access to Economic Opportunities) confirms that while gaps in gender outcomes are low, men and women do face distinct challenges. Women find it more difficult to integrate in higher-earning positions

⁴ Law 196 introduces the so-called “urgent restriction order” which gives police officers prerogative to order offender’s exclusion from the household on the spot; it also provides for free legal assistance to victims, and a website to raise awareness about services offered.

⁵ The National Gender Equality Index was developed by a Moldovan think tank, Partnership for Development Center, as a way to measure progress of the National Gender Equality Strategy. More details available at:

<http://www.progen.md/?pag=n&opa=view&id=333&tip=publicatii&start=&>

⁶ Recommendations for the National Strategy on Labor Force Participation 2017-2021, study conducted by Partnership for Development Center with support of East-European Foundation

⁷ Evidence based on: World Bank Country Gender Assessment (2014), World Bank Systematic Country Diagnostic (2015), Moldova National Gender Equality Strategy (2017), Moldova Gender Equality Portal (<http://egalitadedegen.md/en/>), reports by local and international organizations (UN WOMEN, Sida, Women’s Law Center, Partnership for Development Center, Soros Foundation, see Bibliography attached)

and are constrained by the declining availability of affordable childcare, while men face considerably lower health outcomes and high mortality.

The priority gender challenges in Moldova can be summarized as follows:

- 1) **Inequalities in the labor market**
 - a. **Occupational segregation and earnings gap:** Despite evident equality in education and labor force participation data, there are still significantly fewer women in higher-earning sectors and positions. The causes for professional segregation have not been explored in detail but are believed to be largely rooted in social norms perpetuated through the education system, labor market, and media. Expanding women's access to higher-skilled and higher-earning jobs is particularly important in the current demographic context of declining and aging population and one that can help reduce dependence on social transfers (e.g., for women-headed households and elderly households) in the future.
 - b. **Discrepancies in labor force participation:** Women delay for longer their entry into the labor force and take longer breaks from the labor force. There is a substantial difference in labor force participation between women with and without children (20% in 2014, one of the highest rates in Europe). Moreover, a declining share of women return to work after taking maternity leave. Despite provisions in the Labor Code that prohibit gender bias, it exists in the labor market, partly fostered by restrictive maternity leave policies, lack of flexible work arrangements, and scarce childcare options for children under 3.
 - c. **Entrepreneurship and livelihoods:** Entrepreneurship can be an important gateway to livelihoods for both men and women, especially in rural areas where employment opportunities are scarcer. Entrepreneurship can give a viable alternative to women who may otherwise opt for migration at a high family and social cost. Women in Moldova are less likely to start a business, and when they do, they are less likely to expand and employ others. Detailed research and policies on women in business is incipient; available data suggests that barriers include social norms, access to productive assets, and the need for skills such as leadership, management, financial literacy, etc.
- 2) **Agency, voice, and gender-based violence:** Women are under-represented in leadership positions in local and national government, in the legislature, among judges, senior civil servants, senior foreign servants, and in media. Apart from excluding women from decision-making, this serves to perpetuate gender norms and biases.⁸ In addition, Moldova has one of the highest rates in human trafficking (primarily as a source country) and in domestic violence in the region, which indicates both vulnerabilities for women on the labor market, and gaps in public awareness on these issues among both men and women.
- 3) **Healthy lifestyles and behaviors:** Mortality and morbidity is significantly higher among men, driven by unhealthy lifestyles, road and work-related injuries, and the fact that men access health services at much lower rates than women.

Research and advocacy work by government, development institutions and CSOs active on this agenda in Moldova indicate that the persistence of these gender gaps is due to prevalent social norms reinforced by education, media, and labor market as well as with a lack of effective implementation

⁸ As an example, in last year's presidential election the marital and motherhood status of one of the leading candidates was an important part of the political and media campaign by her opposition. <http://www.rferl.org/a/moldova-sandu-smears-orthodox-church-pro-eu-candidate-russia/28108474.html>

and enforcement of existing legislation. In some cases, progress in legislation has to be followed up with secondary regulations, guidelines, awareness, and capacity-building efforts. This would ensure that the relevant agencies are able to apply and enforce the existing high-quality laws, and promote change in institutional and decision-making culture that would ultimately make an impact on gender equality. For example, amendments to the Labor Code need to be followed up with detailed guidance on gender-balanced job announcements, hiring and promotion practices, equal pay for equal work, etc. On other aspects—such as maternity, childcare, and flexible work arrangements—further policy discussion and regulatory changes may be needed to prevent disruptions of women’s inclusion in the labor market. Legal progress on voice and representation for women through quotas also needs to be accompanied by behavioral and cultural change—including through role of media—to encourage meaningful inclusion of women in decision-making roles at the local and national level. Judicial protection for victims of violence should also be accompanied by livelihood and economic empowerment programs and services that can give meaningful options to potential victims of trafficking or violence to change their situation.

A more detailed discussion on the gender issues listed above is included in the Annex. These issues are further summarized in section ‘6.3. Country gender equality outcomes’ in a proposed CGAP Action Matrix that links the gender issues to the current and planned WBG portfolio in Moldova, and suggested targets for enhancing WBG impact on key gender equality outcomes in the country.

IV. Government Priorities on Gender Equality

National priorities on gender focus on equality in the labor market, increasing women’s representation in politics, improving the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs and combating gender-based violence. Moldova has recently elaborated its new Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2020 [to confirm its official approval] that aims to mainstream gender in a wide range of policy areas including health, education, social services, labor market, women, peace and security, climate change and disaster management, political participation, etc. The Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs has the mandate to coordinate implementation of this program across Government. However, government agencies in each sector are responsible for allocating financial resources, or directing donor funding, towards areas under their mandate that are not covered by the national budget.⁹

Table 2 below summarizes the general and specific objectives of the National Gender Equality Strategy. The priorities identified by the National Strategy are closely aligned with the World Bank Groups activities and outcomes, as proposed in the CGAP Matrix above.

Table 2: Objectives of the Draft National Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2020

General Objectives (GO)	Specific objectives (SO)
GO 1: Adopting a comprehensive approach to promoting gender equality	<p><i>Women’s participation in decision making</i> SO 1.1: Consolidating institutional and legal mechanisms which aim at women’s advancement in decision making processes</p> <p><i>Labor market and gender wage gaps</i> SO 1.2: Legislative amendments to adopt European standards on equal pay for equal work</p>

⁹ <http://www.mmprf.gov.md/ro/content/strategia-pentru-asigurarea-egalitatii-de-gen-republica-moldova-pentru-anii-2016-2020>

