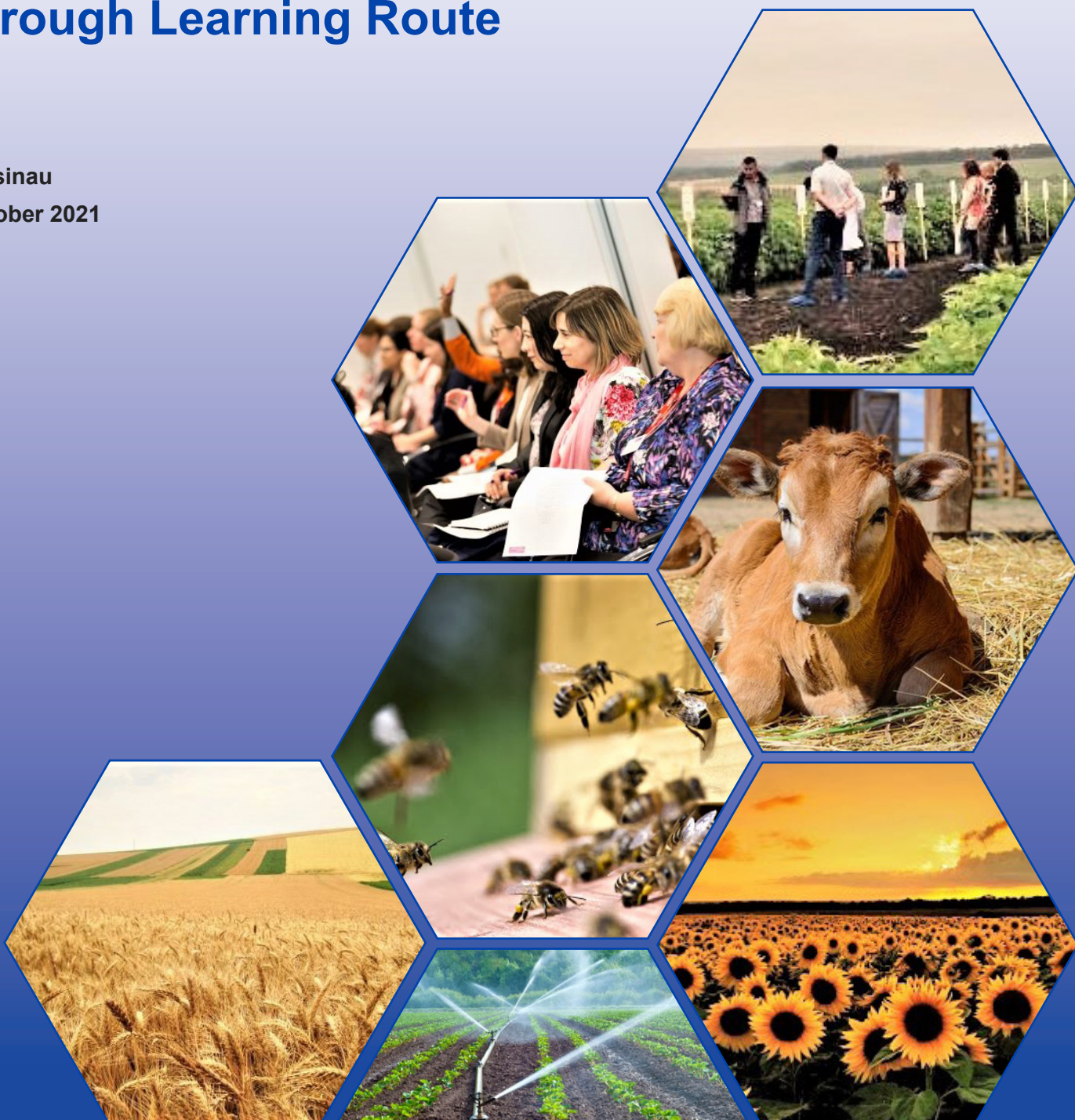




Country Source Book

The Republic of Moldova promoting agriculture, women empowerment, youth, knowledge management, and best practices through Learning Route

