

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
IDENTIFICATION/CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.: PIDC20761

Project Name	Strengthening capacity - EMIS
Region	EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA
Country	Moldova
Sector(s)	Secondary education (100%)
Theme(s)	Economic statistics, modeling and forecasting (30%), Education for all (40%), Managing for development results (20%), Social Inclusion (10%)
Lending Instrument	Lending Instrument
Project ID	P154541
Borrower Name	Ministry of Education
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Education
Environment Category	C - Not Required
Date PID Prepared	09-Apr-2015
Estimated Date of Approval	31-Jul-2015
Initiation Note Review Decision	The review did authorize the preparation to continue

I. Introduction and Context

Country Context

Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe. Over the last two decades, Moldova has suffered from rising poverty resulting from an economic downturn in the 1990s, territorial secession, armed conflict, severe demographic decline, significant outmigration, and was hit hard by the global financial crisis in 2009. In 2010-13 Moldova's economy grew at an average of 5 percent but GDP (constant 2005 US\$) in 2014 was still around three quarters of what it used to be in 1990. The favorable periods of economic growth were driven mainly by remittances rather than capital inflows, exports or foreign direct investments. Main downside risks to the macroeconomic framework stem from external environment, fiscal pressures and weaknesses in financial sector. In order to ensure future prosperity, the country needs to develop a second engine of growth from exports of goods and services, and conduct a series of deep fiscal and structural reforms.

Moldova's recent economic performance reduced poverty and promoted shared prosperity. Still, based on the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) standardized poverty lines of US\$5/day and US\$2.50/day at Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), 55 percent of the population was poor and 10 percent was extremely poor in 2011. The most vulnerable groups at risk of poverty in Moldova remain those with low education levels, households with three or more children, those in rural areas, families relying on self-employment, the elderly, and Roma. Also, labor force participation in Moldova is extremely low, particularly among women, rural residents, youth (15-24 years old), older workers (55 years old and more), and those with low educational attainment.

Strong and robust economic growth and development will necessarily have to rely on the country's human capital. Improving the quality, relevance and efficiency of the education system is thus one of the main priorities for the country. Sound quality enhancing policies substantiated by the efficient financing in the education sector are vital to the advancement of the sector in accordance with national priorities. The Government of Moldova recognizes its needs in the education sector and is involved in a bold reform that seeks to improve the quality of education at the primary and secondary levels against the backdrop of efficiency measures.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

The Government of Moldova's primary objective in education is to improve the quality, efficiency, and relevance of the education system to meet the needs of the labor market and the broader economy. A continuous demographic transition presents efficiency challenges and opportunities and reinforces the need to invest in quality relevant education to maximize the population potential. Moldova's school-age population has decreased by more than half since 1991. Demographic decline (the student population has shrunk by over 50 percent since 1991) presents significant efficiency challenges.

In response, the Government of Moldova has reemphasized through its education reform program the need for quality, efficiency, and evidence-based policy making. The Government has taken critical steps toward improving resource allocation by adopting per capita financing and an enabling legislative framework. Sustaining and advancing these reforms with a focus on improving learning results is fundamental to improve the quality and efficiency of the education system. It is also important to emphasize that in April 2012 Moldova joined the Global Initiative for Open Government. The Government has committed to opening the education data including school budgets and information on performance of schools which is particularly important in the context of wider financial autonomy granted to schools under education reforms. The new Education Code - key law in the sector - approved by the Parliament in 2014 gave legal grounds for opening education data.

This Grant would directly support the ongoing reforms by strengthening capacity of the Ministry of Education, rayon authorities and schools to make full use of the newly created Education Management Information System (EMIS) for evidence-based education decision making and wider open data initiatives to encourage citizens' oversight of the education reforms.

Relationship to CAS/CPS/CPF

The proposed project is directly in line with the Country Partnership Strategy for Moldova for 2013-2017 (Pillar 2 'Enhancing Human Capital and Minimizing Social Risks'). It will also support ongoing Bank engagement under Moldova Education Reform Project (P127388) that helped Moldova set up an EMIS and the Global Partnership for Social Accountability initiative (P147607).

II. Project Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen the quality, openness and use of education statistics to better inform the ongoing education reforms in Moldova.

Key Results

The following outputs and outcomes are to be achieved as result of the project activities.

Outcomes:

- Improved evidence-based education decision-making at various levels;
- Increased quality of education statistics;
- Improved monitoring of the education reforms;
- Increased openness and accessibility of education data;
- Improved civil society oversight of the education reforms and work of education services providers;
- Strengthened accountability of the education services providers for the use of resources and the results of their work.

Outputs:

- assessment report with recommendations on strengthening the statistical capacity and improving information flows of the MoE, the Center for Information and Communication Technologies in Education of the MoE, subnational (rayon) authorities and schools in relation to the use of the new EMIS;
- revised statistical operations and procedures, regulatory and managerial framework for educational indicators collected with EMIS;
- training program on data collection, quality controls, information flows and analysis of the data;
- 500 officials of the Ministry of Education, the Center for Information and Communication Technologies in Education of the MoE, rayon education and IT departments, schools trained in analyzing and using the EMIS;
- Data errors for students with unique ID decreased to 1 percent;
- Open data catalogue developed;
- Education sector open data web-pages created and functioning;
- Number of users of the education sector open data web-pages reaches 1000 people.

III. Preliminary Description

Concept Description

The Government recognizes the importance of education and has, since 2011, been implementing an ambitious efficiency and quality enhancing reform program. Ongoing consolidation of school network requires proper statistical information to support and fine-tune reform measures so that to ensure that students directly affected by the reform are adequately accommodated in the 'receiving' schools. In 2013 the Ministry of Education with the support of the Bank developed the EMIS. The grant will support:

1. Strengthening statistical and analytical capacity and information flows of the MoE, the Center for Information and Communication Technologies in Education of the MoE, subnational (rayon) authorities and schools to make use of the new EMIS through: (i) assessment of their statistical capacity and information flows; and addressing identified gaps with (ii) training sessions on data collection, quality controls, information flows and analysis of the data (to education and IT personal in line with the division of responsibilities over EMIS system); and (iii) revision of the statistical operations and procedures, regulatory and managerial framework for educational indicators;
2. Improving quality and reliability of data collected through EMIS by: (i) developing and implementing data validation mechanisms including module integrating/validating EMIS data with the National Population registry; (ii) introducing digital signatures; and (iii) elaborating additional present reports in EMIS;
3. Opening data in education sector in an user-friendly format through: (i) assessment of education data needs of the stakeholders, (ii) catalogization of the identified data categories that need to be

collected, compiled in user-friendly manner, opened and regularly updated; (iii) development of the open data webpages for dissemination and interactive visualization of educational data; and (iv) PR campaign informing stakeholders on the education sector open data availability encouraging citizens oversight of the education reforms.

The TF will support strengthening statistical capacity in relation to both (i) indicators related to education itself (e.g. on access, participation and progressions such as primary school enrollment, schools performance with comparative performance outcomes on regional and country level etc.) and (ii) indicators and characteristics of the education system (such as number of teaching and non-teaching staff, number of schools, school-size, student-teacher ratios etc.). Both types of indicators will be released through open data web-pages of the MoE.

IV. Safeguard Policies that Might Apply

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01		x	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		x	
Forests OP/BP 4.36		x	
Pest Management OP 4.09		x	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		x	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		x	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12		x	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		x	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		x	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		x	

V. Financing (in USD Million)

Total Project Cost:	0.37	Total Bank Financing:	0.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower			0.00
Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building			0.37
Total			0.37

VI. Contact point

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