	<p><i>Social Protection and Family Policies</i></p> <p>SO 1.3: Equitable representation of the needs of women and men in social policies</p> <p>SO 1.4: Improving social policies on families with children to ensure equitable involvement of both parents in child care</p> <p>SO1.5: Improving social assistance policies and services through integrating gender dimensions</p> <p><i>Health Care</i></p> <p>SO 1.6: Incorporating gender dimensions in medical staff training</p> <p>SO 1.7: Promoting healthy behaviors during life cycles for men and women aiming at increased accessibility to health care services</p> <p><i>Education</i></p> <p>SO 1.8: Integrating gender dimensions in teacher’s training aiming to overcome gender stereotypes and increase awareness on gender related issues</p> <p>SO 1.9: Incorporating gender aspects in career consulting services targeting increased access to less conventional professions</p> <p><i>Climate change</i></p> <p>SO 1.10: Integrating gender perspectives in sector strategies taking into account climate change impacts</p>
GO 2: Enhancing national institutional mechanism on gender equality	<p>SO 2.1: Building capacity for human resources within the institutional mechanism on gender equality at the level of central public administration</p> <p>SO 2.2: Increasing efficiency of the Government Committee on Gender Equality</p> <p>SO 2.3: Capacity building for human resources within the institutional mechanism on gender equality at the level of local public administration</p>
GO 3: Combating gender stereotypes and advancing non-violent communication	<p>SO 3.1: Promoting gender-balanced content in media and publicity industries</p> <p>SO 3.2: Public awareness raising on gender stereotypes and non-violent communication</p>
GO 4: Ensuring gender equality in security and defense fields	<p>SO 4.1 Ensuring equal participation of women and men</p> <p>SO 4.2 Integrating gender dimensions in security and defense policies</p> <p>SO 4.3 Ensuring implementation of CEDAW’s general recommendation #30 and UN Security Council Resolutions on women, peace, and security</p>
GO 5: Integrating gender sensitive budgeting in budgetary planning processes	<p>SO 5.1: Promoting gender dimensions in budgetary processes</p> <p>SO 5.2: Enhancing awareness raising on the needs and importance of gender sensitive budgeting for decision makers at the national and local levels</p>

As mentioned above, between 2006 and 2016, the Government adopted a number of laws concerning gender equality. Most recently, Law 71 which introduced political representation quotas, also amended 15 other national laws to include more gender-sensitive provisions; for example, prohibiting sexist language and images in media and advertizing, allowing a 14-day paid paternity leave, establishing a process for overseeing implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy, etc.¹⁰ However, the implementation and enforcement of legislation is still weak.

¹⁰ UN WOMEN, <http://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/06/moldova-takes-historic-step-to-promote-gender-equality-in-politics>

In addition to this process, in June 2015, a Gender Equality Platform was established by a group of government and CSO champions. This platform aims to serve as an active and unified voice to advance gender equality and, in particular, contribute to improving and enforcing gender equality legislation. This initiative has resulted in the creation of a website that collects resources on gender equality, and advocacy activities focusing on: (i) promoting equitable representation of women in politics; (ii) preventing and combating gender-based violence; (iii) promoting a better environment for gender equality in the labor market; (iv) facilitating women entrepreneurship; and (v) ensuring a functional institutional mechanism for gender equality.¹¹

For the National Gender Equality Strategy to be effective, it is also necessary to strengthen the institutional mechanisms for gender equality policy and oversight. Commitments on gender are fairly decentralized. The Government Committee on Gender Equality has not been consolidated as a key structure to lead on gender equality issues in the country; it has relatively low capacity, funding, and power to hold different Government actors accountable for commitments on gender equality. Enforcement of gender equality legislation remains a key challenge.¹² Such enforcement would entail producing relevant guidance, training and capacity building for each respective agency to uphold gender diversity standards (for example, in job advertising, hiring, promotion procedures for public and private employers, etc.).

Several international development partners support aspects of the national gender equality agenda in Moldova. UN Women leads programs directed at issues of gender based violence, leadership and political participation, economic empowerment, national planning and budgeting. The Embassy of Sweden and UNDP are implementing three programs to support women's participation in politics and decision-making. EBRD and the Embassy of Sweden provide joint support to the Moldova Women in Business program. The EU and CoE support the alignment of legislation, policies, and capacity-building efforts with EU standards on areas on human rights and equality, including gender equality. OSCE implements an anti-trafficking and gender program.

V. Gender in the WBG Program

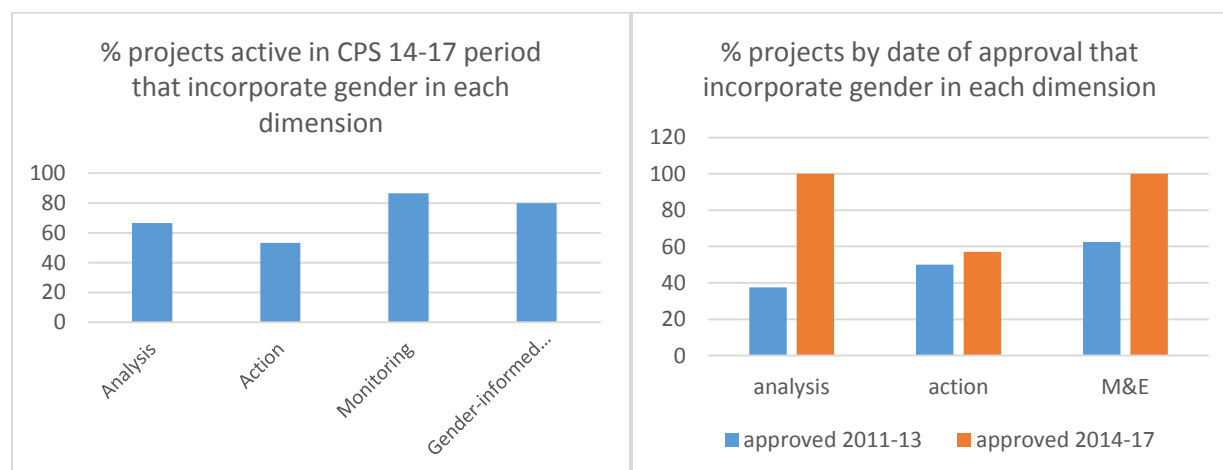
WBG analytics and operations have an important role to play in addressing occupational segregation and labor force participation issues through education and labor interventions, opening up opportunities for women as entrepreneurs, promoting women's participation and empowerment, as well as change towards healthier lifestyles for men. WBG lending and knowledge products can contribute to establishing the evidence base for linkages between gender equality and social and economic empowerment, pilot specific skills, training, or capacity-building programs, bring good practice knowledge in public awareness and communications on gender issues, as well as help build government's capacity for establishing better statistics and continuous monitoring of gender outcomes.

¹¹ <http://egalitedegen.md/noi/>

¹² Gender Equality Strategy , 2016-2020

A review of 15 projects active under the 2014-17 CPS shows a growing trend of gender analysis and gender monitoring.¹³ Two thirds of projects are informed by some form of gender analysis, and the wide majority include gender indicators in their results framework (RF). Overall, 80% of projects can be considered gender-informed, i.e., meeting at least two out of three criteria: gender analysis, actions, and/or monitoring. A positive trend is also notable when comparing projects approved between FY11 and FY13 with ones approved under the current CPS period (2014-17): 100% of projects approved in or after FY14 are informed by gender analysis and have gender-related indicators. At the design stage, gender is integrated either through project-specific analysis (part of a social assessment, PSIA, or baseline survey),¹⁴ or through review of secondary data (household survey, sector-specific data, evaluations or analysis done under previous projects).¹⁵ Moldova’s First and Second DPOs, approved in 2014 and 2016 respectively, are grounded in gender-informed PSIA work.¹⁶ Gender monitoring, in the majority of projects, consists of collecting gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries.

