

APASAN PHASE II EVALUATION MISSION

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Local Currency (Lei) – CHF / Euro Conversion – Exchange Rate (15 July 2014)

1 CHF (Swiss franc)	=	15.6 MDL (Moldovan Lei)
100 MLD	=	6.4 CHF
1 Euro	=	19.0 MDL
100 MLD	=	5.3 Euro

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AEI	Alliance for European Integration
AM	Apele Moldovei
AMAC	Association of Water Supply and Sewerage Utilities
ApaSan	SDC financed and ADA co-funded Water Supply and Sanitation Project (SKAT executed)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CoP	Community of Practice
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoM	Government of Moldova
GTZ/GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GWSSP	General Water Supply and Sanitation Plan
HQ	Headquarters
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
KfW	German Development Bank
KM	Knowledge Management
LPA	Local Public Administration
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MRDC	Ministry of Regional Development and Construction
MSIF	Moldova Social Investment Fund
NCPH	National Centre for Public Health
NDS	National Development Strategy
NEF	National Ecologic Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPEGE	National Program for Ensuring Gender Equality
NRDF	National Regional Development Fund
NRDS	National Strategy for Regional Development
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PD	Policy Dialogue
ProDoc	Project Document
RWS	Rural Water Supply
RWSS	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
SC	Steering Committee (of ApaSan)
SCC	Sector Coordination Council
SCO	Swiss Cooperation Office (in Moldova)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEAM	Solidarity Water Europe in Moldova
Skat	Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development
SSP	Support Service Provider
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
WASH	Water, Sanitation, Hygiene
WatSan	Water and Sanitation
WB	World Bank
WCA	Water Consumer's Association
WES	Water and Environmental Sanitation
WISDOM	Women for Sustainable Development of Moldova
WS	Water Supply
WW	Wastewater

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Country Context

1. The Republic of Moldova, with a surface of 34,000 km² and a population of about 3.5 million and an estimated 1 million emigrants mostly to Europe and Russia is one of the smallest and poorest European countries. Moldova's has a GDP of US\$2,300 / capita (World Bank 2013) and about 21% of the population live with less than US\$ 4.30 per day. Thanks to the labor exodus, annual remittances amount to about US\$ 1.6 billion, about 20% of GDP. Yet Moldova is an agrarian country where agriculture contributes 15% to the country's economic output.

2. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union Moldova is in a difficult process of economic, political and legal transition. In July 2014, the parliament of Moldova ratified the Association Agreement with the EU, which will require adaptation to EU laws and standards. The DCFTA (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area), akin to a so-called Free Trade Agreement, is expected to boost GDP by 5.4% annually. During the past few years, the EU has provided Moldova with substantial Budget support, amounting to €135 million in 2013 with an increasing trend over the coming years. Net Official development Assistance (ODA) in 2012 was US\$ 473 million, about US\$ 135 per capita, one of the highest in the world. Yet, economic absorptive capacity is a mere 65% of total ODA. Moldova will require a long transition period to fulfill the EU *acquis*.

The Water Sector

3. In the last years, the sector registered significant changes at policy and legal level, gradually complementing regionalization of water utility companies with decentralized public Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) services. The overall level of access to improved water supply countrywide is low with 62% and 56.6% with access to sewage and wastewater (WW). About 69% of urban dwellers benefit of safe water supply and 75.4% have access to public sewerage networks. However, only 25% of sewage systems are in a satisfactory condition. Except for Chisinau, WW treatment is practically non-existent. In rural areas, about one third of the population has access to 'improved' water and a dismal 2% to safe sanitation facilities.

4. The sector is facing a series of governance challenges marked by a lack of planning, non-transparent financing and a myriad of partially overlapping institutions, with the Ministry of Environment (MoE) having main responsibility for policy and strategy in the water sector, though most water infrastructure investments are carried out by the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction (MRDC). The sector is marred by an inconsistency of competing and overlapping institutions, lowering sector efficiency and effectiveness. Millennium Development Goals (MDG) final targets set for 2015 regarding supply coverage and improved sanitation (65%) most likely will not be achieved.

5. Moldova has issued recently a highly optimistic Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy 2014-2028, depicting annual investments of €30 to €35 million, when absorptive capacity of external funds is around €20 million. Overall sector funding depends to more than 60% on foreign funding. This dependence is expected to only slightly decline by 2028. The proportion of foreign funding is similar to other investment sectors in the country.

6. Water resources are scarce with only 500 m³/capita/year renewable water. Moldova is considered a water stressed country, a hindrance for economic development, if not addressed as a priority. Groundwater, except for some deep wells and spring water, is mostly shallow and highly polluted from human and animal waste. Surface water sources from the rivers Prut and

Nistru are basically sufficient for domestic consumption, but uncoordinated irrigation projects are already competing with water for domestic use.

Swiss Involvement in the Water Sector

7. From 2001 until 2008 SDC's interventions in the water sector in Moldova has been with Humanitarian Aid (HA). In 2008 the HA program was converted into a structured water and sanitation development project. Implementation was outsourced by public tender to SKAT (Swiss Resource Center and Consultancy for Development, St. Gall, Switzerland) in December 2008. *ApaSan Project Phase I* was implemented from May 2009 to May 2011. The current Phase is expected to be completed by end May 2015. The 4-year overall budget phase II is CHF 10'244'983 of which CHF 2'255'000 contribution from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). Moreover, during the last years the SCO was engaged in donor harmonization, policy dialogue and alignment and played a leading role in the Sector Coordination Council (SCC) and policy dialogue with the government.

8. In the new Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Moldova (2014-2017) water and sanitation will continue to be one of the three core domains of Swiss intervention in Moldova, the others being health and migration. *ApaSan* is expected to pursue its current approach of scaling up decentralized water supply and sanitation (WSS) systems to clusters of villages supplied from treated surface or deep well water, managed by municipal water utilities. Future SDC water investments will be accompanied by appropriate sanitation technologies – the WASH concept which in the past has not been systematically applied.

9. Under a new 6-year (two 3-year phases) Cooperation Agreement (CA) in the water sector between SDC and GIZ (01.04.2015 – 31.03.2021), *ApaSan* is expected to cooperate closely with GIZ with the goal of synergizing its profound technical experience with GTZ activities.

External Review

10. SCO has mandated a team of experienced international and national consultants (30 June-6 July 2014) to conduct an assessment of *ApaSan II*, with key recommendations for steering the intervention and for planning the next project phase.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

11. The evaluation of *ApaSan II* is providing the springboard for a new orientation. The ten-plus years of SDC experience in the sector is an asset for a horizontal and vertical expansion. - *ApaSan* expertise is projected to synergize with GIZ funding, and the combined leveraging capacity within the MRDC and the NRDF is expected to (i) accelerate service coverage of rural water supply and sanitation, (ii) facilitate legal, regulatory and normative adaptations necessary for EU accession, as well as (iii) help harmonize sector institutions.

ApaSan Performance

12. *ApaSan II* performed well within its TORs (*ProDoc*) and following the logframe, meeting targets on average by 80% (*Annex 4 – updated Logframe*). *ApaSan II* has successfully developed its decentralized, Water Consumer Associations (WCA) managed water supply models, as well as promoted the highly successful *Ecosan* school toilets. *ApaSan II* has also started promoting the *Ecosan* Household (HH) toilet. Patterned according to the SDC-sponsored Aguasan group in Switzerland, *ApaSan* has created a young and enthusiastic Community of Practice (CoP) for exchanging experiences and expertise. Supporting SCO,

ApaSan has considerably contributed to the Policy Dialogue (PD) and the Sector Coordination Council (SCC).

13. *ApaSan II* has demonstrated initiative, designing new water supply models – treated surface WS to clusters of villages and with public utility management systems.

14. However, *ApaSan II* could have applied more creativity – beyond the mandates of the *Prodoc* and the logframe, particularly by (i) investigating and developing new adapted sanitation technologies and by integrating them into water supply projects (WASH concept); (ii) more systematic recording and disseminating of experiences and practices, including through CoP, monitoring their replication impact; and by (iii) widening its *Outreach* – through SDC / SCO on PD and SCC – beyond its own project, on national sector interests and improving sector governance – *rural tariff* methodology, cooperation with universities, through AMAC preparing *Municipal and Regional Water Utilities (Apa-Canals)* towards closer cooperation with WCAs in view of taking over their management function in the medium-to long term.

Recommendations

15. Proposals and ideas are formulated in view of priorities and according to the categories (i) physical implementation, (ii) capacity building and policy dialogue, (iii) transversal themes and (iv) integration of new components. The remainder of Phase II may be used preparing Phase III.

i) Implementation and Expansion of SDC / SCO / ApaSan Phase III:

- Combine and integrate water and sanitation and hygiene (the **WASH concept**) in a reoriented approach towards supplying **clusters of villages** with **treated river and deep well water** managed by municipal or regional public utilities; priorities to be determined by regional or *raion* planning.
- Study **different technologies** and combination of technologies for **safe community WW disposal and /or hygienic human waste disposal**; due to lack of effluent water, the immediate solution may be based on improved hygienic and environmentally safe HH sanitation / toilets.
- Promote **scaling up** by **leveraging SDC funds and knowhow** with those of (a) other donors, and (b) the **National Environmental** and **Regional Development Funds**.
- Use WSS as an entry point to initiate **Integrated Water Resources Management** (IWRM), choosing project area(s) in sub-river basins where the IWRM approach could be initiated – see (iv) *New Components*, below.

ii) Capacity building and Policy Dialogue

- Continue **training and monitoring existing WCAs**, as well as preparing them for an alternative role in cases where regional or municipal utilities may take over.
- Training of **municipal operators and water sector professionals** – sponsoring (technical) university programs – licensing of operators.
- **Document approaches and experiences** for learning purposes, prepare **dissemination strategy**.
- Seek **donor alliances** to (a) develop guiding material for Moldova's needs and to help meet EU Accession regulations, and to (b) help strengthen coordination between sector ministries; **a common sector vision is essential**.
- Use SCC and PD to **seek and promote national sector solutions**, i.e. – rural tariffication, WASH Concept, transparent use of national development funds and more.
- **Update and adjust Guidebook** – including transversal themes.
- Envisage **end-of-project transfer strategy**.

iii) Transversal Themes

- Integrate **gender perspective in to planning**, implementing and monitoring in all WASH activities.
- Continue promoting **inclusive public water services** – water as a human right (water for all, including vulnerable groups) – strengthen responsibilities of public authorities for services: **water to remain in the public domain.**

iv) New components (see *Water Sector Institutional Assessment* – October / November 2013):

a) River basin based Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)

- In the Government's *Water Strategy*, river basin based IWRM is a priority – Moldova with only 500m³ /capita/year of renewable water is under *water stress* – which may affect economic development, if not properly managed.
- It is recommended that this component be closely linked to / integrated into *ApaSan III*, using rural WSS as an entry for IWRM:
 - Choose one or two sub-river basins, and combine with *ApaSan* RWSS projects.
 - Provide IWRM responsible government agency (currently *Apele Moldova* in MoE) – with capacity building, aiming at establishing participatory basin commissions;
- Fostering a bottom-up combined with top-down approach – *Apele Moldova* providing the methodological and planning support in line with the legal, regulatory and policy framework for basin commissions, while on-the-ground work by the *ApaSan* project generates practical experiences feeding into basin commissions.
- Encouraging expansion of related river basin activities (solid waste management, WW collection and disposal preventing river pollution), carried out by LPAs and donors, and organizing awareness campaigns and participatory river basin commission meetings.

b) Water Sector Information Management System (IMS)

- Assist in overcoming weakness and incoherence of sector data needed for intelligible, professional and sustainable water sector development,
- Consolidate mass of data available within donor and government agencies, municipalities, NGOs and consultants into a single cutting-edge technology data operating system.

16. **Preferred solution for both new components** – It is advisable that the **IWRM** project component be integrated into the *ApaSan III* project which may require increasing or reorienting *ApaSan* staffing. The **IMS** component might preferably also be closely linked to the *ApaSan* project, since *ApaSan* would be a prime input provider.

17. The ET recommends against *stand-alone* or independent projects, as they tend to work in 'silos' – in isolation and within the confines of their specific tasks. This happened in the past between the SDC/SCO Health program and the *ApaSan* water program, when the absence of collaboration failed optimizing joint benefits. *ApaSan* might be envisaged as an umbrella, under which different components – WSS, IWRM, Health, IMS – could be coordinated to enhance benefits.

18. Special Considerations (beyond TORs)

A. SDC/SCO to support both, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and Ministry of Regional Development and Construction (MRDC)

- Policy support, IMS, IWRM to Min. of Environment (MoE)

- Investment implementation to Min. of Regional Development and Construction (MRDC)
- Bringing the ministries closer together, to cooperate, especially in view of more transparency between the two development funds (NEF and NFRD), might be part of SDC's lead role in the policy dialogue / SCC – but in alliance with other donors.

B. Seek establishing Synergies between Domains – Water / Health / Migration

i) Linking water and health at the working level, in addition to the Protocol for Water and Health

Designing interwoven activities between the *ApaSan III* water program (WASH concept) and the SDC / SCO Health program. The two projects would ideally cover the same district(s) or water basins, allowing for joint monitoring of results. Child health, for which the WASH component is essential, could be targeted for synergies. Children up to 5 benefit most from the WASH concept.

ii) Migration – Assist developing a Moldovan Diaspora – Exploring possibilities for mobilizing migrants' skills and knowledge resources for the benefit of their home communities.

Countering the 'brain drain' by (a) inviting prominent Moldovan water and / or health professionals from abroad to lecture at universities, and/or (b) become consultants for government water related activities, (c) creating a pool of consulting services, supporting Moldovan entrepreneurs exploring and establishing small business opportunities (water / health related), and (d) organizing cultural activities for Moldovans abroad – and more.

iii) Consider Using Water and Health as a confidence building element in the Transnistria conflict.



I. INTRODUCTION

Preamble

19. The Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ) have entered into a Framework Cooperation Agreement (CA) in the water sector for maximum impact and leverage with their combined knowledge and financial resources. The CA is planned to extend over a six year period in two phases from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2018 (Phase I), and from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021 (Phase II) with a 5-month opening and adaptation phase from 10 June 2014 to 31 March 2015. Amounts allocated for this cooperation are CHF 40,000 for the opening phase and CHF 9 million for Phases I and II – approved by SDC on 6 June 2014.

20. The External Evaluation will attempt to take into account the future SDC / GIZ cooperation, while assessing *ApaSan II's* achievement and projecting an autonomous *ApaSan Phase III*.

External Evaluation

21. The Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova (SCO-M) has engaged the services of an experienced team of consultants, Erika Schläppi, Specialist Transversal Themes (international); Leonid Meleca, Water and Sanitation Engineer (local); and Peter Koenig, Economist, Water Resources Specialist, Mission Leader (international), to conduct an assessment of the *ApaSan* Phase II Project in Moldova, the purpose of which is to formulate key recommendations for steering the future interventions and for planning the next project phase. *The Terms of Reference (TOR) – Annex 1* – outline the framework for the task.