Chisinau
October 2021



SKiM
Strengthening Knowledge Management
for Greater Development Effectiveness
in the Near East, North Africa,
Central Asia and Europe



www.viitorul.org

This publication was developed within the “Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM)” grant project led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and funded by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Project website:

<https://mel.cgiar.org/projects/SKiM>

Project portal:

<https://knowledgemanagementportal.org>

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Table of Content

Acronyms and Abbreviations	4
Introduction and background (including short information about the project) for the participants in the Learning Route	6
Partners of the project	8
International Fund for Agricultural Development	8
International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas	10
Consolidated Programme Implementation Unit	12
State Agricultural University of Moldova	14
Research Institute of Field Crops “Selectia”	17
The Institute for Development and Social Initiatives “Viitorul”	19
The Learning Route Methodology (PROCASUR methodology).....	22
Short description of the Republic of Moldova (geography and agricultural sector)	25
Maps of the Republic of Moldova with the main points from the Learning Route.....	29
Learning route schedule (Agenda for face to face Learning Route)	30
Hosts experience and cross table of cases	33
Description of the study cases of the beneficiaries.....	35
Case study 1.....	35
Case study 2.....	45
Case study 3.....	53
Case study 4.....	58
Case study 5.....	63
Visit locations	67

List of tables

Table 1. Economic activity by sector.....	28
Table 2. Dynamics of quarterly indices of agricultural production volume in households of all categories, in 2019-2020 (in % compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year)....	28
Table 3. The main risks and obstacles	52
Table 4. Honey production (bee honey).....	58

List of figures

Figure 1. The steps for successful SMART CAFE.....	49
Figure 2. Elements of successful incubation programme	49
Figure 3. Communication matrix for SMART CAFE.....	50
Figure 4. 360° Multichannel Strategy	51
Figure 5. Revenues Model for SMART CAFE.....	51
Figure 6. The dynamics of the cattle herd 2006-2019, thousand heads	63
Figure 7. Cattle herd dynamics by household categories, 2007-2019, thousand heads.....	63

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIPA	– Agency for Interventions and Payment for Agriculture
ANSA	– National Food Safety Agency
CALM	– Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova
CCI	– Chamber for Commerce and Industry
CEDAW	– Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CGIAR	– Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIS	– Commonwealth of Independent States
CLLD	– Community-Led Local Development
CoE	– Council of Europe
COSOP	– Country Strategic Opportunities Programme
CPIU-IFAD	– Consolidated Programme Implementation Unit of the International Fund for Agricultural Development
CSO	– Civil Society Organization
EaPC	– Eastern Partnership Countries
EEF	– Eastern European Foundation
EFSE DF	– Development Facility of the European Fund for Southeast Europe
EPIN	– Economic Policy Institutes Network of UNDP
EU	– European Union
FAO	– Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	– Gross Domestic Product
HEI	– Higher Education Institution
HSS	– Hanns Seidel Foundation
ICARDA	– The International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
ICBSS	– Black Sea Research Network
ICT	– Information and Communications Technologies
IDIS	– The Institute for Development and Social Initiatives “Viitorul”
IFAD	– International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	– International Labour Organization
IM	– Individuell Människohjälp (IM Swedish Development Partner)
IRR	– Internal Rate of Return
IT	– Information Technology
IUH	– International Hellenic University

KM	– Knowledge Management
LAG	– Local Action Group
LPA	– Local Public Administration
MADRM	– Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment
MAFI	– Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry
NARS	– National Agricultural Research Systems
NBS	– National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova
NDRI	– Network of Democracy Research Institutes
NGO	– Non-governmental organization
NISPAcee	– The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe, Slovakia
ODIMM	– Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development
PASOS	– The Network of Institutes and Associations for Public Policy
PIU	– Project Implementation Unit
PR	– Public Relations
R&D	– Research and Development
RIFC	– Research Institute of Field Crops (“Selectia”)
RM	– Republic of Moldova
SAUM	– State Agricultural University of Moldova
SKiM	– Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia, and Europe
SLO	– System Level Outcomes
SMEs	– Small and medium-sized enterprises
TPN	– Transitional Policy Network
UN Women	– United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	– United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	– United Nations Children's Fund
VLC	– Virtual Learning Community
WP	– Working package