Fig 1 & 2: Share of active projects that are gender informed in each dimension (analysis, actions, M&E); Share of projects by date of approval that incorporate gender in each dimension



Although the portfolio is thoroughly ‘gender-informed’, it still faces challenges in terms of having a transformational impact on key gender equality issues in the country. It is positive that all projects conduct gender-disaggregated monitoring of beneficiaries. However, only one project incorporates and reports on a gender-specific target (50% female beneficiaries in the E-Transformation project), and no projects target gender equality outcomes in their results framework. The rate of gender-specific actions in project design (53%) is less than that of analysis or M&E. Moreover, a large share of projects that report gender actions at the design stage do not provide evidence of these during implementation, which may indicate that the share of gender activities actually implemented is even lower. It can be expected that not all projects by design will provide a natural link to advancing gender equality outcomes. However, in cases where the project has the potential to affect gender equality goals, further

¹³ Based on a portfolio review of 15 active Investment Project Financing (IPFs) implemented in Moldova in the course of the CPS FY14-17. The review does not include TF projects. The assessment is based on preparation and appraisal documents (e.g., PADs, CNs, and PIDs) and available implementation and supervision documents (e.g., ISRs, AMs, and POMs) recorded in the Operations Portal. Ratings have been cross-checked with data from the Gender CCSA.

¹⁴ Local Roads Improvement Project, Tax Administration Project, and District Heating Efficiency Improvement Project.

¹⁵ Moldova Health Transformation Project, Moldova Education Reform AF, and Agriculture Competitiveness Project.

¹⁶ DPOs are not included in the charts presented here.

technical support to task teams would be desirable to help design activities, adopt feasible result indicators, and report more consistently on implementation and outcomes.

WBG’s knowledge work in Moldova is also making a strong contribution to the evidence base on specific gender gaps. The 2015 study *From Aspirations to Occupations* and the Moldova SCD (2016) highlighted the gap in occupational preferences across men and women with significantly fewer women entering into higher-earning STEM professions, and the fact that women tend to delay longer their entry into the labor force. A TA to Moldova’s Small and Medium Business Development Agency (ODIMM) is undertaking the first national survey on barriers for women entrepreneurs to inform the Agency’s Women in Business program. The findings from these knowledge products will be an important basis for informing gender-specific actions in education, livelihoods, and competitiveness/entrepreneurship sectors. A WB TA informed the Moldova Pension Reform Law, approved in December 2016. This Law equalized the retirement age for men and women (at 63); it is expected to improve adequacy of women’s pensions and benefits and reduce the income gap for retired men and women.

The preparation of the IFC’s ECA Gender Project¹⁷ included analytical work in Moldova on gender-sensitive selection of a value chain. Three priority sectors (light industry, horticulture and honey) were compared for the selection of a value chain which has a potential to contribute to increased women empowerment and gender equality. Therefore, the honey value chain was selected for further in-depth gender specific analysis as a chain with significant number of women employed and new job opportunities, commitment of chain actors, their readiness for change, existence of some level of organization of chain actors, low entry barriers for women entrepreneurs (time and mobility, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints), offering new opportunities for women. The Honey Value Chain Analysis focused on a global gender-sensitive picture of the value chain, the actors involved, their linkages and the percentages of men and women in each chain segment. The Analysis identified constraints and opportunities for women to participate in the value chain, the differences in power (positions) in the value chain governance, and discovered opportunities for women to upgrade their position. Limited access to both local and foreign markets, lack of women associations, informal employment and skills gaps were among the major constraints.

Table 3: Gender activities and indicators in the current WBG portfolio

Project	Gender Elements in Active WBG Program	Type of intervention OPN=operational M&E=indicators AA=analytic
Education Reform Project	Disbursement linked indicator related to a functioning Education Management information System (EMIS) (which can track basic indicators such as enrollment, completion, drop-rate rates by gender)	M&E
E-Transformation project (P121231)	% of female beneficiaries (citizens who access public services via the Government e-portal or mobile phone), 50% target	M&E
Agriculture	Communication and outreach targeted at women clients	OPN

¹⁷ This project envisaged including Moldova, and helping to develop beekeeping / honey production value chain and supporting female producers in this value chain; currently the project is being prepared for Armenia.

Competitiveness (P118518; P127125)	% of women participating in communication activities % of female beneficiaries	M&E
Health Transformation (P144892)	Support enabling environment for men to access health care services Tailored communication campaign to female health workers Smoking prevalence (by gender) % of adults with hypertension receiving treatment (by gender) % of adults whose blood pressure is under control (by gender)	OPN M&E
Strengthening Effectiveness of SSN (P120913)	# of female beneficiaries # of female SSN beneficiaries	M&E
Local Roads Improvement (P150357)	# of girls trained in road safety awareness % of female beneficiaries	M&E
Second Competitiveness Enhancement (P144103)	National survey to assess barriers to women entrepreneurs Support to ODIMM to improve women entrepreneurship program % of Matching Grants beneficiaries that are woman-owned or have a female CEO	AA OPN M&E
District Heating Efficiency Improvement (P132443)	Social Impact Mitigation plan for potential retrenchment to include gender-specific activities (support retraining) % of female beneficiaries who gained access to more energy efficient cooking and/or heating generating facilities % of female staff received re-training (target of 50%)	OPN M&E
Tax Administration Modernization (P127734)	Conduct gender-disaggregated satisfaction survey to inform improvements in tax services 100% of appropriate STI staff trained (by gender) # of female STI staff trained	OPN M&E

VI. Proposed Actions for the Moldova CGAP

This CGAP is based on a desk review of key gender issues in Moldova and of the current and upcoming WBG country program in Moldova. This CGAP will feed into Moldova's Country Partnership Framework 2018-2022. Specifically, it seeks to: (i) identify entry points in WBG's policy, operational, and/or analytic work that are aligned with WBG's twin goals and can advance key gender equality outcomes in the country; and (ii) propose mechanisms and indicators to ensure that gender analysis, actions, and monitoring are consistently incorporated, and progress on agreed gender targets is systematically recorded.

To achieve this objective, the CGAP is proposing a two track approach:

- Mainstreaming (or cross-cutting activities): ensure continuous attention to gender in the portfolio, identify opportunities for deepening gender analysis, actions, and/or targets in projects;
- Country gender equality outcomes: selectively pursue specific targets in the CPF period that are aligned with both the Bank portfolio as well as key gender issues in the country.

The proposed actions and metrics in these two areas are described in more detail below.

6.1. Gender mainstreaming (cross-cutting activities)

Activities to support gender mainstreaming would include providing technical support to task teams, bringing up-to-date knowledge on gender to the country team, conducting periodic supervision of gender in the portfolio, and communicating with external partners, such as Government counterparts and development partners, active on the gender equality agenda.

Mainstreaming activities will be advanced through a Country Gender Focal Point as well as dedicated communication efforts to disseminate successful practices in gender mainstreaming.¹⁸ These activities will build on tasks performed by the country Gender Focal Point under the existing CPF and will aim to strengthen the technical assistance to teams, monitoring and recording of progress and achievements in project documents.