II. BACKGROUND

Country Context

22. The Republic of Moldova, with a surface of 34,000 km² and a population of about 3.5 million (Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Moldova), is one of the smallest Eastern European countries. With its neighbor Ukraine it shares a Soviet past and a somewhat ambivalent position between Russia and Western Europe, with still strong cultural and economic ties to the East and a (currently cold) territorial conflict about Transnistria. With Romania in the West, Moldova shares its main language. The Soviet legacy still weighs heavily on state institutions, their way to work and their perception by the population.

23. Despite recent progress, Moldova remains one of the poorest countries in Europe, having a GDP of US\$ 2,300/cap in 2013 (World Bank). The share of population with under US\$4.30 per day consumption was 20.8% in 2012 (Third Millennium Development Goals - MDGs, Moldova). With a moderate climate and good farmland, Moldova's economy relies heavily on its agriculture sector and depends on annual remittances of about US\$ 1.6 billion (National Bank of Moldova) from the roughly one million Moldovans working abroad, half of them in Russia. With few natural energy resources, Moldova imports almost all of its energy supplies from Russia and Ukraine.

24. The EU is developing an increasingly close relationship with Moldova to facilitate gradual economic integration and a deepening of political co-operation. In June 2014, the EU and Moldova have signed an Association Agreement and its principal objective is to draw Moldova closer to the EU through a commitment to approximate EU laws and standards in a number of areas. The DCFTA (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area) is expected to boost GDP by 5.4% annually, while Moldova stands to gain almost €142 million of annual income, when all reforms are completed (Delegation of the European Union to Moldova). The EU has already

been providing Moldova with substantial budget support to assist the reform process for a number of years, including €135 million of assistance in 2013. This amount is likely to increase, in the coming years, as other bilateral and multilateral donors become more active in the country. The total net official development assistance (ODA) received by Moldova was US\$ 473 million in 2012 (World Bank). Still, the overall country's absorption capacity remains at a low 65% of total ODA (assessment of the Absorption Capacity in Moldova – *Idis Viitorul*).

25. Moldova, which is poor both in terms of infrastructure, economic wealth, as well as in institutional and human capacity, will require time and investments especially in the latter, to efficiently and effectively absorb the multilateral funding and to adapt to EU standards in law and practice.

Water and Environmental Sanitation

26. Moldovan WSS sector is in transition process. In the last years the sector registered significant changes at policy and legal level, gradually introducing regionalization aspects to the existing decentralized public RWSS services. Still, the overall level of access to improved WSS remains low – 62% with access to water and 56.6% to wastewater (Moldovan Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy, 2014-2018). While the urban areas have relatively satisfactory WSS service coverage (68% water supply and 75.4% wastewater evacuation), the rural localities are the most deprived areas in water sector development with 33% with access to water and only 2% to wastewater systems (WSS Regional Sector Programs for South, Center and North Development Regions, MRDC).

27. A lack of sector planning and incoherence in sector investments is commonly recognized by the government and the donor's community. The recently approved Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy (2014-2028) recognizes low sector progress and estimates that the main MDG targets for 2015 will be met only in 2020 (65% of population with access to 'improved' water) and 2025 (65% - access to 'improved' sanitation).

28. So far, the existing water resources (surface – rivers the Prut and the Nistru, and underground water) are sufficient for public water supply of the country. However, together with development of irrigation systems and increase in industrial water use, available renewable water resources of about 500 m³/capita per year (FAO, *Aquastat* Database), represents a situation of water stress and may become a hindrance for economic development, if not addressed as a priority. The Association Agreement requires a new approach to sector development, establishment of regional WSS Plans (equivalent to Sector Master Plans), applying integrated water resources management (IWRM) and river basin management principles, which are expected to address the existing water scarcity issues and improve coherence in sector investments.

29. The current institutional setup at central and regional levels is also seen as a hindering factor in sector development, resulting in overlapping of activities, conflicts of interests (WSS Regional Sector Programs for South, Center and North Development Regions, MRDC, 2014 vs. The WSS Sector Strategy – 2014-2028, under the MoE). As a consequence they are hindering absorption capacity of external funds (currently, about €19-21 million per year in WSS sector). A new sector regulator is foreseen to be in charge for licensing of WSS operators and tariff setting policies. It is however not yet clear how the new entity will tackle the different water sector development initiatives under different ministries.

Swiss Involvement in the Water Sector

30. From 2001 until 2008 SDC has been active in the water sector with Humanitarian Aid (HA). In 2008 Switzerland concluded the HA program and converted its water and sanitation intervention into a Water and Sanitation development program. As a result, the approach shifted from direct implementation to out-sourcing. In December 2008, SKAT (Swiss Resource Center and Consultancy for Development, St. Gall, Switzerland) was mandated by SDC, based on public tender, to be the implementing agency for the newly called *ApaSan* project. After a 5-month start-up time, Phase I of the project – *ApaSan Phase I* – started in May 2009 and ended in May 2011.

31. *ApaSan Phase II* started on 1 June 2011 and is expected to last four years until 31 May 2015. The overall budget of the current project phase is CHF 10'244'983 with SDC as main donor and a co-funding contribution from the *Austrian Development Agency* (ADA) amounting to CHF 2'255'000. .

32. In 2010 *ApaSan* was active in 4 districts, expanding its geographic activities under Phase II to 14 in 2014. After more than 13 years of SDC sector involvement, about 40,000 people benefit from improved water supply; and almost 14,000 people enjoy decent and environmentally friendly sanitation and hygiene facilities.

33. In the new Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Moldova (2014-2017) water and sanitation will continue to be one of the three core domains of Swiss intervention in Moldova, the others being health and migration, with gender and governance as crosscutting themes for all interventions. *ApaSan* will pursue its current approach of scaling up decentralized water supply systems and sanitation solutions by adjusting and optimizing the existing models and piloting new technological and management options.

34. However, *ApaSan* will expand its horizon towards treated surface water supply and deep wells, managed by existing *ApaCanals* and other public utilities. The new system will involve clusters of villages, based on inter-municipal cooperation, to be supplied from one source point. *ApaSan* will explore and study various sanitation options for suitability, i.e. wastewater (WW) collection and disposal, condominial or collective septic tank systems, or, if not justified by sufficient water use and WW flow, simple, hygienic individual HH toilets, i.e. Ecosan (dry system) HH toilets, or similar.

35. The WASH concept (water-sanitation-hygiene) will be pursued in Phase III for improved health, personal hygiene and comfort, as well as for environmental protection and groundwater restoration, as all of the project areas have shallow aquifers, mostly polluted with human waste.

III. OBJECTIVE (*beyond TORs*)

36. The overall objective of the external review is threefold – the second and third objectives were added to the TORs post-mission.

- To confirm the project's results to date for accountability and strategic steering purposes and to assist SDC/SCO-M and the Implementing Agency in:
 - Drawing conclusions on the level of achievement of the project objectives (outputs/outcomes) stated in the project documents and on the efficiency / effectiveness of the project implementation;

- Formulating evidence-based recommendations about planning of the project's next phase (strategic approach, priority lines of actions, necessary changes and adjustments), and
- To present the future role of *ApaSan* in the context of the new Framework Agreement with GIZ and propose options of cooperation.
- In addition, the Evaluation Team was asked to look into the new *Swiss Development Strategy for Moldova 2014-2017*, expressing views on how to
 - Integrate recommended key components of the *Institutional Framework Assessment*, of October / November 2013,
 - Establishing synergies between domains – Water / Health / Migration, and on
 - Migration – how to assist developing a *Moldovan Diaspora* with possible links to the water / health sectors.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW – (TORs expanded)

37. The project review methodology included the followings key elements:

- Information collection and desk review of relevant *ApaSan* project and Moldova water and sanitation sector supporting documents;
- Interviews and exchanges with representatives of the *ApaSan* project team, relevant Moldovan authorities, donor organizations and key project stakeholders, i.e. municipalities, local public administration, water consumer associations, water utility companies, support service providers, NGOs, project beneficiaries;
- Field visits to both concluded and ongoing projects;
- Compilation of key findings and presentation of preliminary conclusions to SCO-Moldova during debriefing at the end of the mission.

38. The Evaluation Team (ET) carried out most of the meetings and field visits as a team, i.e. three pairs of eyes see more than two, particularly if they represent three different and cross-feeding perspectives. In exceptional time-task conflicts the team separated according to specialties.

39. The mission's preliminary findings were illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation at the SCO Moldova on 4 July 2014. A debriefing session with SDC Berne has taken place on 17 July 2014 – *Terms of Reference – Annex 1; Mission Agenda – Annex 2; List of People Met – Annex 3.*

V. FINDINGS

Achievements in Phase II

40. After Phase I a management change and a re-designed project team was put in place with the idea of increasing approach flexibility and putting more emphasis on addressing social issues, as well as more innovating approaches, for example shifting from a model approach for communities on a *first-come / first-served basis*, to a systematic planning approach and to multi-village systems based on treated surface and deep well sources, managed by institutional and

professional operators, such as formal public utilities, rather than the informal WCAs. They have proven satisfactory in the current context, but will unlikely have the capacity to manage multi-village systems. Several stakeholders see WCAs as temporary solutions only.

41. Overall, *ApaSan* Phase II performance is good. *ApaSan* has successfully achieved some of the less quantifiable but extremely important objectives, like improved health and living conditions. Through the organization of community WCAs, assemblies and meetings to set up the WCAs, populations' awareness on the benefits of potable water and sanitation was raised. Furthermore, WCAs management has empowered communities with trust and confidence to be able to manage their own WSS systems. These achievements may have positive repercussions in future community development activities.

42. One of the main shortcomings of *ApaSan I and II* is the inconsistent application of the WASH concept. Without the parallel application of sanitation and hygiene to water supply, health benefits are not optimized. Some of the shortcomings have less to do with *ApaSan's* performance than with too optimistic projections listed in the logframe (*Annex 4 – updated Logframe 30.06.2014*). For example, the logframe foresaw the formulation of 6 General Water Supply and Sanitation Plans (GWSSP), while only one is expected to be finished by the end of 2014. The reason is that *ApaSan* has rightly chosen a full participatory approach, including tendering which took much longer than expected. However, the learning exercise of the process is perhaps worth more than the plan itself.

Outcome 1 – Sustainable Service Delivery Models

43. Water Supply

Systems built are expected to be sustainable in the short- to medium term, maybe even long-term, depending on the extent of WCAs functioning. WCAs receive continuous training, but they are informal organism and not formal institutions. They depend to a large extent on the persons / personalities leading them. Water resources for the supply schemes of Phase II have proven sufficient and tariffs are general affordable.

44. The project has followed the non-discriminatory approach, where marginal groups should not be excluded from receiving water supply – even if they are at times unable to pay for the service. However, the establishment of 'social tariffs' or a social fund to help such groups has not been accepted everywhere and needs to be studied further. Specific achievements under *Outcome 1*:

- Total 26 WCA-based village systems were implemented – ***ApaSan I + II*** (~40,000 beneficiaries) – of which in ***Phase II*** – 9 were built (15,000 beneficiaries in 11 villages of 7 raions); 6 are currently under construction, expected to be finished before the end of Phase II.
- Planned new options for water production from spring catchments to treated river water and deep wells – some are partially implemented with multi-village / inter-communal organizational options, i.e. public utilities, including 2 ethnic minority villages (1 inter-communal scheme: Boltun and Cristesti; 5 multi-village schemes: Carpineni (Gagarin & Tarlichici), Graguesnii Noi & Horodca Mica, Bacseni & Bolduresti, Trebujeni & Butuceni-Morovaia, Vulcanesti & Cioresti).
- Training and monitoring of 26 WCAs is ongoing.

45. Systems / models are available for replication, though neither donors nor government agencies have replicated them. Major reasons may be that each donor works for its own

agenda. While Policy Dialogue and sector coordination testify positively about the Swiss approach, most donors remain keen on planting their flag on their project. A notable exception is the Ecosan school toilet which has received considerable acclaim by municipal and education authorities.

46. On the other hand, the ‘*scaling-up*’ concept has not taken hold yet. *Scaling up* in reality means disposing of more funds than are available from *ApaSan*’s own budget. Therefore, if *scaling up* transcends the slogan to become a key objective, *ApaSan* in Phase III may consider teaming up with other donors – i.e. with GIZ under the new SDC-GIZ CA – and with the two government development funds, especially the National Regional Development Fund (NRDF). The NRDF is dedicated to infrastructure, and allocates about 30% of funding to the water sector.

47. Under the SDC-GIZ CA and with a separate cooperation agreement with the NRDF, *ApaSan* might with its input *leverage* or raise additional funding. Its contribution could typically consist of 10%-20% for investments, technical know-how, training of operators and institutional capacity building, while the NRDF would finance 50%-60% and the community 20%-30% of investments. Such an arrangement would synergize GIZ and *ApaSan*’s know-how with NRDF funding, thereby increasing much lacking absorptive capacity – and chances for sustainability.

48. *Sanitation*

7 Constructed Wetlands – all of them were planned under Phase I, but only 3 were built under that Phase; the others were built under Phase II. Those built for social institutions with captive markets – schools, a prison – are successful; the other may be considered less than successful. Although the CW technology is viable, they were designed without taking into account that (i) HH did not connect to the main sewer, because of the high connection cost, partially due to the dispersed housing character of the villages, and (ii) that the minimum WW flow per person has to be between 30 li/day and 50 li/day – which is mostly not the case. At present the non-institutional CWs are utilized at an average of 10% to 20% only. These are the physical results:

- 3 built for social institutions.
- 4 built for schools allowing household (HH) connections.
- Training operators and monitoring their performance.

Ecosan toilets (dry toilets) – especially for schools have been a success. Initially during Phase I the cost was too high to evoke the interest of municipalities, unless they were highly subsidized, *ApaSan II* was able to reduce the cost considerably to the point where demand by municipalities and raion education authorities is growing. *ApaSan II* has also made inroads into the ‘market’ of HH toilets with the HH-type Ecosan dry toilet – see details below:

- 34 Ecosan school toilets were built and are in operation in Phases I and II; 17 additional ones to be operational by end 2014.
- 62 HH Ecosan (individual family) toilets were built, plus 5 in mayors’ offices.
- Individual Ecosan toilets were promoted in 4 *raions* (districts).
- The project achieved a remarkable average cost-reduction of 40% for school *Ecosan* toilets.
- *Raion* education and municipal authorities contributed on average 25% to the cost; future local contributions may reach as much as 50%.

49. Overall – for the *WatSan* component – *except for the WASH concept* - the original logframe targets are expected to be met by 80%.