Introduction and background (including short information about the project) for the participants in the Learning Route

Dear participants in the learning route promoting agriculture, women empowerment, best practices, and knowledge management, in the Republic of Moldova, October 2021

This publication is elaborated within the “Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM)” grant project led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project also collaborates with international partners, such as CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR, Virginia Tech as well as National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), governments, and agricultural extension services in Moldova, Morocco, and Sudan.

The project was initiated in June 2018 and facilitates and supports the growth of knowledge management (KM) and capacity development activities in the three selected countries (Moldova, Morocco, Sudan), providing practical examples of KM best practices for analysis and adoption by participating institutions.

The overall goal of the project is to develop effective and long-term knowledge management-related capacities in target countries. This will be undertaken through effective knowledge generation and sharing approaches that ensure improved knowledge management and results measurement for rural poverty reduction purposes.

The objectives of this work include:

- assessing capacity and enhancing knowledge management skills of key rural institutions and other stakeholders in Moldova, Morocco, and Sudan.
- fostering and promoting knowledge exchange for in-country and trans-national partners to foster knowledge uptake, transfer, and management.

The project website (<https://mel.cgiar.org/projects/SKiM>) provides background information and outlines the project team, partners, and stakeholders. The website also shares key documents including the project proposal and outlines the goals, objectives, and the impact pathway of the project, as well as additional resources and information on news and events.

The SKiM Knowledge Management Portal (<https://knowledgemanagementportal.org>) is the open-access page showcasing the latest info and achievements of SKiM institutions, organizations, and networks partnering in Knowledge Management worldwide.

Within the SKiM project, ICARDA and PROCASUR have published together a plethora of information on Sudanese agricultural knowledge management best practices through a closely monitored and interactive social media campaign on the Virtual Learning route held from November 30 to December 4, 2020.



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The IFAD funded SKiM Knowledge Management Portal, is a beacon of publications, news, data and information coming from research for development organizations, academia, government bodies, national agricultural research systems and extensionists across the globe. The Portal is built to enhance the outreach of the scientific and organizational knowledge aggregated, fostering partnership building and information sharing across users and institutions, strengthening knowledge management and providing the basis for more advanced knowledge visualization ([DSpace](#) powered [ARes](#)).

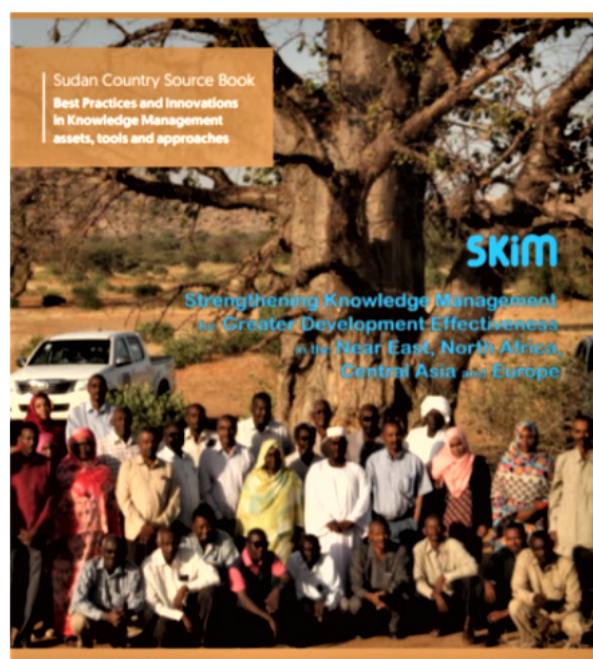
Portal

What's New

Ongoing Projects

For the year 2021, it was decided to elaborate a Learning route for the Republic of Moldova. The best practices from the Republic of Moldova related to agriculture, women empowerment, youth and knowledge management will be published and disseminated through this sourcebook based on five case studies. This new approach will contribute towards raising awareness in the Republic of Moldova on the importance of knowledge management as an asset for rural development, through peer-learning, knowledge sharing, and cooperation.