The CMU will designate a country gender focal point to:

- Monitor the execution of the Country Gender Action Plan, and recommend action to Task Teams and management to avoid slippages;
- Work with GPSURR on the updating of the CGAP at the time of the Performance and Learning Review;
- Bring and share information internally and externally, particularly information from the Gender CCSA, and information on funding sources;
- Liaise with project task teams, respective GP gender focal points, and ECADE (OPCS Gender review) at project preparation to ensure that task teams are considering all options to incorporate gender analysis, actions, and monitoring in new operations; Refer teams to relevant GP focal points on gender for technical advice on integrating gender in their sector.
- Represent the World Bank in gender donor coordination meetings and provide relevant inputs to country strategic documents, as relevant;
- Ensure that GPSURR and/or the Gender CCSA provide upstream inputs on gender to WBG strategic country documents, e.g., CPIA, PLR, CLR, etc.
- Collaborate with selected task teams and the communications team in the dissemination of stories about successful gender work emerging in the country program.

Table 4 below outlines specific commitments to be considered in Moldova’s CPF with regard to mainstreaming gender in the country program for FY18-21. It is worth noting that already 80% of the portfolio of projects are fully gender informed, and 100% of projects include gender analysis and gender-sensitive monitoring. The results listed below would aim to improve the rate of reporting and recording of gender monitoring in project documents, and encourage teams to pursue specific gender targets, where relevant.

Table 4: Moldova CGAP Gender Mainstreaming Targets

Result	Indicator	Target	Responsible party
Projects aim at transformational gender impacts	Pipeline projects incorporate gender activities and targets aiming to close a priority gender equality gap:	At least 2 Projects by 2022	TTLs and Country Gender Focal Point

¹⁸ Practice proposed in Armenia CGAP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education Reform AF - Skills for Jobs Project - [Land Registration, Valuation, Taxation Project] - [Improving Access to Justice for the Vulnerable, JSDF proposal] 		
Success stories on gender outcomes produced and disseminated	# of stories disseminated internally and externally	At least 1 by 2022	TTLs, Communications officer, Country Gender Focal Point

6.2. Country gender equality outcomes

The matrix below summarizes a range of proposed sectors, actions, and outcomes that can be pursued in the framework of the Bank’s CPF FY18-22. These are formulated to address key gender issues in the country—recognized in research and in the National Gender Equality Strategy—that are also aligned with existing and planned WBG program.

The Action Matrix proposed in this CGAP includes a range of options to pursue gender equality goals through the World Bank’s program in Moldova. The specific activities, outcomes and targets to be adopted by the Moldova CPF can be adapted further by the respective GPs/task teams and CMU.

Table 5: Moldova CGAP Country Goals Action and Results Matrix

This table includes a list of key gender challenges, linkages to the WBG program and proposed interventions and results. It should be noted that all activities and results are pending further discussion with national counterparts and may be adapted further by task teams.

In addition to actions related to the five identified gender issues, this matrix includes activities on road safety and mobility proposed by Transport GP.

Key Gender Issue	Causes	Interventions	Bank Program	Proposed Results / Indicators
Occupational segregation ➤ Women under-represented in high-paying, high-skill jobs	Gender norms and stereotypes reinforced by education system, media, labor market. 'Feminization' of education and social service sectors	Conduct review / diagnostic of curriculum to assess gender stereotypes/norms Integrate gender diversity module in teacher/ education policy-maker training Initiate dialogue with Min of Education on integrating training on social issues such as bullying, GBV, safety/cyber-safety in school program as well as in teacher curriculum and/or training courses	Education Reform AF Pending resources and agreement of counterparts	Curriculum assessment conducted and informed teacher training # of teachers trained in gender module
		Improve information for women on skills demand and education opportunities in STEM fields Improve gender-disaggregated data collection in STEM fields / Assess barriers for women to entering STEM occupations	Skills and Jobs Project (pipeline) and/or related TA Pending resources and agreement of counterparts	Recommendations presented to Min of Education to increase incentives for women in STEM Gender-disaggregated statistics on youth entering STEM professional education/jobs conducted annually

		<p>Assess norms and behaviors that drive hiring decisions in selected sectors</p> <p>Soft skills training for women incorporated in vocational / active labor market programs</p>	<p>SP&L ASA FY18</p> <p>Pending resources</p>	<p>Research results on roots of occupational segregation presented to Government</p>
<p>Discrepancies in labor force participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Women delay longer their entry into LF and take longer breaks from LF ➤ Significant difference in occupation rates between women with and without children 	<p>Employer bias ('hidden discrimination') in hiring young women due to restrictive maternity leave policies</p> <p>Restricted childcare options until age of 3 partly due to obsolete and restrictive regulations</p>	<p>Design and deliver training module for National Employment Agency /HR professionals to strengthen implementation of Labor Code provisions on reducing gender bias</p> <p>Introduce guidelines / pilot training for removing gender bias in hiring processes</p>	<p>Skills and Jobs Project (pipeline)</p>	<p>Training module designed and delivered on inclusive labor/HR practices</p> <p>Guidelines prepared and presented</p>
		<p>Propose secondary legislation to implement gender equality provisions as per the Labor Code (equal pay standards, gender equality standards in job advertising, hiring, promotion, etc.)</p> <p>Reform childcare policies to introduce more flexible options for childcare services (can boost women's employment as potential workers/entrepreneurs in childcare services, and their flexibility to take employment)</p>	<p>AA, DPO</p> <p>Pending resources and counterpart agreement</p> <p>OR 'advocacy'</p>	<p>Draft regulations prepared</p> <p>Policy options for childcare reform presented to Government</p> <p>Draft regulation prepared/ Consultations concluded / Secondary legislation enacted to introduce more flexible options for childcare services</p>

<p>Entrepreneurship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Women less likely to own a business and to be employers 	<p>Traditional gender norms affecting perceptions of women as employers and managers</p> <p>Lack of training opportunities to strengthen financial literacy, management, leadership skills among women.</p>	<p>Conduct national survey to inform the Government's beginning Women in Business Program</p> <p>Promote participation of women-owned businesses as beneficiaries of the Government's Matching Grant Facility</p>	<p>Second Competitiveness Enhancement Project (T&C)</p> <p>Committed</p>	<p>ODIMM Women in Business Program informed by results of national survey</p> <p>increased participation of women-owned businesses in Government support schemes (e.g., Matching Grant Facility)</p>
		<p>Design business training/exchange program/grant program to promote women entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Second Competitiveness Enhancement Project (T&C)</p> <p>Pending agreement with counterparts</p>	<p>Increased participation of women in business training workshops</p>
<p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Higher mortality, lower life expectancy among men 	<p>Social norms (women responsible for health in the household) resulting in men having less information of available health services</p> <p>Less healthy lifestyles of men and at young age (tobacco/alcohol) though trends may be slowly changing</p>	<p>Targeted health screening services extended to men</p> <p>Awareness campaigns targeted at men and boys for preventative health care services</p>	<p>Health Transformation Project</p>	<p>Increase in # of male beneficiaries reached by improved screening for select conditions.</p> <p>Increase in # of persons (% male/female) reached by public awareness campaign</p>
		<p>Increase in tobacco tax, resulting increased price for consumers</p>	<p>DPO</p>	<p>Decrease incidence of smoking</p>
<p>Gender-based Violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High rates of violence, 	<p>Social norms; behaviors (alcoholism)</p>	<p>Improve capacity of justice-sector officials to adequately address needs of GBV survivors.</p>	<p>Pending approval of TF resources (JSDF proposal)</p>	<p>Contribute to / Inform the Government's action plan on gender-based violence</p>