Outcome 2 – Adequate Implementation Capacity

50. Implementation capacity for *ApaSan* projects may be judged adequate. However, this may be due to *ApaSan* being an international donor agency, paying well and paying in time, and therefore local entrepreneurs are keen in performing well. This may mask a different reality for locally funded projects. Overall absorptive capacity is still weak – see introduction. Reliability of local service providers, i.e. for O&M, has not yet been tested, as WCAs are still closely accompanied by *ApaSan* through regular training. Therefore the long-term sustainability of WCAs, especially those not within ‘reasonable’ distance from municipal WSS utilities, is at this point not secured. For implementation details - see below:

- Implementation construction capacity is adequate for decentralizes WS and sanitation schemes of *ApaSan* Phase II.
- The project successfully established a Community of Practice (CoP) – following the example of the SDC-sponsored AGUASAN.
- The impact of CoP and its effect on capacity building at large, needs to be monitored and recorded.
- The management capacity – WCAs, local public authority (LPA) – was improved by *ApaSan*. Eight (out of 26) WCAs have elementary Operation and Maintenance (O&M) plans in place. *Logframe targets are expected to be met by 80% at the end of Phase II.*
- Planning capacity at *raion* and local level is limited, lacking public framework and interest. – Though the Phase II logframe target was to establish and train 6 Regional Planning Committees, only one *raion*-level Committee and General Water Supply and Sanitation Plan (GWSSP) – the *Ialoveni Raion Plan*, as a pilot – is expected to be available by end 2014. The participatory planning process introduced by *ApaSan* is an elaborated learning exercise, including tendering and evaluating tenders. It took much longer than expected when planned by end of 2011. However, the learning from doing (planning) is an invaluable experience to be documented and disseminated for replication. – Accordingly, planning capacity was considerably improved by *ApaSan*.

Outcome 3 – An Enabling Environment

51. The ‘*Enabling Environment*’ refers to several concepts. Key of them are (i) the capacity of the community to manage their own systems, (ii) does the legal, regulatory and institutional framework favor (rapid) increase of service coverage, i.e. *scaling up*, and (iii) are the funds and capacity for scaling up readily available.

52. The capacity of the communities to manage their own systems is for now adequate – see also above. The legal, regulatory and institutional framework is at present too complex to favor an enabling environment’. It is expected that with work towards EU accession these complexities and overlapping and conflicting political interests which at the cause for many sector inefficiencies, will be ironed out. This may, however take time – and, in the meantime, affect the *scaling up* potential. Measures to circumvent these issues include close collaboration between donors – i.e. SDC/SCO with GIZ, as well as others – and with government investment funds, such as the NRDF.

53. With a clear emphasis on developing models and providing technical assistance to local operators, *ApaSan* continues to focus its activities on outcomes 1 and 2. By its own account, *ApaSan* estimates that only 5% of its work time is used for *Outcome 3*. This is insufficient to bring about the necessary change in the ‘enabling environment’ – which in turn may accelerate a sustainable increase in WSS service coverage.

54. On the positive side:

- *ApaSan* was successful in mobilizing “*champions*” – people with influence and dedication to the project, for example the mayors of *Cristesti* and *Cioresti*, who by their own motivation successfully mobilized the WCA Committee.
- *ApaSan* also successfully initiated and carried through regional (raion level) planning at *Ialoveni Raion*, established a Raion Planning Committee and a General Water Supply and Sanitation Plan (GWSSP) is expected to be ready by end 2014 – to be replicable by mid-2015. – The process of formulating this GWSSP was long but an excellent learning exercise that ought to be documented and disseminated.

55. On ***Policy Dialogue*** in general, *ApaSan* sees itself in a supporting role to SCO-M, the leading donor for the sector and co-chair of the Sector Coordination Council. *ApaSan*’s own interventions focused largely on promoting its own models by anchoring them in the national legal and policy framework and did not (at least not systematically) address other issues relevant for successful replication of models (such as motivation of local actors, local capacity and knowhow, access to existing funds for investments). Also, *ApaSan* may have focused more on the sector’s systemic short-comings on a national level. *ApaSan* has a wealth of practical experience with which to contribute to the sector at large. In the course of implementing Phase III, *ApaSan*’s expertise may further gain from the following new experiences:

- (i) Expanding the rural WSS approach to treated surface water and cluster villages managed by public utilities,
- (ii) Rural tariff structures (work done for the *ApaSan* project),
- (iii) Promoting the WASH concept countrywide,
- (iv) Seeking and promoting alternatives to canalized WW evacuation, and
- (v) Addressing long-term interests of ***Transversal Themes***, i.e. ***gender*** – a more gendered perspective of water and sanitation needs and solutions; the role of women in the sector; ***governance*** – delineating hitherto overlapping and even conflicting sector responsibilities within ministries and between ministries, coordination, rather than competition, between the main ministries dealing with water, MoE and MRDC, the distribution of tasks relating to investment and operation between central, regional and local authorities, as well as clarifying and unifying funding criteria for transparency’s sake and to bolster funding efficiency, and ***human rights*** – inclusiveness in access to water and sanitation (vulnerable groups, *right to water*).

Questions and Answers according to TORs (Questions – pages 3-6)

56. While many of the answers to the questions below are summarized above, in some cases the detailed answers (below) may provide more insight into the Moldovan WSS sector:

57. *Performance achieved by the ApaSan Project*

i) Reflect on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the main project results against the initially planned assumptions.

Answer

This question was widely covered above.

ii) What are the effects (positive and negative) of the project on both population and institutional / organizational level? Explain how products / services from the project will produce effects and changes for the target groups.

Answer

Positive effects of the project include among others covered above:

- *Proven decentralized spring-water based, WCA managed WSS models accepted and integrated in Government Water Strategy. Although this model has limited potential, as unpolluted groundwater is limited. This gives also the impetus for forward looking options: treated surface water for cluster of villages and managed by a public utility.*
- *Learning at all levels – for example, (i) the creation and training and supervising of WCAs is an invaluable experience for the Local Public Authorities (LPA); the ‘enabling’ effect provides rural populations with self-esteem, capacity and confidence to undertake other development endeavors; as well as (ii) the establishment of the Community of Practice (CoP) – a platform for experience sharing.*

Negative effects are few:

- *The inconsistent application of the WASH concept, i.e. combining in each project water supply with sanitation and hygiene, clearly an SDC policy, may have failed to optimize the full benefits of drinking water.*
- *Constructed wetlands (CW) – though an excellent technology – have not proven appropriate for the Moldovan rural context – not sufficient water flow and high connection costs. There is no negative impact on the people, other than funds spent that serve a limited purpose.
Alternative WW and human waste disposal system need to be investigated and tested, i.e. collective (community) septic tanks, small-bore condominium systems – and individual HH solutions, i.e. Ecosan and similar. The latter may prove for now to be the most suitable solution that could bring both, HH hygiene as well as prevent further shallow aquifer contamination; in the long-run safe HH solutions may even restore shallow aquifers.*

iii) Outreach: were the needs of the population groups addressed properly? Does the level of out-reach of WES systems in the target communities correspond to the inclusiveness and non-discrimination principles?

Answer

- *The needs of the people served with potable water by 26 WCAs have been met satisfactorily.*
- *The WASH principle was not systematically applied at HH / community level (see above), other than by installing school Ecosan toilets – very successfully - and in relatively few cases Ecosan HH toilets.*
- *ApaSan has made great efforts to be inclusive and non-discriminatory and largely met that goal, though the inclusiveness for vulnerable groups has not been fully resolved yet, i.e. social tariffs (not accepted by some WCAs), cross-subsidy tariffs, social tariff fund need further explorations.*

iv) Estimate the degree of articulation of human, social and institutional (soft component) and technical / engineering (hard components) of the project and the impact on long-term operation and maintenance.

Answer

- *Policy Dialogue and SCC – At government level, bringing more coordination and transparency into the institutional maze, is a more difficult endeavor; it is highly political and therefore can hardly be a realistic target and logframe objective for ApaSan – and*

even SCO to achieve. It will need to be tackled in coordination with other donors and in the context of EU accession work.

v) Reflections on efficiency and effectiveness of the project intervention: were the allocated resources used properly and in an efficient manner to achieve the set up objectives?

Answer

- *Generally, resources were used efficiently and effectively – achieving about 80% of physical and ‘capacity building’ targets. The question is – are these results sustainable? (see below).*
- *An exception was investments in CWs, 4 of which are utilized only at about 10%, with little perspective of a rapid increase in the foreseeable future.*

vi) What were the main implementation constraints during Phase II and how do you appreciate the project’s ability and efforts to overcome them?

Answer

- *The WASH concept was not systematically applied (see above), therefore the full benefits of potable water may not be achieved.*
- *The argument ‘sanitation is not a priority for most HH’ is as old as development itself and as such only partially valid. It befits the donor or implementing agency to rigorously promote the concept by sensitizing the communities, as well as the responsible government agencies (parallel development of water and sanitation (the WASH concept) is in the country strategy, as well as a principle of SDC sector policy), so as to contribute at once to HH hygiene and health, improved living conditions, as well as to an improved environment for the community, i.e. prevent further shallow groundwater pollution.*

vii) Assess project-bound risks and potentials and the efficiency of ApaSan risk-mitigation strategy.

Answer

Risks:

- *Current WCA based decentralized supply systems may in the long run not be sustainable, as spring and deep well water resources are limited, and WCAs may not be able to manage growing responsibilities, for instance if and when management of WW and human waste disposal may be added to WCAs tasks.*

Risk Mitigation Measures:

- *ApaSan is fully aware of these limitations and is already planning and working on expanding its approach to treated surface or deep well water intake and supplying several communities (clusters) with municipal, public utility management.*
- *In the next phase ApaSan may need to do more to prepare WCAs to a different role, in case their supply systems will be taken over by a regional water utility (Apa-Canal) or a public utility, a possibility which may in certain cases already apply soon.*

viii) Evaluate sustainability and durability of project results; identify eventual challenges and outline the potentials to address them.

Answer

- *It is too soon to evaluate real sustainability and durability of project results. This should be done in a post-project assessment, i.e. 2 or 3 years after the project closes. – So far the potential for sustainability of WCA managed systems is medium.*
- *It is not yet clear how WCAs will perform, once ApaSan's backing is gone. It is important that these risks are addressed early on in the preparation of an ApaSan phase-out, i.e. are there nearby public utilities that could take over WCA support, or even absorb their management responsibilities – and bestow WCAs with other functions, such as being responsible for O&M?*

58. **Relevance of ApaSan project to the country / sector context**

i) Assess the applicability of the strategic approach (strategy of intervention) of the project with regard to the sector context and country development objectives.

Answer

- *Water Supply – decentralized rural spring water WS systems, WCA managed, are relevant in the current project context, where alternative water sources and management systems are not available. In the longer run, especially post-ApaSan, these systems should be supported or taken over by municipalities, or public utilities (see above).*
- *The relevance needs to be enhanced by applying systematically the WASH concept.*
- *Sanitation – Ecosan toilets for schools and HH are very relevant – see above.*

ii) Is the sector framework favorable for creating the basic conditions for sustained scaling-up of decentralized WES services delivery models? What are the drivers and restrainers of change?

Answer

- *As mentioned above, the current sector framework is too complex and too fragmented to be favorable for sustainable scaling-up of any system, as it lacks an institutional memory as well as capacity allowing replication of successful models and adapting to changing contexts.*
- *If there is the political will to adapt and adjust the framework to the actual needs of the sector, as has repeatedly been voiced in the various forms of sector / policy dialogue – there is a potential for replication and scaling up. Local and donor funding is available – the NEF as well as the NRDF have more financial resources than they currently are able to effectively use – absorptive capacity is at low 65%.*

iii) What is the perspective of decentralized WES models within the tendency of regionalization of water/sanitation services and promotion of large-scale water schemes by sector authorities?

Answer

This question has been answered abundantly in previous sections.

iv) What are the main challenges / limits of on-site sanitation (including constructed wetlands - CW) and how do these models fit into the country sanitation strategy with regard to rural sanitation in Moldova?

Answer

This question was discussed in previous sections.

v) What would be the influence of river basin organizations and professionalization of water companies on ApaSan decentralized WES models?

Answer

- *Integrated water resources management – IWRM – applied on river basins is not only a key strategy in the Government’s Water Strategy; it is also a potential driver for replication of decentralized systems. The IWRM approach is also a harmonizer between the different water users – upstream and downstream – and through its fully transparent participatory methods, it would help prevent and resolve water use and discharge conflicts.*
- *Ideally the ApaSan, in cooperation with GIZ, might be the entry point for IWRM, by selecting one or several sub-river basins for the decentralized WASH approach, while in the course of project implementation Basin Committees would be created in which all stakeholders / interestees in the basin would be represented.*

vi) Evaluate ApaSan’s contribution / voice in policy dialog and its position among similar development projects. What is the role of ApaSan in Policy Dialog (PD) and how does the project explore the coordination platforms, i.e. Sector Coordination Council (SCC), Water Initiative PD, PWH, CoP and other information exchange tools to secure the support of policy makers and relevant Moldovan national authorities for SDC decentralized WES service delivery model.

Answer

ApaSan supports and provides inputs to SCO’s PD and its (lead) role in the SCC.

- *According to observers SCO-M’s engagement with the donor coordination group, the SCO coordinator’s personal relations and her professional commitment have contributed considerably to this relative success. To make this ‘success’ lasting and sustainable, it should be institutionalize it, i.e. creating within SCO an institutional vision that will be pursued regardless of the SCO coordinator in charge. This may have happened already, but needs to be strengthened in Phase III.*
- *The potential of uniting the donor community so as to speak with one voice is limited. Donors are primarily concerned with their own agenda. But efforts to coordinate and cooperate must go on. SCO has a particular interest in linking up with the EU partners in view of the EU Association Agreement which is likely to set the trend for policy dialogue in the next years.*
- *In the future, SCO / ApaSan may want to look at the bigger sector picture, i.e. at ways of resolving systemic sector constraints – discord within the sector agencies, non-transparency, (rural) tariffs, norms and regulations – all of which will be key elements for the government’s thrive for EU accession – see also above.*
- *In the new phase, SCO / ApaSan may also promote the IWRM concept, as well as the need for a systematically updated sector data bank – both of which are recommended to be included in the future SDC/SCO sector development activities.*

vii) What would be the impact of expected changes in water tariffs (as result of law on water and sanitation services) on ApaSan WES models’ sustainability?

Answer

- *Until now professional rural tariff structures have not been enforced. Tariffs are highly political – like everywhere. One of the key tasks of the new Regulator to be instated in the foreseeable future will be setting up a new tariff structure and calculation method – one that would foresee full cost-recovery, with focus on urban areas.*
- *It is clear, urban tariffs cannot and should not apply to rural areas, since conditions are different. Special rural tariff calculation models should be foreseen – models that address inclusiveness (vulnerable groups, human rights) while covering O&M costs and to a certain degree replacement costs. Full investment amortization is unlikely to function*

in today's Moldovan rural context – and it does not function in most developing countries. Full cost recovery does not work in urban areas for political reasons. – Why should rural populations, generally financially worse off than their urban peers, not benefit from the same (or even increased) government subsidies?

- *ApaSan may be / should be pro-active in organizing with the new Regulator a special working group for designing rural water tariffs – lest urban tariffs may be imposed on rural dwellers.*

viii) *Outreach* of public awareness and community mobilization for decentralized WES services was promoted by the *ApaSan* project. – Did the *ApaSan* social mobilization activities contribute to more active engagement of local communities in WES service delivery and management models and their better understanding of need for participation in the planning and decision making process?

Answer

- *ApaSan has been rather successful in community mobilization, including in bringing on board Local Public Administrations (LPA); many mayors have taken an active interest in the functioning of WCAs. In some cases, at least in the two visited by the mission – Cristesti, and Cioresti of the Nisporeni district – the mayor is the “champion” - the driver – of the project. This is positive, but the WCAs need to be institutionalized within the LPA, so that they continue to function well, if and when the “champion” leaves.*

ix) Assess the effectiveness and ability of WCAs to sustainably operate and manage water supply systems and how this community-based model will congregate with regionalization of water companies. What are other alternative models for rural decentralized WES systems?

Answer

This question was amply discussed in previous sections.

x) Assess local capacity (local public administrations, civil society organizations and local service providers) to absorb the gained knowledge / experience and to ensure sustainability of project results. How do you assess the capacity of support service providers (design, engineering and construction companies) as result of *ApaSan's* endeavor and what are the potentials for fostering their implication in project design, implementation works and quality control.

Answer

- *For the purpose of implementing the project, local service providers' capacity has been sufficient. This may be due to the special attention (including correct payment of their services) the *ApaSan* project has dedicated to their service delivery – see also above.*
- *Countrywide, however, there is an implementation capacity shortage that only over time and with concerted efforts among donors may be overcome. To cope with the expected new legal and technical standards for EU association, capacity building in technical and water management services will become a priority.*

xi) Identify potential partnerships and alliances that are influential at the policy level and enhance *ApaSan* relevance.

Answer

- *ApaSan's future should clearly be seen as a close collaboration with GIZ (see **Introduction**, above), as well as with other donors.*
- *SCO may want to pursue a closer collaboration with the EU / EC, especially in view of using EU resources more efficiently, converting 'budget support' operations – blank checks, so to speak – to meaningful and transparent investment programs.*

59. **Transversal themes within the project approach**

i) Assess the project's components that are directly or indirectly addressing transversal themes: gender, governance and human rights. Are *ApaSan* interventions implemented in a gender-sensitive way?

Answer

Gender - *women and men have different perspectives on water and sanitation (see for example SDC, Gender & Water: Mainstreaming gender equality in water, hygiene and sanitation interventions, Bern 2005). However, as it is pointed out in a report recently commissioned by SDC (Alex Buzu, 'Gender Assessment of the Water and Health Domains in Moldova and its Relevance for Swiss Co-operation', Chisinau 2013), gender is not an issue at all in the recently adopted strategy papers and laws in the WatSan sector in Moldova.*

Accordingly, in ApaSan's first phase approach, women seemed to be mostly invisible. Limited attention was dedicated to gender at all levels. This has considerably and positively changed in the second phase:

- *The composition of the ApaSan team has become more gender balanced.*
- *Management started to systematically reflect on how to better integrate the gender perspective, particularly in monitoring performance of WCAs (see below).*
- *In areas where ApaSan plans new interventions (under Outcome 1), views of women are now taken up more systematically – to the point that formal public consultations often tend to make men's needs and interests more visible.*
- *Capacity building efforts (Outcome 2) focused on decision makers of WCAs (mostly men) in the beginning, but also offers training for accountants (mostly women).*

*On Outcome 3, ApaSan addressed a series of **governance** issues at different levels (see also the following question). At the project level ApaSan focuses on transparency and participation issues in WCA management and shows clear awareness of the link between transparency and (financial) accountability: Keeping books on the financial contributions of users and making accounting figures available to all users (the billboard in WCAs' offices) is an important element for improving **transparency** and building trust.*

ii) Point to shortcomings in tackling transversal themes. Does the monitoring system generate data on transversal themes for outcome oriented reporting?

Answer

Current challenges in terms of gender, governance and human rights include:

- **Gender** – *Women participation in WCA councils is generally weak, despite a high representation of women in the WCA general assemblies, responsible for electing the council. ApaSan's recommendations to WCAs to increase the number of women in the councils and sub-committees were hardly followed probably due to stereotyped attitudes towards men and women in decision-making roles. Asked why the women are not represented in the WCA council, a WCA president replied that this is normal, since women did not 'dig the ditches and channels', referring to the voluntary work program.*

Thus, ApaSan's approach of "community contribution" building on stereotyped men's contribution (and not making visible women's contributions in the background, i.e. they prepare lunch for the men who dig the ditches) may have contributed to privileging men in decision-making.

- **Gendered cum Governance questions** were introduced by ApaSan in the 2012 monitoring of WCAs performance (participation of women in WCA council, decision-making, transparency, accounting procedures, information to the public, links to local public administration, documentation of decisions). The resulting suggestions were followed-up in the monitoring of WCAs in 2013. Sex-disaggregated data have begun to be collected at various levels – an exercise that needs to continue, since available data are still insufficient to come to meaningful conclusions.
- Like in many SDC supported projects, ApaSan's approach puts strong emphasis on **participation of beneficiaries** – a method that is seen as fostering ownership for the project's vision and objectives supported by ApaSan. This is particularly valid for the initiating phase: A variety of verbal consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries are held. Beneficiaries have to be ready to participate financially or contribute in kind in order to participate to the benefits of the project. However, the concrete design and planning of the intervention seems to be perceived as a rather technical process (under the responsibility of ApaSan engineers) without greater contribution of future users of services, particularly of women. Though, a full and detailed assessment of quality and equality of community participation is beyond this brief evaluation, it appears that the WCAs are also using a participatory approach in operating the WS systems.
- **Tariffs** – the participatory approach also begs the question – how to motivate users to increase tariffs, if needed? – It appears that tariffs are never increased but rather decreased, no matter what the rationale for an increase might be. Since individual users see a short term interest in low tariffs instead of the common interest in the long-term sustainability of the systems, tariff increases are usually voted down. ApaSan provides WCAs with a method to calculate tariffs, but as long as there is no regulatory systems that keeps control on rural tariffs, it is likely that tariffs are fixed haphazardly, depending on what the community considers affordable – see also Section 'Tariffs', under Recommendations, below.
- **Accountability** – is a key element of sustainability. The creation of WCA to manage local but decentralized WS systems was an excellent idea. It is in a way finding a solution in an emergency situation, where rural people have otherwise no access to water services. It is like an extension of Humanitarian Aid to urgent needs but creating a parallel system to what should be operational with a long term perspective – municipal services for water supply; for example, ApaCanals or similar municipal utilities being in charge of and accountable for delivering WS services to big and small communities. WCAs are generally well trained to provide these vital services for now, and possibly in the foreseeable future. According to many stakeholders' views and the ET's assessment, WCAs may not be sustainable in the long run. Water services with the addition of sanitation – the WASH concept – needs to be integrated in a water institutional setting, like regional or raion-based utilities taking the responsibilities to deliver services, with WCAs assuming a supporting role within this institutional structure, for example, being in charge of O&M, but having an institutional backing in case of need.
- **Access to public funds** – in the future, rural communities should also have access to local development funds, i.e. the NRDF. This is not yet the case and has not been promoted for WCAs; in fact, ApaSan has not yet used its 'leverage effect' to mobilize financial resources for rural WSS – see above.

- **Efficiency and effectiveness** – *ApaSan is confronted with outdated and inflexible technical standards stemming from the centralized soviet model of service delivery, prioritizing large and heavy structures instead of light and decentralized approaches. ApaSan interventions for now must respect these deficient standards. ApaSan – as part of an input to the Policy Dialogue - is engaged in processes envisaging modernized, adapted technical standards, sustained by ApaSan’s practical experience and knowhow. Hopefully, the EU association process will boost legal and institutional reforms in this sense.*

iii) What are the effects of the project with regard to the reduction of inequalities between men and women? Have the women benefited equally from the project in comparison to the men?

Answer

No doubt women did benefit from the project, even to a larger extent than men, since piped water supply particularly makes women’s traditional tasks in their care-taking role easier. Whether the project had effects in reducing gender inequalities is difficult to say after this review. However, women did not benefit as men did in terms of empowerment. Decision-making and management in WCAs remains largely controlled by men. The project managed to slightly raise the number of women members in WCA’s in Phase II, but insufficient sex-disaggregated data makes it difficult to assess changes in impact of inequality between women and men.

iv) Reflect on possible entry points for ApaSan regarding equity, inclusiveness and affordability to water and sanitation services from the perspective of human-rights based approach. How do you assess the capacity of LPA to put in practice non-discrimination and human right to water and sanitation and what is ApaSan role in this endeavor?

Answer

According to the Buzu report (also quoted above), significant human rights concerns are the facts that

- *Only 19% of the poorest groups of the population have access to WSS, Compared to 64% of the richest population segment.*
- *Roma HHs have four times less access than the average Moldovan HH. Accessibility seems to be closely connected with income.*
- *Affordability is an issue particularly in the outskirts of cities and in rural areas where necessary per capita investments in WSS tend to be higher than in urban areas. Nevertheless, beneficiaries are expected to contribute proportionally more than better-off urban dwellers to investments as well as O&M – see comment above; para. 56 (ii)*
Answer.
- *The Buzu report also identifies disparities between HHs led by women and those led by men, mainly due to financial differences.*
- *It further emphasizes the vulnerability of people with disabilities.*
- *Moldovan authorities so far have paid little attention to such human rights questions. The various water strategies and policy documents that have been adopted recently do not even mention human rights or gender concerns, be it in the context analysis, in the results framework, or in the implementation framework. Awareness and capacity of LPA to effectively address inclusiveness are limited. – A point to be noted for future Policy Dialogue.*
- *ApaSan commits itself to inclusiveness by aiming from the beginning at complete service coverage in the areas of intervention (see ProDoc Phase 2, p. 17). One of the criteria for*

ApaSan's engagement with a (pre-selected) community is that on average 70% of HH are willing to participate. In fact, ApaSan's internal review of 2014 states that overall more than 90% of households are connected, still with a trend to increase. After the completion of the system, the WCA and the Mayor are expected to take the lead for aiding unconnected households to connect. ApaSan plans to further make efforts and engage with the Mayoralty to explore how connection rates could be raised. However, there was no in-depth analysis of the socio-economic background of those not covered by the service and their motivation to abstain.

- *Inclusion is also about operating water services. The Prodoc mentions as a relevant indicator for Output 6: “% of WES services with operational solidarity schemes”:*
- ✓ *According to ApaSan's internal review solidarity schemes based on social tariffs do not seem to be appropriate and acceptable by users fearing that this may jeopardize financial sustainability of the WCAs.*
- ✓ *ApaSan observed that in Roma villages connection fees for poor families were taken over by others showing solidarity beyond what's otherwise usual.*
- ✓ *ApaSan has engaged in facilitating access of poor and disadvantaged HHs to the system by trying to convince WCAs to adopt social tariffs as well as by asking for case-by-case support from the local public administration.*
- ✓ *A more systematic approach to address inclusion particularly with regard to raising awareness of LPAs on the issue has not yet been developed.*

v) How did ApaSan use the causal link in the chain results to integrate transversal themes into oriented outcomes, indicators and lines of actions; and give recommendations on how to mainstream the cross-cutting aspects.

Answer

- *The current logframe expects in Outcome 1 the availability of “inclusive” WES service delivery models. Output 1 refers to developing a monitoring system for “efficiency, effectiveness and inclusiveness” of such models. However, the relating indicator refers only to the existence of a monitoring system but does not refer explicitly to the quality of the monitoring system. Thus, the indicator is not helpful in this sense.*
- *Outcome 2 also mentions inclusive WES service delivery as an objective of capacity building. This is reflected in expected Output 6 and 7 relating to capacities of WCA presidents and support service providers (but not in relation to the CoP). Training activities for WCA's seemed to include awareness raising on gender and equity issues (see also indicator under Output 6).*
- *Outcome 3 did address some general governance issues in terms of “enabling environment”, the outputs expected related to building alliances and processes for reforming the legal and policy framework. However, indicators were not explicit in relation to governance, gender or human rights issues. This outcome was perceived by ApaSan as too ambitious to be realized (see above).*
- *Concluding – ApaSan's chain results did favor capacity building of implementing partners in equity and gender, but focused less on integrating those aspects into its own activities of designing and implementing service delivery models and in policy dialogue. In practice, first steps were made in this respect during Phase II. ApaSan did manage to provide space for reflection on gender issues at various operational levels.*

VI. SPECIAL OBSERVATIONS

Experience and Technical Knowhow combined with financial strength and political leverage – “Scaling-up”

60. SCO-M / *ApaSan* may capitalize on their cumulative wealth of more than 10 years of experience in the RWSS sector in Moldova, while GIZ has sizable sector funding availability plus a long-standing working relationship with the MRDC and the related NRDF. Together they may leverage and mobilize additional funding from the NRDF to increase the pace of rural water sector funding, with proven technologies and management models, thereby enhancing sustainability of sector investments.

ADA Cooperation and other alliances

61. The Austrian Development Agency has been a long-term supporter of SDC / SCO’s water program. To keep ADA involved in the future Cooperation Agreement between SDC / SCO and GIZ would be an asset. ADA as part of a threesome cooperation team would add to the strength of leveraging efficiently and effectively additional national funding to accelerate rural service coverage applying the WASH concept. Building alliances at various levels may increase the water sector’s absorptive capacity – currently at a low 65%.

The WASH Concept

62. Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is a water sector concept dating back to the International UN-sponsored Water Decade of the 1980s. It has since been adopted by all the major donors and is enshrined in their water sector policies, including in SDC’s. Yet, the concept is not systematically applied, mostly because resources available are limited and priority by governments and consumers points to water supply and neglects the sanitation and health consequences. Without hygienic sanitation and a hygienic HH environment, especially in rural and peripheral urban areas, potable water supply may not yield optimal benefits. To the contrary, additional water to a rural HH that does not dispose of a safe waste and WW disposal system may add to groundwater pollution.

63. Case in point are parts of Moldova, where groundwater is shallow and simple unprotected pit latrines discharge human waste directly into the shallow aquifer – while often a few meters away a handpump collects the groundwater. Though this water is usually not used for drinking purposes, in the frequent summer droughts it may be used for personal hygiene and washing – and even cooking – thereby causing an environmental and health hazard.

Target Setting for Political Dialogue – is it Useful?

64. The Logframe *Outcome 3* sets several targets related to the PD. While the dialogue is useful, particularly with SDC / SCO having a key role within the donor community, it is somewhat unrealistic to expect concrete Outputs in a sector setting as political as the one in Moldova. Even concerted efforts for years of SDC, GIZ, EU and World Bank to reform the dis-coordinated sector institutions have had little to no impact. However, Moldova’s ambition to conform to the rules and regulations required by the EU under its access agreements may be an opportunity to guide the sector into more transparent waters, so to speak. These may be dynamic processes, uncontrollable by individual donors. Notwithstanding the importance and usefulness of the Policy Dialogue, target setting in logframes makes little sense.