<p>especially of domestic violence</p>	<p>Weak public awareness, and enforcement of protection services</p> <p>Weak institutional capacity, budget availability, and range of services fostering livelihoods and economic independence of GBV victims/survivors</p>	<p>Expand the range of judicial, livelihood, and skills services available to GBV survivors.</p> <p>Raise public awareness on the range of services available to victims of GBV, particularly in the Justice sector.</p>	<p>under preparation) and agreement with counterparts</p>	<p>Increased # of women benefitting from access to justice and livelihood programs</p>
<p>Road Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High percentage of men dying in road accidents. However, as pedestrians, women are more vulnerable to road accidents. 	<p>Women are involved in multi-chain trips (e.g. from home to work, to school, etc.), which expose them and their children to more car accidents.</p> <p>Men use more cars than women which make them more prone to fatal accidents.</p> <p>Poor physical design of roads that do not take into account the needs of more vulnerable populations.</p>	<p>Incorporation in the physical design of roads the needs of vulnerable populations (women, children, people with disabilities), for instance by encouraging the use of local area traffic management (e.g., use of traffic-calming devices such as road humps, creating lower-speed environments, and roundabouts) and safer road crossings (e.g., marked pedestrian crossing, controlled pedestrian crossing, and pedestrian overpasses or underpasses).</p> <p>Providing trainings and designing/implementing awareness road safety campaigns.</p>	<p>Local Roads Improvement Project</p> <p>[committed; restricted to the beneficiary communities of the project]</p>	<p>Number of consultations with women for road infrastructure design.</p> <p>Number of targeted awareness campaigns for women and children on road safety</p> <p>Number of trainings for girls and women on road safety</p>
<p>Mobility barriers and access to jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Women and men have different mobility patterns and use of 	<p>Social and economic roles of men and women: many women need to make trips that are shorter in both time and distance, be more willing to combine trips, make more household-</p>	<p>Undertake gender analysis to inform the design of transport investment.</p> <p>Conduct qualitative analysis on women's barriers to mobility or use planned Impact Evaluations to incorporate questions that can capture gender differences in mobility.</p>	<p>Local Roads Improvement Project</p> <p>[committed; restricted to the beneficiary communities of</p>	<p>Number of qualitative/quantitative assessments that identify women's mobility barriers</p> <p>Recommendations of gender-sensitive assessments reflected in sub-project design</p>

<p>transport modes, which can impact their ability to access to more and better jobs.</p>	<p>serving trips, and travel with children and with more packages than men do. This limits the possibility of accessing better jobs.</p>	<p>Include women in stakeholder’s consultations for transport planning.</p> <p>Collect sex disaggregated data on access constraints through routine transport monitoring as user satisfaction surveys.</p>	<p>the project]</p>	
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ANNEX

Summary of Key Gender Issues in Moldova

Gender differences in development outcomes in Moldova are not high by global or regional standards. They also do not exclusively concern women. Women remain affected by traditional gender norms when it comes to choice of profession, earning equal income, integrating in higher-earning sectors, and being represented in leadership positions (in business, social life, or politics). Child and family care responsibilities continue to weigh more heavily on women and take a toll on their continuous participation in the labor market as well as professional development. Demographic shifts—shrinking population, higher life expectancy of women, and high poverty risk for elderly women—expanding opportunities for high-skilled and high-earning employment for women is an issue of concern. Also, men face substantially higher mortality and morbidity.

Using the framework of the World Bank Group’s Gender Equality Strategy, gender gaps for Moldova can be seen mostly in the areas of economic participation, and voice and agency, while endowments are generally equitable for men and women. The sections below elaborate on the five priority gender challenges for Moldova identified in this Country Gender Action Plan: occupational segregation and earnings gap; discrepancies in labor force participation; entrepreneurship and livelihoods; voice, agency, and gender-based violence.

Occupational segregation and earnings gap

Gender gaps in educational attainment at all levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary) are negligible in Moldova. Moldova has close to universal primary [and secondary] school completion rates, yet the quality of education has been of higher concern. The enrollment of men and women in tertiary institutions is also balanced. However, as the Moldova CGA (World Bank 2014a) concludes, secondary and tertiary education levels appear to be the beginning of occupational segregation that yields less favorable outcomes for women in the labor market.

A closer look at the choices of university specialization for men and women¹⁹ does not in itself suggest a clear division in professional occupations in higher- and lower-earning streams. Women comprise more than two thirds of enrolled students in chemical and bio-technology, communications, economics [including finance], education, humanities, manufacturing and processing, public services, social sciences, and social services. Men comprise more than two thirds in agricultural sciences, architecture, engineering, environmental sciences, military, security services, and transport. Professional fields such as law, political science, natural sciences, arts, and sports have a relatively equal distribution.

Yet, gender segregation is evident when looking at labor market data: by sector, occupation, and gender distribution of leadership positions. The majority of employed women concentrate in public administration, education, agriculture, and trade and hotel services. Only 21% of firms have women as top managers. Women earn only 74% of what men earn and the earnings gap persists even in economic sectors in which women predominate. Women are underrepresented in areas such as IT and financial

¹⁹ Min of Education Statistics for university enrollment by field and gender for 2015-2016: http://www.statistica.md/public/files/publicatii_electronice/Educatia/Educatia_RM_2016.pdf

services that generally offer higher-paying jobs.²⁰ The World Bank (2016) report “From Aspirations to Occupations” finds that gender differences in aspirations in terms of vocational or general education as well as preferred fields of study perpetuate existing occupational segregation in the labor market. A recent SIDA gender analysis of Moldova’s accession to the EU Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (Spear, et. al. 2016) concludes that Moldovan women may not be as successful in reaping economic benefits from the DCFTA agreement due to the sectors of the economy where female labor is concentrated, and lower access to finance, among other factors. Women may benefit as employees in selected sectors, such as agriculture and textiles.

At the national level the gender earnings gap (12%) is comparable, or even relatively low, compared to other ECA countries; however, it is greater in higher skilled and higher earning jobs. For example, women earn 29% less than men in financial services, but only 9% less in the agricultural sector. This may contribute to explaining why Moldovan women with tertiary education are slightly more likely to look for opportunities abroad compared to similarly educated Moldovan men. The gender wage gap has long-term repercussions, as it translates into higher vulnerability to poverty for retired women. Many retired women find themselves living in poverty because they had worked in the informal sector of the economy or had been employed in low paid jobs.²¹

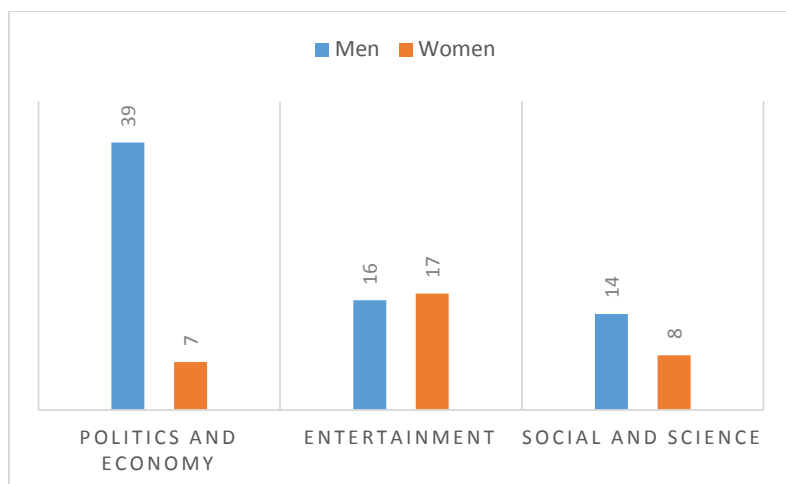
Occupational choices of men and women arise from entrenched social and cultural norms that begin in the family, community, and school, including early childhood education. Because of this, interventions to enhance gender equality in professional development should also begin early in life throughout early childhood, primary and secondary education. Such interventions may include a gender assessment of the curriculum and related curriculum reform, preparation and delivery of gender module to be added to teacher training courses, providing incentives for more gender balanced work force in primary and secondary education, among others.