Transversal Themes – Gender, Governance and Human Rights

65. All transversal themes – gender equality, access to potable water and hygienic sanitation services, as well as transparency of and accountability for the use of public funds may be seen as topics of human rights. It is important to perceive affordable access to water and water management as a public task and strengthen the respective accountability of public authorities – a principle to be carried over to *ApaSan III*, as well as into the new SDC / GIZ Cooperation Agreement.

SDC / SCO / *ApaSan* Long-term Perspectives and Water Sector Professionals

66. By the end of the envisaged double-phased SDC – GIZ cooperation Agreement, SDC / SCO will have assisted Moldova's water sector for almost 20 years – time to prepare a transfer strategy. The accumulated knowledge of building decentralized, multi-village municipal managed water and sanitation systems will have to be handed over to a well prepared government run institutional structure. To that end, *ApaSan* may consider helping create a pool of qualified sector professionals who are prepared to take over sector responsibilities, paving the way for SCO / *ApaSan* to gradually withdrawing from the front line and leaving management functions to well-trained national professionals.

67. The challenges to successfully turning a donor-driven project / program into a permanent government run endeavor include:

- Availability of qualified sector professionals is scant at present. To change this dismal perspective, *ApaSan* may initiate a program of student interns in collaboration with technical departments of universities. Learning by doing in a well-reputed program with a decent salary scale may be an incentive for young professionals to stay in the country and to put the brakes on the brain drain.
- Low government salaries discourage young graduates and other professionals from seeking potentially interesting government jobs in general, and in the water sector in particular. SDC-GIZ-ADA may want to consider seeking for the sector a merit-based pay-scale. It would not only attract qualified professionals, who otherwise may have left the country, the return on the increased sector efficiency would outweigh the additional payroll cost by a multiple.

EU Accession

68. The EU sees the Association Agreement as a reform agenda for Moldova, based on a comprehensive program of regulatory, legal and normative approximation, around which Moldova's assistance partners can align themselves and focus their assistance. For adapting rules and regulations to EU standards, Romania's experience may be helpful. *Romanian* being an official Moldovan language may further facilitate homogenization.

69. Chapter 1 of Section IV of the Association Agreement relates to public administration reform at all levels, focusing on efficient and accountable institutions and processes, and improved capacities of human resources. To achieve this objective and to attract needed qualified staff, performance-driven wage scales are required – see above.

70. Other chapters refer to alignments with the European Statistical System – Eurostat; transparent public financing, budgeting and accounting – and, perhaps key for the water sector is Chapter 16, cooperation on environment aiming at preserving, protecting, improving and rehabilitating the quality of the environment, protecting human health and sustainable utilization of natural resources (art. 87). Among the focus areas mentioned is “*water quality and resource management, including flood risk management, water scarcity and droughts*”.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

71. The evaluation of *ApaSan II* is providing the springboard for a new orientation. The ten-plus years of SDC experience in the sector is an asset for a horizontal and vertical expansion. - *ApaSan* expertise is projected to synergize with GIZ funding, and the combined leveraging capacity within the MRDC and the NRDF is expected to (i) accelerate service coverage of rural water supply and sanitation, (ii) facilitate legal, regulatory and normative adaptations necessary for EU accession, as well as (iii) help harmonize sector institutions.

ApaSan Performance

72. *ApaSan II* performed well within its TORs (*ProDoc*) and following the logframe, meeting targets on average by 80% (*Annex 4 – updated Logframe*). *ApaSan II* has successfully developed its decentralized, Water Consumer Associations (WCA) managed water supply models, as well as promoted the highly successful *Ecosan* school toilets. *ApaSan II* has also started promoting the *Ecosan* Household (HH) toilet. Patterned according to the SDC-sponsored Aguasan group in Switzerland, *ApaSan* has created a young and enthusiastic Community of Practice (CoP) for exchanging experiences and expertise. Supporting SCO, *ApaSan* has considerably contributed to the Policy Dialogue (PD) and the Sector Coordination Council (SCC). On both of these activities SCO is recognized as the leader among donors by both the government as well as the donor community.

73. *ApaSan II* has demonstrated initiative, designing new water supply models – treated surface WS to clusters of villages and with public utility management systems.

74. However, *ApaSan II* could have applied more creativity – beyond the mandates of the *Prodoc* and the logframe, particularly by (i) investigating and developing new adapted sanitation technologies and by integrating them into water supply projects (WASH concept); (ii) more systematic recording and disseminating of experiences and practices, including through CoP, monitoring their replication impact; and by (iii) widening its *Outreach* – through SDC / SCO on PD and SCC – beyond its own project, on national sector interests – *rural tariff* methodology, cooperation with universities, through AMAC preparing *Municipal and Regional Water Utilities (Apa-Canals)* towards closer cooperation with WCAs in view of taking over their management function in the medium-to long term.

Recommendations

75. Proposals and ideas are formulated in view of priorities and according to the categories (i) physical implementation, (ii) capacity building and policy dialogue, (iii) transversal themes and (iv) integration of new components. The remainder of Phase II may be used preparing Phase III.

i) Implementation and Expansion of SDC / SCO / ApaSan Phase III:

- Combine and integrate water and sanitation and hygiene (the **WASH concept**) in a reoriented approach towards supplying **clusters of villages** with **treated river and deep well water** managed by municipal or regional public utilities; priorities to be determined by regional or *raion* planning.
- Study **different technologies** and combination of technologies for **safe community WW disposal and /or hygienic human waste disposal**; due to lack of effluent water, the immediate solution may be based on improved hygienic and environmentally safe HH sanitation / toilets.

- Promote **scaling up** by **leveraging SDC funds and knowhow** with those of (a) other donors, and (b) the **National Environmental** and **Regional Development Funds**.
- Use WSS as an entry point to initiate **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)**, choosing project area(s) in sub-river basins where the IWRM approach could be initiated – see (iv) *New Components*, below.

ii) Capacity building and Policy Dialogue

- Continue **training and monitoring existing WCAs**, as well as preparing them for an alternative role in cases where regional or municipal utilities may take over.
- Training of **municipal operators and water sector professionals** – sponsoring (technical) university programs – licensing of operators.
- **Document approaches and experiences** for learning purposes, prepare **dissemination strategy**.
- Seek **donor alliances** to (a) develop guiding material for Moldova's needs and to help meet EU Accession regulations, and to (b) help strengthen coordination between sector ministries; **a common sector vision is essential**.
- Use SCC and PD to **seek and promote national sector solutions**, i.e. – rural tariffication, WASH Concept, transparent use of national development funds and more.
- **Update and adjust Guidebook** – including transversal themes.
- Envisage **end-of-project transfer strategy**.

iii) Transversal Themes

- Integrate **gender perspective in to planning**, implementing and monitoring in all WASH activities.
- Continue promoting **inclusive public water services** – water as a human right (water for all, including vulnerable groups) – strengthen responsibilities of public authorities for services: **water to remain in the public domain**.

iv) New components (see *Water Sector Institutional Assessment* – October / November 2013):

a) River basin based Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)

- In the Government's *Water Strategy*, river basin based IWRM is a priority – Moldova with only 500m³ /capita/year of renewable water is under *water stress* – which may affect economic development, if not properly managed.
- It is recommended that this component be closely linked to / integrated into *ApaSan III*, using rural WSS as an entry for IWRM:
 - Choose one or two sub-river basins, and combine with *ApaSan* RWSS projects.
 - Provide IWRM responsible government agency (currently *Apele Moldova* in MoE) – with capacity building, aiming at establishing participatory basin commissions;
- Fostering a bottom-up combined with top-down approach – *Apele Moldova* providing the methodological and planning support in line with the legal, regulatory and policy framework for basin commissions, while on-the-ground work by the *ApaSan* project generates practical experiences feeding into basin commissions.
- Encouraging expansion of related river basin activities (solid waste management, WW collection and disposal preventing river pollution), carried out by LPAs and donors, and organizing awareness campaigns and participatory river basin commission meetings.

b) Water Sector Information Management System (IMS)

- Assist in overcoming weakness and incoherence of sector data needed for intelligible, professional and sustainable water sector development,

- Consolidate mass of data available within donors, government agencies, municipalities, NGOs and consultants into a single cutting-edge technology data operating system.

76. **Preferred solution for both new components** – It is advisable that the *IWRM* project component be integrated into the *ApaSan III* project which may require increasing or reorienting *ApaSan* staffing. The *IMS* component might preferably also be closely linked to the *ApaSan* project, since *ApaSan* would be a prime input provider.

77. The ET recommends against *stand-alone* or independent projects, as they tend to work in ‘silos’ – in isolation and within the confines of their specific tasks. This happened in the past between the SDC/SCO Health program and the *ApaSan* water program, when the absence of collaboration failed optimizing joint benefits. *ApaSan* might be envisaged as an umbrella, under which different components – WSS, IWRM, Health, IMS – could be coordinated to enhance benefits.

78. Special Considerations (beyond TORs)

A. SDC/SCO to support both, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and Ministry of Regional Development and Construction (MRDC)

- Policy support, IMS, IWRM to Min. of Environment (MoE)
- Investment implementation to Min. of Regional Development and Construction (MRDC)
- Bringing the ministries closer together, to cooperate, especially in view of more transparency between the two development funds (NEF and NFRD), might be part of SDC’s lead role in the policy dialogue / SCC – but in alliance with other donors.

B. Seek establishing Synergies between Domains – Water / Health / Migration

i) Linking water and health at the working level, in addition to the Protocol for Water and Health

Designing interwoven activities between the *ApaSan III* water program (WASH concept) and the SDC / SCO Health program. The two projects would ideally cover the same district(s) or water basins, allowing for joint monitoring of results. Child health, for which the WASH component is essential, could be targeted for synergies. Children up to 5 benefit most from the WASH concept.

ii) Migration – Assist developing a Moldovan Diaspora – Exploring possibilities for mobilizing migrants’ skills and knowledge resources for the benefit of their home communities.

Countering the ‘*brain drain*’ by (a) inviting prominent Moldovan water and / or health professionals from abroad to lecture at universities, and/or (b) become consultants for government water related activities, (c) creating a pool of consulting services, supporting Moldovan entrepreneurs exploring and establishing small business opportunities (water / health related), and (d) organizing cultural activities for Moldovans abroad – and more.

iii) Consider *Using Water and Health as a confidence building element in the Transnistria conflict.*

ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Cooperation Office

Representation of the Embassy of Switzerland to Moldova

Terms of Reference

for the external review of the second phase of the Water and Sanitation Project 7F-06540.02 (ApaSan) in the Republic of Moldova (01.06.2011-31.05.2015)

The Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova (SCO-M)/the Representation of the Embassy of Switzerland to Moldova, is soliciting the services of an experienced team of consultants (international and local) to conduct an assessment of ApaSan Project in Moldova, Phase 2 with key recommendations for steering the intervention and for planning the next project phase. These terms of reference outline the framework upon which the prospective consultants shall provide their services to the SCO-M.

1. Introduction

The Republic of Moldova is a small country located on the eastern border of the European Union, lying between Ukraine and Romania with a surface area of 33,846 km². The current population of 3.5 million (excluding Transnistria) is almost half rural (59%). Half of the country's urban population lives in Chisinau. Moldova is currently structured into 32 administrative districts (rayons), 1 autonomous region (Gagauzia) and Transnistria, and five municipalities (Chisinau – the capital city, Bălți, Bender, Comrat-Gagauzia and Tiraspol-Transnistria).

Moldova's water resources are estimated at about 1.32 billion m³/year of which 85% is provided by the two main rivers Nistru and Prut, and the rest 15% is ground water coming from various shallow and deep/artesian wells. This makes Moldova susceptible to climate change and extreme weather conditions. To this end Moldova is qualified as a "water stressed country" with water availability at the critical threshold. With scarce water resources that are susceptible to extreme weather conditions and a dilapidated water supply and sanitation infrastructure, Moldova hardly meets peoples' legitimate basic needs to water and sanitation.

Apart from water availability the quality of water is an issue. Untreated wastewater discharges pollute rivers and groundwater with negative implications for overall water quality. It is estimated that only 45% of the population has access to potable water complying with governmental standards. Rural settlements rely heavily on water from shallow wells, which do not meet water quality norms. The sewerage situation is equally dismal. In rural areas 11% of the population has technical connection to the sanitation networks but in reality no more than 2% benefit from the functioning sanitation facilities. As result, 46% use simple pit latrines with direct percolation to shallow groundwater aquifers, which are, in turn, used through the wells for drinking water supply.

The water and sanitation sector in Moldova is under-developed and faces serious challenges. Infrastructure is collapsing and emergency repairs cannot keep pace with the breakdown in pipes, buildings and mechanical installations. Decentralization of services provision took place without suitable fiscal coverage and resulted in a fragmented number of operationally weak water companies (42 Apa Canals). Continued political interference has prevented water utilities from operating as autonomous institutions and applying cost-recovery tariffs. Low absorption capacity undermines financial sustainability and efficiency of allocated resources.

Key challenge is the poor water governance which is rooted in weak sector institutions with insufficient capacities. The sector institutional set up is rather confusing. There is a wide range of stakeholders entitled with WSS sector management functions. Delineation of tasks and responsibilities between various governmental agencies is not clear. Strategies and resources for the sector are provided without any policy coherence and coordination. The sector lacks an accurate and incisive database.

Despite encountered challenges, the country context is favorable for advancing the core reforms. The initial Association Agreement with EU (Vilnius, November 2013), as well as international

conventions¹ to which Moldova is a Party, provide a clear road-map towards achieving a more efficient management in the water sector. The updated National Water Sector Strategy opens a broad range of options aimed at physical and institutional development. In addition, the new water law and the respective by-laws create favorable conditions for deploying interventions in line with European standards.

2. Swiss support to the water sector in Moldova

Switzerland is active in the water sector of Moldova for more than 13 years by developing and promoting innovative decentralized water supply and sanitation models in line with the European standards. Since SDC presence in Moldova around 40'000 people benefited from improved water supply and almost 14'000 enjoy decent and environment friendly sanitation and hygiene facilities. The geographical area of SDC interventions has been extended from 4 districts of Moldova in 2010 to 14 in 2014. Swiss-supported technology and management solutions are accepted and introduced in the national policy documents. SDC is an acknowledged centre of competence and a reliable partner to sector stakeholders and donor community.

Recently, SDC switched towards a more systemic policy dialog by leveraging its role as a leading donor in the water sector. SDC interventions included improvement of regulatory framework and dissemination of best practices. SDC is supporting since 2010, the establishment of the Sector Cooperation Council which is a joint coordination platform of the Moldova Ministry of Environment and the development partners. In its endeavour in the water sector SDC relies on its strategic partnership with ADA and explores potentials for new long-term alliances with GiZ, EU, EBRD and other development partners.

SDC contribution is complementary to what other donors are supporting in the sector. With limited funds SDC promotes its expertise at the national scale and influence sector-wide processes. Partnering with donor agencies allows SDC to better coordinate and create synergies among interventions in the water sector. With its long-term partnership approach, Switzerland positions itself as a valuable partner in contributing to the sector policy reform processes.

In the new Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Moldova (2014-2017) water and sanitation will continue to be one of the core domains of the Swiss intervention. Within the Water and Sanitation domain, SDC will contribute to improving the access of the Moldovan population to safe drinking water and proper sanitation services through sustainable, affordable and replicable models, especially in rural areas and in small towns. Switzerland intends to pursue its current approach of scaling-up decentralized water supply systems and sanitation solutions by adjusting and optimizing the existing models and piloting new options. Along with the consolidation and geographical expansion of the current models of decentralized water supply systems and sanitation solutions, SDC intends to also contribute to sector-wide interventions with national impact, i.e. to increase its support for institutional reform and capacity building.

3. ApaSan project history and process

From 2001 to 2008 SDC implemented directly the *WatSan* (water and sanitation) as part of the Humanitarian Aid (HA) program. In 2008 SDC concluded the humanitarian aid program in Moldova and converted the intervention into a development endeavor. As a result, the approach switched from direct implementation to contracting-out. In December 2008 Skat (Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development, St. Gallen, Switzerland) was mandated by SDC, based on a public tender, as the Implementing Agency of ApaSan Project.

ApaSan Project, financed by SDC with co-funding from ADA, started its activities on December 1, 2008 with a 5 months start-up phase (Dec. 2008 – Apr. 2009). During the start-up period the handing over of the project from SDC Humanitarian Aid to Skat was concluded, and local Project Facilitation Unit (PFU) was registered officially as Skat Foundation Moldova.

ApaSan Phase 1 (May 2009- May 2011) capitalised on reputation, achievements and experience of SDC *WatSan* Programme and developed new innovative decentralized potable water and sanitation models applicable for cost-effective up-scaling. The aim was to institutionalize these practices by

¹ Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus convention), Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the Protocol on Water and Health.

positioning Moldovan stakeholders as key promoters of these models. ApaSan Phase 1 was subject to SDC External Review (Nov 2010) which concluded high relevance of the project to the country needs.

4. ApaSan Phase 2

The ongoing ApaSan Phase 2 started on 01.06.2011 and ends on 31.05.2015. Since the overall performance of Skat is satisfactory, no tender process was foreseen for Phase 2. Therefore, the Implementing Agency remains Skat Consulting Ltd.

The overall Project goal is to ensure that the basic conditions for the sustained scaling-up of inclusive decentralized WES services delivery models are met in Moldova. As the main objective is to promote the replication of developed models and previous experience, the role of Skat will change from implementation to facilitation.

In order to reach the overall goal, the intervention strategy of the current Project Phase is structured in three levels (national/system, rayonal/district and local/community) and aims to achieve the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Sustainable Service Delivery Models: Making available for replication proven and inclusive decentralized WES service delivery models (in water supply, on-site sanitation and wastewater collection & treatment) for rural communities.

Outcome 2: Adequate Implementation Capacity: Enhancing the capacities of the communities, local public administration, civil society and services providers for planning, implementing and managing inclusive decentralized WES services delivery.

Outcome 3: An Enabling Environment: Fostering legal, institutional, regulatory, normative, procedural and knowledge frameworks in the Moldovan water sector which are conducive to an effective scaling-up of decentralized WES services delivery models.

Target groups and beneficiaries are mainly local governments (municipal and district level), support services providers (design and construction companies), Water Consumers' Associations, civil society organisations. Ultimately, ordinary citizen will benefit from improved WES services in their constituencies.

The geographical coverage of the Project does not have any specific preferences; it aims at rural areas which meet ApaSan prerequisites. However, Project activities will be extended to other regions, e.g. Gagauzia and South Moldova shall specific opportunities to demonstrate the potential of decentralized WES models arise.

The ApaSan Phase 2 was subject to an internal self-assessment mid-term review (Oct 2013) which evaluated project current progress and considered necessary adjustments for the remainder of the Phase 2.

5. Objectives of the external review

The overall objective of the external review is to confirm the project's results to date for accountability and strategic steering purposes and to assist SDC/SCO-M and the Implementing Agency in:

- (a) drawing conclusions on the level of achievement of the project objectives (outputs/outcomes) stated in the project documents and on the efficiency/effectiveness of the project implementation;
- (b) formulating evidence-based recommendations about planning of project next phase (strategic approach, priority lines of actions, necessary changes and adjustments).

The review is expected to address the following questions:

5.1 Performance achieved by the ApaSan Project

- Reflect on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the main Project results against the initial planned assumptions.
- What are the effects (positive and negative) of the Project on both population and institutional/organisational level? Explain how products/services from the project will produce effects and changes for the target groups
- Outreach: were the needs of the population groups addressed properly? Does the level of

reach-out of WES systems in the target communities correspond to the inclusiveness and non-discrimination principles

- Estimate the degree of articulation of human, social and institutional (soft component) and technical/engineering (hard components) of the project and the impact on long-term operation and maintenance
- Reflections on efficiency and effectiveness of the project intervention: were the allocated resources used properly and in an efficient manner to achieve the set up objectives?
- What were the main implementation constraints during the phase and how do you appreciate the Project ability and efforts to overcome them?
- Assess project-bound risks and potentials and the efficiency of ApaSan risk-mitigation strategy.
- Evaluate sustainability and durability of project results; identify eventual challenges and outline the potentials to address them.

5.2 Relevance of ApaSan project to the country/sector context

- Assess the applicability of the strategic approach (strategy of intervention) of the project with regard to the sector context and country development objectives.
- Is the sector framework favourable for creating the basic conditions for sustained scaling-up of decentralised WES services delivery models? What are the drivers and restrainers of change?
- What is the perspective of decentralised WES models within the tendency of regionalisation of water/sanitation services and promotion of large-scale water schemes by sector authorities?
- What are the main challenges/limits of on-site sanitation (including constructed wetlands) and how do these models fit into the country sanitation strategy with regard to rural sanitation in Moldova?
- What would be the influence of river basin organisation and professionalization of water companies on ApaSan decentralised WES models?
- Evaluate ApaSan contribution/voice in policy dialog and its position among similar development projects. What is the role of ApaSan in policy dialog and how does the Project explore the coordination platforms, i.e. Sector Coordination Council, Water Initiative NPD, PWH, CoP and other information exchange tools to secure the support of policy makers and relevant Moldovan national authorities for SDC decentralised WES service delivery model
- What would be the impact of expected changes in water tariffication process (as result of law on water and sanitation services) on ApaSan WES models sustainability?
- Outreach of public awareness and community mobilisation for decentralised WES services promoted by the ApaSan project. Did the ApaSan social mobilization activities contribute to more active engagement of local communities in WES service delivery and management models and their better understanding of need for participation in planning and decision making process.
- Assess the effectiveness and ability of Water Consumers Associations to sustainable operate and manage water supply systems and how this community-based model will congregate with regionalization of water companies. What are other alternative models for rural decentralized WES systems?
- Assess local capacity (local public administrations, civil society organisations and local service providers) to absorb the gained knowledge/experience and to ensure sustainability of project results. How do you assess the capacity of support service providers (design, engineering and construction companies) as result of ApaSan endeavor and what are the potentials for fostering their implication in project design, implementation works and quality control.
- Identify potential partnerships and alliances that are influential at the policy level and enhance ApaSan relevance.

5.3 Transversal themes within Project approach

- Assess the project's components that are directly or indirectly addressing transversal themes: gender, governance and human rights. Are ApaSan interventions implemented in a gender-sensitive way?
- Point to shortcomings in tackling transversal themes. Does the monitoring system generate data on transversal themes for outcome oriented reporting?
- What are the effects of the Project with regard to the reduction of inequalities between men and women? Have the women benefited equally from the project in comparison to the men?
- Reflect on possible entry points for ApaSan regarding equity, inclusiveness and affordability to water and sanitation services from the perspective of human-rights based approach. How do you assess the capacity of LPA to put in practice non-discrimination and human right to water and sanitation and what is ApaSan role in this endeavor?
- How ApaSan used the causal link in the chain results to integrate transversal themes into oriented outcomes, indicators and lines of actions; and give recommendations on how to mainstream the cross-cutting aspects.

5.4 Recommendations regarding project perspectives (Phase 3)

- Identify what activities and products of the project were successful and therefore should be sustained, disseminated and replicated in the next phase of the project. What adjustments are required in the current approach of scaling up to ensure correlation with sector/country development objectives?
- Assess relevant aspects of that have contributed to project success, i.e. thematic approach, main innovations, partnership (s), communication, harmonisation and alignment.
- What challenges do you envisage in the future project phase and what recommendable measures shall be applied by the ApaSan to overcome them.
- What are the perceptions of Moldovan key stakeholders regarding methods and approaches used by the ApaSan project? What are lessons learnt from the current modality of working relationships of ApaSan with project partners and sector professionals? What are the viable options of ApaSan external relationships that ensure support and involvement of Moldovan stakeholders in scaling up WES models?
- Does the ApaSan knowledge management platform ensure efficient communication and high visibility of the project among key sector stakeholders? What shall be considered in the future to enhance ApaSan relevance?
- What are the avenues of ApaSan involvement in policy dialog with a view to linking concrete experience to policy development and influence systemic changes? What are the entry points in building strategic partnerships and alliances and facilitating involvement of private sector in the promotion of water and sanitation infrastructure?
- Recommend strategic directions, possible project adaptation measures, approaches and implementation structures that will serve as a core element for the "Planning Platform" of the next project phase.
- Reflect on the end of project vision that ensures sustainability and consolidation of achieved results and positions ApaSan as an influential player in the water sector. Provide options/proposals for the exit strategy to be developed in line with the specifics of project intervention.

6. Methodology of the External Review

Sound knowledge and thorough understanding of SDC policy principles and strategic guidelines for WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), as well ApaSan project approach within country and sector context are obligatory requirements to make a realistic appraisal of achievements in relation to the set objectives. The project review methodology includes the followings elements but not limited to:

- Information collection and desk review of ApaSan project and Moldova water and sanitation sector relevant supporting documents

- Interviews and exchanges with representatives of ApaSan project team, relevant Moldovan authorities, donor organizations and key project stakeholders, i.e. municipalities, local public administration, water consumer associations, water utility companies, support service providers, NGOs, project beneficiaries
- Conduct field visits to both concluded and ongoing projects
- Compilation of key findings and presentation of preliminary conclusions to SCO-M during debriefing at the end of the mission-assignment.

The above list of steps is not exhaustive and the consultants may engage in other activities deemed important for accomplishing this mandate.

7. Deliverables

- A presentation (power point) at the end of the mission for the debriefing session for discussing the preliminary findings, main conclusions and recommendations.
- A draft report submitted to SCO-M for comments within two weeks from the debriefing.
- A final report (max. 25 pages, font size 11 Arial, annexes not included), revised based on comments and remarks, submitted to the SCO-M no later than four weeks after the mission in Moldova (date will be specified in the contract). The report shall be submitted in one printed (hard) copy and an electronic (e-mail) version.

The report shall be organised alongside the four main chapters included in the present ToR, (performance achieved by the Project, relevance of ApaSan project, transversal themes and recommendations for the future), written in English and has to be comprehensive, unbiased and reader-friendly. It shall comprise the executive summary, background and rationale for the review, description of the methodology, review findings, conclusions, recommendations and annexes (mission program, list of documents consulted, list of persons interviewed, synopsis of field visits' findings, summary of main national documents relevant for WES sector).

The SCO-M reserves the right to request changes in the report or additional information relevant to the External Review exercise.

8. The Evaluation Team

The assignment will be carried out by a team of three independent experts experienced in development cooperation of water and sanitation domain, familiar with transversal themes (gender, good governance and human rights) and program management.

The international consultant in water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) will bear the role of team leader and be responsible for the overall evaluation process. He/she is expected to bring in relevant expertise and knowledge according to SDC requirements and ultimately be the author of the report.

Specific tasks of team leader (international consultant) include:

- Define missions' program and objectives.
- Prepare methodological tools and instruments for desk review, interviews and site visits.
- Carry out interviews with relevant stakeholders and leading specialists.
- Maintain communication with and conduct briefings and de-briefings at the SCO-M and with SDC Head Office in Bern, as the case might be.
- Prepare the report in accordance with the requirements specified in the current ToR.

The consultant on transversal themes will bear the following responsibility:

- Prepare methodological tools and instruments for addressing gender, governance and human rights aspects.
- Identify entry points and make recommendations for mainstreaming gender, governance and human-rights based approach in ApaSan project cycle
- Participate in the briefings & debriefings with the SCO-M.
- Contribute to the preparation of the report.

The local consultant responsibilities include:

- Prepare mission schedules and organize logistics
- Provide relevant documents for the desk review and organize interviews with selected actors /

stakeholders

- Assist the team in carrying out the desk review, interviews, group discussions and site visits (including translation from Russian & Romanian into the English, when necessary)
- Participate in the briefings & debriefings with the SCO-M
- Contribute to the preparation of the report

8.1. Qualification and professional requirements

- Relevant university degree in water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Advanced university degree in water economics, political science/sociology and other related fields will be an asset.
- Excellent knowledge of water and sanitation management, human-rights, governance and gender aspects in the context of project implementation
- Relevant international experience in the concerned areas; field experience in Eastern European and/or CIS region would be an asset
- Familiarity with issues faced by Moldova water sector - a must for the local consultant and an asset for the international consultant.
- Institutional knowledge of SDC will represent a strong asset.
- Excellent and proven experience in similar assessments.
- Excellent analytical skills, ability to propose recommendations.
- Excellent coordination, communication and reporting skills.
- Excellent spoken and written English.
- Working knowledge of Romanian and Russian – a must for the local consultant and an asset for the international consultants.

9. Timeframe

The assignment is foreseen for **June-July 2014** as per the following provisional schedule:

Activities	Team Leader-international consultant (days)	Consultant Transversal Themes (days)	Local consultant (days)
Relevant desk review	4 days	4 days	3 days
Preparation of all logistical support for the mission in Moldova			1 day
Mission in Moldova, including briefing / debriefing with SCO, interviews with stakeholders, project site visits	6days	6 days	6 days
Travel/round trip to Moldova	1 day	1 day	
Debriefing with SDC CIS Division, if needed	1 day	1 day	
Report writing (3 days for the draft report and 1 day to consolidate comments and finalize the report)	4 days	4 days	3 days
Total	16 days	16 days	13 days

The detailed program will be elaborated by the consultants in cooperation with the SCO-M.

10. Documents requested for application

1) *Technical proposal* (max. 3 pages excluding Annexes), which shall include:

- Understanding of the consultancy:
 - Proposed approach and methodology to complete the task;
 - Proposed timeframe.
- Annexes:

- Curriculum vitae of the proposed consultant
- Relevant reference projects from previous successful mandates

2) *Financial proposal*: the financial proposal shall be submitted using the standard form “8B” that is sent together with these Terms of References.