The role of media is also significant in shaping norms, and fostering a more gender neutral representation of men and women in professional roles. An analysis of professional representation of men and women in media (Radu and Terzi 2008) revealed a trend of women being under-represented in professional areas. In more than 9,000 articles analyzed, which refer to “women” and “men” as professionals, men are more often presented in professional roles, and dominate areas of politics and economy, social fields, and science, while women professionals mostly appear in the entertainment field. The same study conducted a review of more than 150,000 employment announcements. It found that a large number of announcements are explicitly aimed at women or men (e.g., “seeking woman – night receptionist at hotel”). Announcements aimed at men are more likely to seek leadership qualities and highlight professional development opportunities, while announcements aimed at women stress physical appearance, personal character, and lack of family responsibilities.

Figure 1: Percentage of men and women presented in professional roles (Radu and Terzi 2008)

²⁰ Based on Europe’s Digital Agenda and Europe 2020 Initiative, the ICT sector would bring an additional profit of 9 billion euro if women would be engaged more efficiently in technological occupations.

²¹ National Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2020



The causes for occupational segregation and resulting earnings gaps in higher-paying professions and positions require further examination. They are likely to be found in social norms, perpetuated through the education system, media, and labor markets. Efforts to better understand, monitor, and reverse occupational segregation may include:

- (i) Improving tertiary education data to better track women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and encourage gender balance in STEM fields;
- (ii) Assessing gender norms in education curriculum and pursuing more gender-neutral representation of men and women in professional roles in the curriculum;
- (iii) Working to reverse the ‘feminization’ of lower-paying public service positions (such as primary and secondary school teachers where women represent over 80% of the labor force);
- (iv) Supporting Government, media, and/or CSO-led public awareness efforts on gender equality in the professional domains;
- (v) Reforming legislation that prohibits or *protects* women from working in certain fields, such as driving heavy vehicles;
- (vi) supporting initiatives to increase women’s participation in higher-earning sectors such as IT;
- (vii) Providing opportunities for soft and leadership skills development for women in public and private sectors. For example, the National Gender Equality Strategy highlights the need for career mentorship to encourage girls to pursue less traditional professions.
- (viii) Helping to implement and enforce recent legislation that prohibits sexist images and language in media, advertisements, job announcements, etc.

Discrepancies in labor force participation

As suggested by the section above, gender inequalities in Moldova are most evident in the labor market. In fact, the decrease in the Gender Equality Index score (discussed earlier) can be largely attributed to intensifying inequalities in the labor market – the labor market equality score decreased from 70 in 2009 to 63 in 2014.²² Delays in entry to the labor force, longer breaks from the labor force,

²² The Gender Equality Index in the labor market was calculated based on 5 indicators: occupation rate; occupation rate of the population aged 25-49; people who have at least 1 child aged 0-6, vertical segregation, horizontal segregation, and informal occupation rate, except in the agriculture field. More details on the Gender Equality Index can be found at http://progen.md/files/7562_raport_indexul_egalitatii_gen_2015final.pdf

gender bias in labor market decisions, and restrictive childcare and maternity regulations are some of the main issues that obstruct opportunities for women to work. The participation rate of women with at least one child has decreased. In 2014, the difference between occupied women with one pre-school child and women with no children was 20%, one of the most significant discrepancies among European countries.²³ There is a declining number of women who resume work after benefitting from partially-paid child care leave (up to 3 years).²⁴ Women are the primary beneficiaries of child care leave and thus their careers are affected because of long interruptions.

Hidden discrimination in the market, due in part to restrictive maternity leave policies, may be further disadvantaging women on the labor market. Compared to other European countries, Moldova has one of the most generous child care leave policies.²⁵ Partially-paid childcare leave is available for up to 3 years, and unpaid leave up to six years, the period for which the employer is obligated to reserve the job place. This is likely to influence employers' decisions in hiring young women. At the same time, flexible work programs are not common and in fact are used by men slightly more than women: a recent study revealed that 47.2% of women enjoy a flexible work program, and 6% enjoy a very flexible work program, while the shares for men are 49.7% and 13.1% of men respectively.²⁶ The Labor Code of Moldova prohibits gender bias in hiring, firing, promotion, and salary decisions. However, these provisions are rarely enforced, and there is a widely-recognized need for additional guidelines and capacity building for properly implementing gender equality provisions in HR functions in both public and private enterprises.

Absence of early childcare services (0-3 years) and disparities between maternity leave (126 days) and paternity leave (14 days) further put women at a disadvantage in the labor market. This is due, in part, to social norms which perceive women being care givers. The new provision allowing for a 14 days paternity leave was adopted in April 2016 and, as of now, has not yet been enforced (a leave calculation formula has not yet been established). By law, both women and men can benefit from child care leave (partially-paid up to 3 years; and unpaid up to 6 years). In practice, women are those who most often take the leave with long interruptions in their professional lives. Opportunities for childcare up to the age of 3 are scarce, and strict childcare regulations have prevented expansion of private childcare services. The promotion of more flexible options for private day care services could provide both employment opportunities for women (as providers of childcare) as well as more flexibility for women on the job market. The enforcement of obligatory paternity leave, and public awareness measures encouraging men to partake in childcare, can contribute to changing norms, facilitating women's retention in the labor force, and reducing bias among employers.

Entrepreneurship and livelihoods

Supporting women's incomes and livelihoods has wide-ranging consequences. It is important for reducing the overall risk of poverty. This is partly due to the relatively high share of female-headed households in Moldova, 41%, slightly higher than the ECA average.

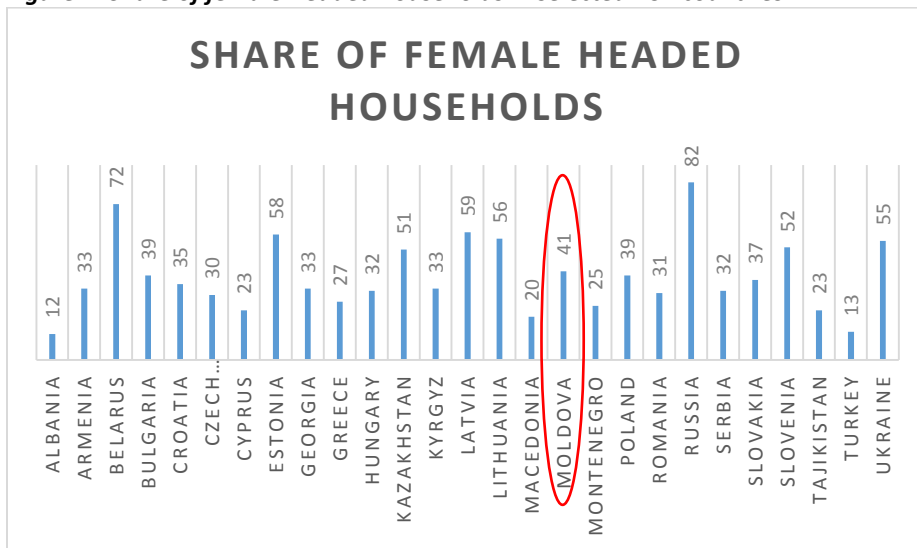
²³ Recommendations for the National Strategy on Labor Force Participation 2017-2021, study conducted by Partnership for Development Center with support of the East-European Foundation

²⁴ In 2013, 15% of women returned to work. In 2014, this number declined to 11% (Moldova Social Report, 2014).

²⁵ Source: OECD Family Database cited by PDC in its study http://progen.md/files/7562_raport_indexul_egalitatii_gen_2015final.pdf

²⁶ Omnibus Survey, Center for Development Partnership, 2015

Figure 2: Share of female-headed households in selected ECA countries



It is also important for preventing insecure and socially-disruptive labor migration. Economic migration of women, leaving families in Moldova, has a number of negative social implications. About 32% of all migrants are women. “Women dominate the groups of Moldovan migrants in several countries, including Italy, Greece, Israel, and Turkey, the majority being employed in the area of individual care services. These occupations offer certain possibilities for accumulating savings, but not so much knowledge, skills, and innovations. Also, these occupations may increase the risk for women to be harassed, not paid, and without any support from the networks and informal groups, since the care services are provided mainly in private houses.” (World Bank 2014b)

The effects on children of women’s absence from home are said to be greater than men’s absence. This is relevant, in particular, in areas of children’s educational achievement, nutrition, health, and psychological wellbeing. An analysis of 4th and 9th grade student assessments for the past academic year has shown that while the absence of either or both parents has a negative effect on the student's performance in those assessments, the impact is greater when the mother migrates. A UNICEF (2008) study found that when the mother leaves, only 46% of fathers take on the role of direct care giver, whereas 64% of mothers do so if the father is absent. In cases where the mother migrates, children experience more frequent and significant changes in care (that may include also grandparents, relatives, or child institutions). There are some indications that the situation may be worse in minority communities, many of whom tend to migrate to Russia due to language and cultural ties. “The rate of poverty in households among migrants to Russia is almost double compared to the rate of poverty in households among migrants to the EU. This may indicate that “push” factors are more relevant for households with migrants to CIS countries and “pull” factors are more important for households with migrants to the EU.” (World Bank 2014a)

Entrepreneurship, in particular in rural areas, can be an important source of livelihoods. The Gender Equality Strategy notes that important disparities exist between rural and urban female employment rates, and highlights the need for rural women empowerment as a key priority. Women in rural areas have fewer economic opportunities than those residing in urban areas.²⁷ In addition, agriculture is one

²⁷ Gender Equality Strategy, 2016-2020

of the sectors with high female employment, accounting for 23% of women's employment in the country.

The Moldovan Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (ODIMM) has recently initiated a Women in Business program. As part of this initiative the first national survey exploring barriers to women in starting a business is being commissioned with WBG funding. Women in Moldova often own small businesses that do not employ others. Employers are 26.9% women and 73.1 % men. One of the goals of this program would be to provide skills and training to increase the share of female business-owners as well as stimulate additional employment by female-owned businesses.

Access to productive assets is one area where attention to gender in entrepreneurship development can be promoted. Women and men have equal rights to own land and other property in Moldova. Women's right to property does not depend on their marital status. All property acquired after marriage is owned jointly by spouses, while men and women retain individual property rights on assets acquired before marriage. In practice, some discrepancies can be noted in terms of asset ownership. Women comprise 36% of agricultural landholders, but own only 19% of agricultural land (Spear et. al. 2016). While women and men have equal rights to credit, women often are unable to access credit because they have less collateral. The share of women with personal bank accounts in 2011 was slightly lower than that of men (17% vs. 19%). A survey of credit applications in rural areas (Miluka, Juna 2009²⁸) found that 73% of applications were filed by men and only 22% by women, the rest being filed jointly. Systematic gender desegregated information on access to assets is still scarce in Moldova.

Voice, agency, and gender-based violence

Agency is about one's ability to make choices, and to transform them into desired actions. Women's agency influences their ability to build their human capital and take up economic opportunities. Women's agency also matters for the welfare of their children. Without women's participation, resources are allocated and decisions are made only to reflect men's perspectives and, thus, leave out the voice of the other half of the population.

Moldovan women are underrepresented in the decision making processes related to politics, public policy, and foreign relations.²⁹ "Moldova has made some progress in integrating women in politics, yet representation remains low. Women hold about 20% of seats in parliament, which is comparable to the average for most developed countries in the region. However, in 2012, only 6% of ministerial positions were held by women, and the representation of women at local levels of government is very low. Women are also underrepresented among judges, and the number of female ambassadors, senior civil servants, and journalists is much lower than those in neighboring countries or in the rest of the EU." (World Bank 2014a)

Moldova has one of the highest rates of human trafficking among neighboring countries and is primarily a source country. The economic situation in the country and domestic violence are identified as the main reasons for the persistent problem of trafficking of women. The Government has made progress in addressing the protection of victims and the prevention of trafficking but has not shown

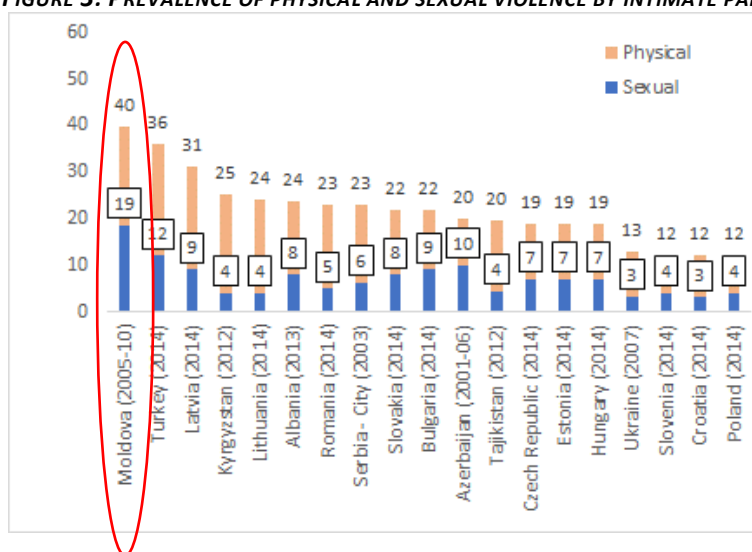
²⁸ Cited in Moldova Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) <http://www.genderindex.org/country/moldova>

²⁹ Ibid

sufficient progress in addressing widespread complicity in trafficking by law enforcement and other public officials.