The completed applications shall be sent electronically to Mr. Andrei Cantemir, NPO Water, at andrei.cantemir@eda.admin.ch no later than **14 April 2014**.

Annex 1

Preliminary list of background documents to be consulted

SCO-M will provide the consultants with the necessary background documents / sources of information. The following is a tentative list and will be amended, if necessary:

I. SDC documents

- Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Moldova 2010-2013.
- Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Moldova 2014-2017.
- Credit Proposal 7F-06540.02 “Water and Sanitation Project (ApaSan) in Moldova, Phase 2
- Agreement between ADA and SDC concerning “Water and Sanitation (ApaSan) Project in Moldova” 01.12.2011-31.05.2015
- Water 2015: Policy Principles and Strategic Guidelines for Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)
- SDC Gender Toolkit
- Governance as a transversal theme: an implementation guide

II. Moldova water sector relevant policy documents

- The updated National Moldova Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy for 2014-2028
- The draft Environmental Strategy of Moldova for 2014-2024
- The Water Law nr. 272 as of 23 December 2011
- The approved 16 regulations under the new water law
- Law on Public Services of Water Supply and Sewerage as of 13 December 2013

III. Studies and researches

- Water Sector Assessment of Moldova: Swiss intervention under the new Cooperation Strategy for Moldova 2014/17. Lucas Beck and Leonid Meleca, January 2012
- Moldova: Assessment of Water Sector Institutional Framework. Peter König and Andrei Isac, November 2013.
- Gender assessment of the Water and Health domains in Moldova and its relevance for Swiss Cooperation Strategy 2014-2017. Alexei Buzu 2013.
- EU Review Mission Report for Moldova Water Budget Support Program. November 2012
- 2nd National Report of Implementation of Protocol on Water and Health. May 2013
- 3rd MDG Moldova National Report. 2013
- WB Report Moldova Water Sector Regionalization Review, December 2013

IV ApaSan documents

- ApaSan Project Document (ProDoc), Phase 2
- Mandate for Project Implementation between Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and SKAT Consulting Ltd concerning the Water and Sanitation Project (ApaSan), May 2011.
- Amendment nr. 1 to Mandate Agreement for Project Implementation between Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and SKAT Consulting Ltd concerning the Water and Sanitation Project (ApaSan), May 2012.
- Memorandum of Understanding between SDC and the Ministry of Environment of Moldova concerning the Water and Sanitation Project (ApaSan) Phase 2, July 2011.
- ApaSan Project Yearly Plans of Operation (YPO)
- ApaSan Project Progress Operational Reports
- ApaSan Project Financial and Audit Reports
- ApaSan Project Report on Internal Mid-Term Review, October 2012
- ApaSan Project Final Operational Report Phase 1
- ApaSan External Review Report Phase 1, November 2010
- SDC Management Response to the External Review Report Phase 1
- ApaSan Project End of Phase Report (EPR), Phase 1
- Other ApaSan documents upon evaluators' request, e.g. training reports, studies, etc.

ANNEX 2. MISSION AGENDA – MISSION REVIEW PROGRAM

Review mission Program External Review of the Swiss Project ApaSan Phase II 30 June – 05 July 2014

June 29, 2014

15.10 Arrival by Vienna flight OS 655
16.00-17.00 Accommodation in hotel
17.00-19.00 Team meeting: setting the stage

June 30, 2014

09.00-10.00 Briefing at SCO-M: Andrei Cantemir, Viorica Cretu
10.00-10.45 Meeting Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Constantin Mihailescu - Water and Sanitation Expert
11.00-12.30 Meeting ApaSan project team
13.00-14.00 Lunch
14.30-15.45 Meeting Ministry of Environment: Valentina Tapis – Minister of Environment, Serafima Tronza – Head of Water Management Department
16.00-16.50 Meeting Ministry of Regional Development and Construction: Svetlana Rogov –
Head of International Relations and Investments Division, Valerian Binzaru – Head of General Division for Regional Development
17.00-18.00 Meeting at the National Center of Public Health, Ion Salaru - First Deputy Director
18.00-19.00 Meeting with EU Delegation, Henno Putnik – Attache – Project Manager

July 1, 2014

08.30-09.30 Meeting UNICEF: Dejan Mincic - Deputy Representative; Larisa Virtosu – ECD
Officer, Cornel Riscanu - Chief Health & Education
10.30-11.30 Meeting Apele Moldovei Agency, Veaceslav Vladicescu – Director of AAM, Vladimir Carbune – WSS Division Main Specialist, Radu Cazacu – Head of Irrigation, Monitoring and Supervision Department
12.00-13.00 Lunch
13.00-17.00 Visiting ApaSan projects in Nisporeni district: 1.Cristesti (WCA, phase I WSS, CW);
2.Boltun water intake (in Cristesti): A. Secieru Mayor, A. Mocanet – president of WCA, M. Razvant – ApaSan Engineer

July 2, 2014

09.00-10.00 Field trip: ApaSan projects
10.30-11.00 1. Rusca (CW at women's prison): Tudor Bostan – ApaSan WSS Specialist, Prison Director, Infrastructure administrator
12.30-13.00 Meet construction company Nica, V. Abajeru - Director

13.30-18.00 individual	2. Cioresti (WCA, WSS, Ecosan school toilet, ecosan toilet at primaria, household ecosan toilets)
	3. Vulcanesti (Roma village. WSS in construction, near completion, to be operated jointly by WCA Cioresti), Mayors of villages, WCA, villagers, Mihai Razvant – ApaSan Engineer
18.00-19.00	Internal evaluation team meeting
19.00-20.00	Meeting SDC Health advisor Mathias – SDC Health Adviser

July 3, 2014

09.00-10.00 Howard	Meeting high level policy adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Breda
10.15-10.45	Meeting Community of Practice, Cristian Murariu, Tatiana Gordinscaia
11.00-13.00 specialist	Meeting AMAC: Iurie Nistor – Executive Director, Vladimir Larionov -
13.00-14.00	Lunch
14.30-15.30 Deputy	Meeting USAID LGSP: Scott Johnson – Chief of Party, Alex Pelivan – Chief of Party
16.00-17.00	Discussion with Natalia Cernat, SDC NPO (gender, human rights, good governance)
17.00-18.00	Meeting OSCE, Deborah Ferbet – Political Officer

July 4, 2014

08.30-10.30	Meeting ApaSan team members, Aurelia Ciornei - Capacity development specialist, Julie Bergamin - Planning assistant
11.00-12.00 – Advisor	Meeting GIZ Project “Modernization of Local Public Services”, Dietrich Hahn – International Senior Advisor on Local Public Services, Sergiu Plesca - on Water and Sanitation RDA South, Anatol Burciu – WSS Engineer
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.45-15.15	Meeting with NGO National Environmental Centre, Mihai Mustea – Program Manager
15.00-16.30	Joint reflection and preparation for de-briefing
16.30-18.30	De-briefing: Andrei Cantemir, Viorica Cretu, Jonathan Hecke, Constantin Mihailescu

July 5, 2014

09.00-09.30	Meeting legal individual consultant: Liliana Belecciu
09.30-10.30	Meeting gender individual consultant: Alex Buzu
10.30-16.00	Meeting ApaSan – Jonathan Hecke
16.00-17.00	Drawing conclusions and recommendations for report writing

July 6, 2014

10.00	Check up from hotel Klassik and departure
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ANNEX 3. LIST OF PEOPLE MET

LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

Government officials at central level

1. Valentina Tapis – Minister of Environment
2. Serafima Tronza – Head of Water Management Department, Ministry of Environment
3. Svetlana Rogov – Head of International Relations and Investments Division, Ministry of Regional Development and Construction
4. Valerian Binzaru – Head of General Division for Regional Development, Ministry of Regional Development and Construction
5. Ion Salaru - First Deputy Director, National Center of Public Health
6. Veaceslav Vladicescu – Director of Apele Moldovei Agency
7. Vladimir Carbune – WSS Division Main Specialist, Apele Moldovei Agency
8. Radu Cazacu – Head of Irrigation, Monitoring and Supervision Department, Apele Moldovei Agency

Government officials at local level and local representatives

Cristesti

1. Alexei Secrieru – Mayor of Cristesti
2. Alexandr Mocanet – President of WCA
3. Tatiana Colun - WCA accountant
4. Beneficiaries (households)

Rusca

1. Victor Deviza - Prison Director
2. Mihai Vremea - Intendent

Cioresti and Vulcanesti

1. Gutu Valeriu – Mayor of Cioresti
2. Armasari Vasile - President of WCA
3. Ebrian Simion - Councillor of Cioresti for Vulcanesti
4. Beneficiaries (households)

ODA / Donors projects

1. Constantin Mihailescu - Water and Sanitation Expert, Austrian Development Agency
2. Henno Putnik - Attache – Project Manager, EU Delegation
3. Dejan Mincic - Deputy Representative, UNICEF
4. Larisa Virtosu – ECD, UNICEF
5. Cornel Riscanu - Chief Health & Education Officer, UNICEF
6. Breda Howard – EU High Level Policy Adviser to the Ministry of Environment
7. Scott Johnson – Chief of Party, USAID LGSP
8. Alex Pelivan – Deputy Chief of Party, USAID LGSP
9. Deborah Ferbet – Political Officer, OSCE
10. Dietrich Hahn – International Senior Advisor on Local Public Services, GIZ
11. Sergiu Plesca - Advisor on Water and Sanitation RDA South, GIZ
12. Anatol Burciu – WSS Engineer, MLPS/GIZ

NGOs

1. Iurie Nistor – Executive Director, AMAC
2. Vladimir Larionov – Main specialist, AMAC
3. Mihai Mustea – Program Manager, National Environmental Centre

Individual consultants

1. Liliana Belecciu – legal expert
2. Alexei Buzu – gender expert

ApaSan Contractors

1. Valeriu Abajeru – Director of Nica Ltd.

Community of Practice

1. Cristian Murariu – CoP core member
2. Tatiana Gordinscaia – CoP member

SDC

1. Viorica Cretu – Acting Country Director, SDC
2. Andrei Cantemir – NPO Water and Sanitation, SDC
3. Mathias - Health Adviser, SDC
4. Natalia Cernat, NPO (gender, human rights, good governance), SDC

ApaSan staff

1. Jonathan Hecke - Project coordinator
2. Aurelia Ciornei - Capacity development specialist
3. Mihai Razvant – Engineer
4. Marianna Iacovlev - Financial and administration manager
5. Alina Rotari - Project assistant
6. Veaceslav Druta – Assistant
7. Nelli Cuturubencu - Water and sanitation specialist
8. Dumitru Mamaliga – Engineer
9. Julie Bergamin - Planning assistant
10. Corina Andronic - Communication specialist
11. Tudor Bostan - Water and sanitation specialist
12. Dominik Guidon – Civil Servant

ANNEX 4. LOGFRAME (UPDATED AS OF 30 JUNE 2014)

Strategy of Intervention	Key Indicators	Data Sources & Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Impact (Overall Goal)			
Improved quality of life and public health of the rural population in Moldova by increasing sustainable access to safe drinking water and environmental sanitation	<p>Incidence of waterborne diseases and relevant infectious diseases in target villages* <i>Baseline (2008) – tbd Target – decrease</i></p> <p>% of access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in target districts <i>Baseline (2008) – tbd Target - increase</i></p>	<p>Statistics of Ministry of Health</p>	<p>A: No major epidemics occur over the Project period</p>
Impact (Phase Goal)			
The basic conditions for the sustained scaling-up of inclusive decentralized WES services delivery models are met	<p>Models nationally recognized and institutionalised through legal/regulatory base (evidence) <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - increase</i></p> <p>Budget allocated to models <i>Baseline (2008) – tbd Target - increase</i></p> <p>Share of the models in WES services provision to rural communities <i>Baseline (2008) – tbd Target - increase</i></p>	<p>Law on water and sanitation services, sector strategy, regulations, norms and standards</p> <p>National strategy of financing the WatSan sector (domestic and donors)</p> <p>National WES sector statistics and monitoring tools</p>	<p>A: The GoM is committed and has the political will to decentralise resources and responsibilities to the level of the LPA.</p> <p>R: Tariffs for WES services are fixed according to a political process rather than criteria based on equity, cost recovery and long-term financial sustainability</p>
Outcomes			
<p>Outcome 1: <i>Sustainable service delivery models</i></p> <p>Proven inclusive decentralized WES service delivery models for rural communities are available for replication</p>	<p>% of implemented water supply systems rated as sustainable <i>Target – 80%</i></p> <p>% of implemented on-site sanitation systems rated as sustainable <i>Target – 80%</i></p> <p>% of implemented small-scale wastewater collection and treatment systems rate sustainable <i>Target – 80%</i></p>	<p>Sustainability assessment tool</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p>	<p>A: Acceptance of technologies</p> <p>A: Tendering procedures are fair / transparent</p> <p>A: Public Budgetary and alternative funds are available and accessible for local communities willing to implement WES services</p> <p>R: The sustainability of the systems may be endangered by stressed water resources subject to increased climate variability</p>
<p>Outcome 2: <i>Adequate implementation capacity</i></p> <p>Enhanced capacities of the communities, local public administration, civil society and services providers for planning and implementing inclusive decentralized WES services delivery in target districts</p>	<p>Target districts have approved GWSSPs <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 6*</i></p> <p>Local operators/utilities in target communities have elaborated O&M plans for their WES systems <i>Target – 80%</i></p> <p>No of the support service providers applying the knowledge acquired outside ApaSan <i>Baseline (2010) – 3 Target – 10</i></p> <p>No of corporate knowledge products released by the WES sector CoP <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 4**</i></p>	<p>GWSSPs</p> <p>O&M plans, monitoring reports</p> <p>Feedback from service providers</p> <p>Reports, publications, reviews</p>	<p>A: National orientation and plans in the WES sector are taken into consideration in the regional WES planning</p>

Strategy of Intervention		Key Indicators	Data Sources & Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p>Outcome 3: <i>Enabling environment</i></p> <p>Legal, institutional, regulatory, normative, procedural and knowledge frameworks in the water sector conducive to an effective scaling-up of inclusive decentralized WES services delivery models</p>		<p>Decentralised WES service delivery explicitly mentioned as part of the rural WES strategy</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 1</i></p> <p>GWSSP planning methodology and procedure is approved as standard in the sector</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 1</i></p> <p>No of decentralised WES services delivery models taken up in revised normative framework</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 4</i></p>	<p>WES sector strategy</p> <p>GWSSP guidelines and regulatory act</p> <p>Norms and standards</p>	<p>A: Working relationships with the key stakeholders at national level can be maintained and strengthened</p> <p>R: National sector policy / strategy continue promoting large-scale centralized WES solutions</p>
Outputs				
For outcome1: Sustainable service delivery models				
Output 1	A monitoring system for efficiency, effectiveness and inclusiveness (incl. impact on gender) of implemented decentralized WES systems provides the evidence and learning required for model optimisation	<p>Functioning full-fledged monitoring system</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 1</i></p>	Monitoring and progress reports	<p>R: Lack of qualified design expertise having the experience and willingness to work with decentralized WES systems</p> <p>R: Community projects implemented overstress the (low) ability of the citizens to pay for water supply and sanitation services</p> <p>R: Corruption, e.g. unfair public tendering and contractualisation processes affecting Project success and authenticity</p>
Output 2	The proven decentralized water supply service delivery model is consolidated, extended to alternative water sources, packaged and its replication supported	<p>No of technological options for water production</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 1 Target - 2</i></p> <p>Availability of a comprehensive package of documentation, tools, standards and guidance for replication</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 1</i></p> <p>No of additional demonstration projects</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 4</i></p> <p>No of partnerships for model replication</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 2**</i></p>	<p>Documentation</p> <p>Documentation</p> <p>Monitoring report of implemented WES systems</p> <p>Monitoring report of implemented WES systems</p>	
Output 3	On-site sanitation models (1. institutional, 2. households) are consolidated, complemented and packaged and their replication supported	<p>Availability of comprehensive packages of documentation, tools, standards and guidance for replication</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 2</i></p> <p>No of additional demonstration projects</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 5</i></p> <p>No of partnerships for model replication</p> <p><i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 2</i></p>	<p>Documentation</p> <p>Monitoring report of implemented WES systems</p> <p>Monitoring report of implemented WES systems</p>	

Strategy of Intervention		Key Indicators	Data Sources & Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Output 4	Small-scale wastewater collection and treatment systems are assessed, optimised, built into a service delivery model, demonstrated and packaged	<p>Availability of a comprehensive package of documentation, tools, standards and guidance for replication <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 1**</i></p> <p>Pilot of concomitant water supply and small-scale wastewater collection and treatment <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 1**</i></p> <p>No of additional demonstration projects <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 2**</i></p>	<p>Evaluation report of implemented sanitation systems.</p> <p>Documentation</p>	
For outcome 2: Adequate implementation capacity				
Output 5	Improved capacities of raion local public administrations in target districts for participatory elaboration and implementation of GWSSPs	<p>No of functioning regional planning committees <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 6*</i></p> <p>% of key staff in raion local public administrations in target districts trained according to identified needs <i>Target – 80%**</i></p> <p>No of GWSSP priority project implementations supported / facilitated <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 6*</i></p>	<p>Records of constitutional and subsequent meetings</p> <p>Training needs assessments and training reports</p> <p>Status reports by raion local public administrations</p> <p>Monitoring report of implemented WES systems</p>	A: Local public administrations are willing to engage into participatory sector development planning and management
Output 6	Improved capacities of local communities and local public administration in the target villages for participatory and inclusive planning, implementation and management of WES services based on the principle of non-discrimination	<p>% of key staff in community groups and LPA in target communities trained according to identified needs <i>Target – 80%</i></p> <p>100% of WCA presidents received comprehensive training package (including sensitivity to gender and equity issues)</p> <p>% of women in WCA boards <i>Target – 30%</i></p> <p>% of WES services with operational solidarity scheme <i>Target – 80%**</i></p>	<p>Training needs assessments and training reports</p> <p>List of board members</p>	R: Villagers may be reluctant to engage in the WES sector and refrain from contributing to the implementation, operation and maintenance of WES systems due to lack of trust
Output 7	Improved capacities of support service providers (private sector, public utilities and civil society) for implementing decentralized and inclusive WES services delivery models	<p>% of support service providers involved in ApaSan trained / coached according to identified needs <i>Target – 100%</i></p>	<p>Training needs assessments and training reports</p> <p>Feedback from service providers</p>	A: Regulations, norms and standards are in place for applying the news models
Output 8	Functioning community of practice that enables domestic and international learning and experience exchange for WES practitioners in Moldova	<p>No of meetings per year with rotating chair <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 4</i></p> <p>No of workshops, tailor-made trainings and exposure visits <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 3</i></p>	<p>Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Workshop, training reports and visit reports</p>	A: Practitioners are interested to learn from others and willing to share their knowledge

Strategy of Intervention		Key Indicators	Data Sources & Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
For outcome 3: Enabling environment				
Output 9	Knowledge management processes regarding decentralized WES services delivery are anchored within the relevant sector stakeholders	Defined national KM framework for decentralized WES services delivery <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 1</i> No of developed KM tools for dissemination of analysed and systematized information <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 3</i>	KM framework, ToR of relevant stakeholders Products of KM tools	A: A national stakeholder is interested to take over responsibility for KM
Output 10	Established partnerships and platforms for policy dialogue on the improvement of legal and strategic framework for decentralised WES service delivery	No of issues critical for decentralized WES service delivery that are addressed in inter-ministerial workgroups <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 10</i> No of partnerships with donors or partners on national level to influence GoM on improving legal and strategic framework for decentralised WES service delivery <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 2**</i>	Minutes of meetings of inter-ministerial workgroups MoU or reports on joint activities with international donors or partners on national level	A: The national key institutions are receptive to integrate innovative experiences, lessons learned and best practices on decentralized WES services delivery into policy and strategy formulations. R: Change of political agendas on national level in disfavour of decentralization of responsibilities and resources
Output 11	Established workgroups on the revision of norms / standards and regulations for the application of decentralised WES models	No of workgroup meetings on revision of technical norms and standards <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target - 8</i> No of workgroup meetings on revision of tendering regulations <i>Baseline (2010) – 0 Target – 8**</i>	Minutes of meeting of workgroups on the revision of technical norms and regulations Minutes of meeting of workgroups on the revision of regulations	A: The inchoate revision of normative, regulatory and legal framework for the WES sector is pursued by the Government and provides decentralized WES services delivery a sound and competitive environment among the other services provision alternatives. A: Abilities to build synergies with other interested international and national actors

* Report on Internal Mid-Term Review Oct. 2013 (Skat, January 2014): Indicator target changed

** Report on Internal Mid-Term Review Oct. 2013 (Skat, January 2014): Indicator not rated anymore because of change of (implementation) approach

Annex 3: Monitoring Framework per 30.06.14 (Adapted after MTR)

Outcome Indicators (OCI) Output Indicators (OPI)	Baseline 2010	Target value 2014 (YPO)	Achievements by mid-2014	Target end of phase 2015	Problems, measures to be taken, comments
Outcome 1: Sustainable service delivery models - Proven inclusive decentralized WES service delivery models for rural communities are available for replication					
OCI 1.1 % of implemented water supply systems rated as sustainable	0	tbd	-	80%	Comprehensive assessment started in 2013 and revealed good prospects. Sound evidence on the sustainability of implemented systems will be available towards the end of 2014.
OCI 1.2 % of implemented on-site sanitation systems rated as sustainable	0	tbd	-	80%	
OCI 1.3 % of implemented small-scale wastewater collection and treatment systems rate sustainable	0	tbd	-	80%	
Output 1: A monitoring system for efficiency, effectiveness and inclusiveness (incl. impact on gender) of implemented decentralized WES systems provides the evidence and learning required for model optimisation					
OPI 1.1 Functioning full-fledged monitoring system	0	1	0	1	1st consolidated monitoring report presents results from monitoring efforts conducted in 2013. Cookbooks (systematized monitoring methodology) for Water Supply, Ecosan and wastewater available towards in the second half of 2014.
Output 2: The proven decentralized water supply service delivery model is consolidated, extended to alternative water sources, packaged and its replication supported					
OPI 2.1 No. of technological options for water production	1	2	2	2	In additional to untreated spring water, the following water production technologies are being introduced: 1. River bank filtration with treatment (in-situ oxidation) in Sculeni (operating since June 2014) and Serpeni. 2. Deep well water with treatment in Trebujeni (planning phase).
OPI 2.2 Availability of a comprehensive package of documentation, tools, standards, guidance for replication	0	1	1	1	Comprehensive draft of the Guidebook for WSS available. Printing and dissemination expected in the second half of 2014.
OPI 2.3 No of additional demonstration projects	0	4	1	4	Out of the 9 WSS implemented 4 are demonstrations in new Raions: Serpeni in Anenii Noi, Trebujeni & Butuceni-Morovaia in Orhei, and Cabaiesti in Calarasi (operating since June 2014).

Outcome Indicators (OCI) Output Indicators (OPI)	Baseline 2010	Target value 2014 (YPO)	Achievements by mid-2014	Target end of phase 2015	Problems, measures to be taken, comments
OPI 2.4 No of partnerships for model replication	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach, Target postponed to Phase 3.
Output 3: On-site sanitation models (institutional, households) are consolidated, complemented and packaged and their replication supported					
OPI 3.1 Availability of comprehensive packages of documentation, tools, standards, guidance for replication	0	2	0	2	Work in progress. A comprehensive draft is expected in the second half of 2014.
OPI 3.2 No of additional demonstration projects	0	8	6	5	Out of the 33 Ecosan school blocks prepared in 2013, 31 are demonstration in 6 new raions (Singerei, Leova, Cahul, Telenesti, Soldanesti, Rezina). 16 blocks are in operation (2013-2014), and 17 additional blocks will be in operation by the end of 2014.
OPI 3.3 No of partnerships for model replication	0	8	6	2	Partnerships established with 6 Raion administrations (Singerei, Leova, Cahul, Telenesti, Soldanestii, Rezina). Additional partnerships are in preparation phase.
Output 4: Small-scale wastewater collection and treatment systems are assessed, optimised, built into a service delivery model, demonstrated and packaged					
OPI 4.1 Availability of a comprehensive package of documentation, tools, standards, guidance for replication	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.
OPI 4.2 Pilot of concomitant water supply and small-scale wastewater collection and treatment	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.
OPI 4.3 No of additional demonstration projects	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.
Outcome 2: <i>Adequate implementation capacity</i> - Enhanced capacities of the communities, local public administration, civil society and services providers for planning and implementing inclusive decentralized WES services delivery in target districts					
OCI 2.1 Target districts have approved GWSSPs	0	1	0	1	MTR: Target end of phase changed from 6 to 1
OCI 2.2 Local operators/utilities in target communities have elaborated O&M plans for their WES	0	tbd	40%	80%	8 out of 18 WCAs visited during the monitoring visits have elementary O&M plans in place. Additional trainings of WCAs targeting planning will be performed in the second half of 2014.

Outcome Indicators (OCI) Output Indicators (OPI)	Baseline 2010	Target value 2014 (YPO)	Achievements by mid-2014	Target end of phase 2015	Problems, measures to be taken, comments
OCI 2.3 No. of the support service providers applying the knowledge acquired outside ApaSan	0	tbd	-	10	Not yet measured. Survey will be conducted in the second half of 2014.
OCI 2.4 No. of corporate knowledge products released by the WES sector CoP	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.
Output 5: Improved capacities of raion local public administrations in target districts for participatory elaboration and implementation of GWSSPs					
OPI 5.1 No. of functioning regional planning committees	0	1	1	1	MTR: Target end of phase changed from 6 to 1.
OPI 5.2 % of key staff in raion local public administrations in target districts trained according to identified needs	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore, merged with indicator above.
OPI 5.3 No of GWSSP priority project implementations supported / facilitated	0	0	0	1	MTR: Target end of phase changed from 6 to 1.
Output 6: Improved capacities of local communities and local public administration in the target villages for participatory and inclusive planning, implementation and management of WES services based on the principle of non-discrimination					
OPI 6.1 % of key staff in community groups and LPA in target communities trained according to identified needs	0	80%	20%	80%	All WCAs staff continuously trained and coached according to capacity gaps identified and demands. Mayors target periodically. Based on the need assessment and capacity development plan, further trainings will be done to cover the capacity gaps.
OPI 6.2 % of WCA presidents received comprehensive training package (including sensitivity to gender and equity issues)	0	100%	50%	100%	All WCAs presidents regularly trained. Further training needed to cover the need and capacity gaps identified.
OPI 6.3 % of women in WCA boards	0	30%	22%	30%	Out of 144 WCAs councillors 35 (24%) are female whereas 3 out of 20 presidents are women.
OPI 6.4 % of WES services with operational solidarity scheme	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.
Output 7: Improved capacities of support service providers (private sector, public utilities and civil society) for implementing decentralized and inclusive WES services delivery models					

Outcome Indicators (OCI) Output Indicators (OPI)	Baseline 2010	Target value 2014 (YPO)	Achievements by mid-2014	Target end of phase 2015	Problems, measures to be taken, comments
OPI 7.1 % of support service providers involved in ApaSan trained/coached according to identified needs	0	100%	100%	100%	Design companies, construction companies, state-licensed technical supervisors for WSS and Ecosan.
Output 8: Functioning community of practice that enables domestic and international learning and experience exchange for WES practitioners in Moldova					
OPI 8.1 No of meetings per year with rotating chair	0	4	2	4	2 meetings with rotating chairs during the first half of 2014.
OPI 8.2 No of workshops, tailor-made trainings and exposure visits	0	3	2	3	Theme of exposure visit identified and preparations started.
Outcome 3: <i>Enabling environment</i> - Legal, institutional, regulatory, normative, procedural and knowledge frameworks in the water sector conducive to an effective scaling-up of inclusive decentralized WES services delivery models					
OCI 3.1 Decentralised service delivery explicitly mentioned as part of the rural WES strategy	0	1	1	1	The GWSSP guideline is part of the new National Water and Sanitation Strategy approved in 2014.
OCI 3.2 GWSSP planning methodology and procedure is approved as standard in the sector	0	1	1	1	
OCI 3.3 No. of decentralised services delivery models taken up in revised normative framework	0	tbd	2	4	No assessed so far. To be conducted within the expected collaboration with GIZ TA to MRDC on norms and regulations.
Output 9 Knowledge management processes regarding decentralized WES services delivery are anchored within the relevant sector stakeholders					
OPI 9.1 Defined national KM framework for decentralized WES services delivery	0	1	1	1	Knowledge sharing strategy developed.
OPI 9.2 No of developed KM tools for dissemination of analysed and systematized information	0	3	1	3	Guidebook for decentralised water supply.
Output 10 Established partnerships and platforms for policy dialogue on the improvement of legal and strategic framework for decentralised WES service delivery					
OPI 10.1 No of issues critical for decentralized WES service delivery that are addressed in inter-ministerial workgroups	0	tbd	3	10	Contribution to sector consultations made (National WSS Strategy, Law on Public Services in WSS, By-laws to Water Law)

Outcome Indicators (OCI) Output Indicators (OPI)	Baseline 2010	Target value 2014 (YPO)	Achievements by mid-2014	Target end of phase 2015	Problems, measures to be taken, comments
OPI 10.2 No of partnerships with donors or partners on national level to influence GoM on improving legal and strategic framework for decentralised WES service delivery	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.
Output 11 Established workgroups on the revision of norms / standards and regulations for the application of decentralised WES models					
OPI 11.1 No of workgroup meetings on revision of technical norms and standards	0	tbd	3	8	Guidelines of GWSSP and water sector glossary. Contribution to the GIZ TA to MRDC on norms and regulations.
OPI 11.2 No of workgroup meetings on revision of tendering regulations	0	-	-	-	MTR: Indicator not rated anymore because of change of implementation approach.