Gender based violence (GBV) represents a significant issue that has a considerable negative impact on women’s physical and mental health as well as on their perception of self-esteem. Sexual harassment, physical aggression, and limited access to opportunities for vulnerable categories of women constitute the key forms of gender based violence in the country. Moldova is one of the highest ranking countries in ECA for prevalence of physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner. A UN study (2011) found that 63% of women had experienced emotional abuse, sexual or physical violence from their husband or partner and at least one in 10 has experienced economic violence. Rural, elderly, separated or divorced women were at higher risk of experiencing multiple types of violence. An increased level of tolerance towards GBV at the level of family, community, media, and society as a whole represents a major challenge for the sustainable development of the country.

FIGURE 3: PREVALENCE OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY INTIMATE PARTNER (LIFETIME)³⁰



Moreover, the infrastructure and support services to survivors of violence and trafficking are in precarious financial condition and face obstacles in terms of their sustainability. The lack of a coordinated mechanism to collect data on GBV and to evaluate the programs and policies aiming to eliminate GBV makes it difficult to assess the scope of this phenomenon.³¹ At the same time, under the country’s decentralization reforms, support centers for women are in a precarious financial situation; in principle they are supposed to be supported by local government, but in practice are reliant on donor or NGO grants.

Moldova has approved legislation in three out of eight areas which are considered key for protecting the rights and providing equal opportunities of its LGBT population. Homosexual acts between adults are legal, and there are equal age limits for consensual sex between homosexual and heterosexual couples. Discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation is prohibited by law; yet, there is

³⁰ Compiled by the United Nations Statistics Division from Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS). (ICF International, 2014, CDC, 2014 and UNICEF, 2014c). Taken from: UNWomen 2015. World’s Women. New York, cited in World Bank. 2016. ECA RGAP 17-20 DRAFT

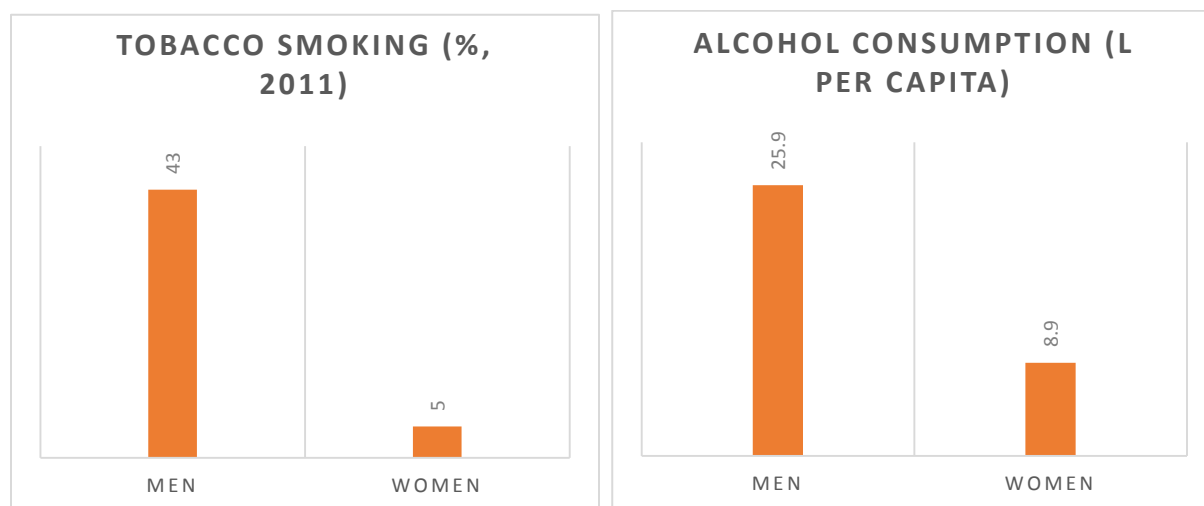
³¹ Gender Equality Strategy, 2016-2020

scarce information on the enforcement of this legislation. Draft legal amendments have been approved by three parliamentary committees to criminalize the promotion of homosexuality among minors.

Healthy lifestyles and behaviors

Health outcomes and behaviors are significantly worse for men than women; such discrepancy is mainly due to gender stereotypes on the value of health for boys and girls. Mortality and morbidity rates are higher among men than those among women, mainly because of unhealthy life style, accidents, drug abuse, work related traumas, and intoxication. The new Gender Equality Strategy highlights male health education and preventative health as priorities. WHO (2013) analysis of male-to-female death ratios suggests that male death rates have been increasing relative to female, as also supported by the figures below. Men use health care services less frequently than women. Also, the social norms and expectations, which focus on men as key providers for their families, increase the pressure for performance on men. Such tendency is reflected in an increased rate of drug abuse and suicide among men (the suicide rate among men is 5 times higher than that among women).³²

Figures 4 & 5: Incidence of tobacco and alcohol consumption for men and women

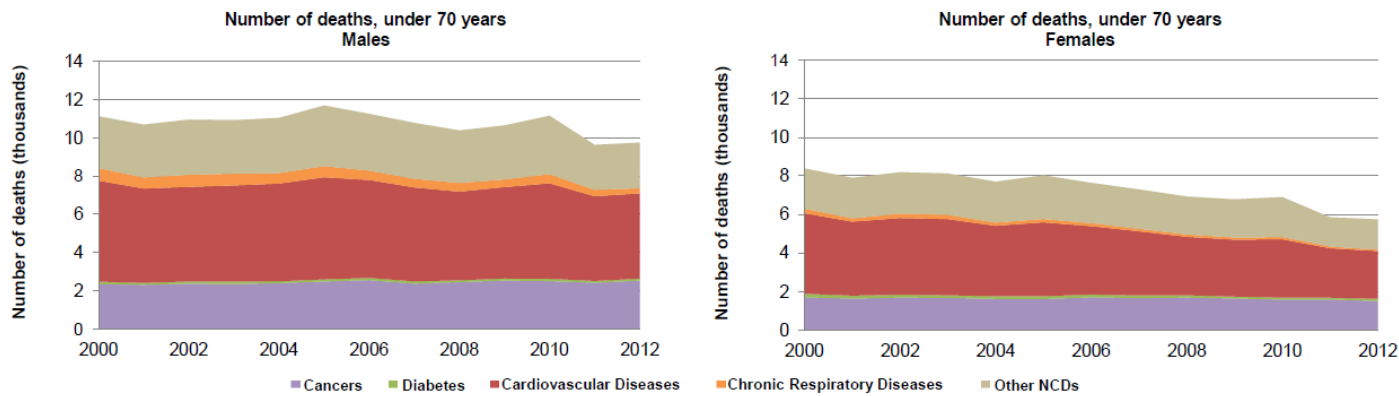


Source: WHO, 2014

Figure 6: Life expectancy for men and women in Moldova: 2000-2012

³² Gender Equality Strategy, 2016-2020

The probability of dying between ages 30 and 70 years from the 4 main NCDs is **26%**.



Source: WHO, 2014

Public policies targeting preventive measures across sectors are generally not gender responsive. The Gender Equality Strategy points to the lack of gender mechanisms which could guide policy making in the health care sector. At the same time, the sectoral public policies, which directly influence public health, need to be reviewed in terms of gender dimensions.³³

³³ Gender Equality Strategy, 2016-2020