Learning Routes were introduced as key knowledge management and learning methodology. Learning Routes are a means to exchange knowledge between different participants and countries. The current learning route promotes agriculture, women empowerment, youth, knowledge management, and best practices from the Republic of Moldova. We have used the Learning Route Methodology of the Procasur Corporation ([PROCASUR](#)) that has been recognized, replicated, scaled up, and institutionalized over the years.



Partners of the project

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

This project is funded by IFAD.



Investing in rural people

Who they are

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialized agency of the United Nations, was established as one of the major outcomes of the 1974 World Food Conference. Three years after the Rome conference, IFAD was set up as an international financial institution in 1977. Since then, IFAD – supported projects have reached millions of people.

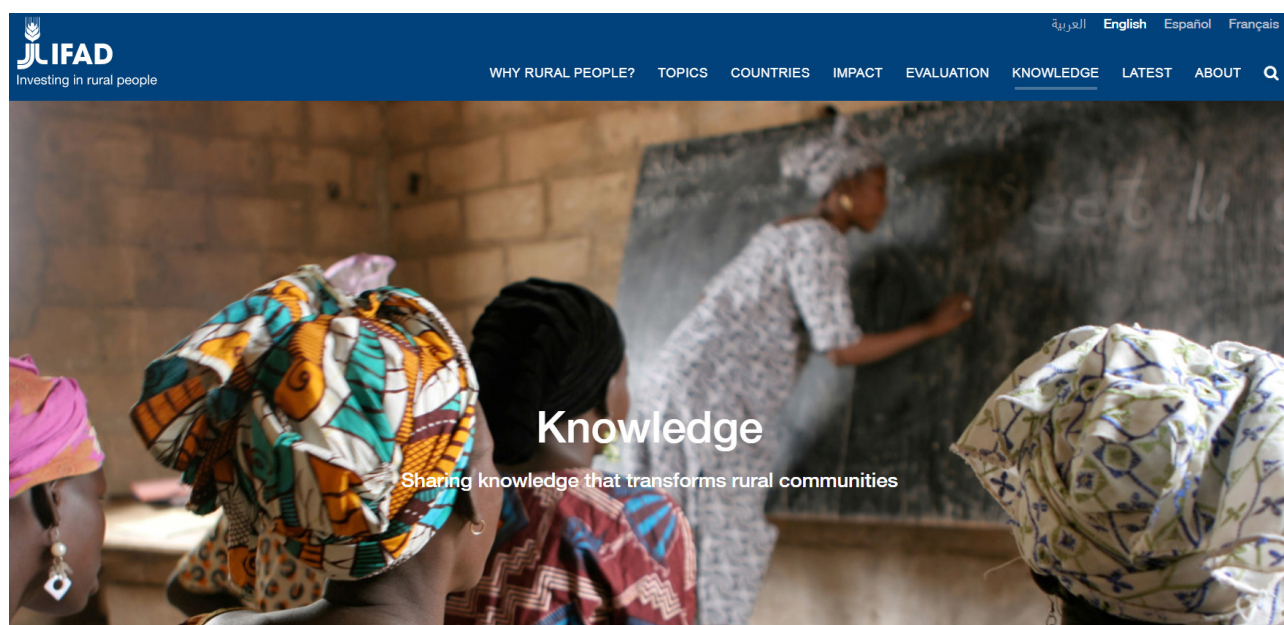
Mission

The mission is to transform rural economies and food production systems by making them more inclusive, productive, resilient, and sustainable. IFAD invests in the millions of people who are at risk of being left behind: poor, small-scale food producers, women, young people, and other vulnerable groups living in rural areas. IFAD is the only specialized global development organization exclusively focused on and dedicated to transforming agriculture, rural economies, and food production systems.

Priority directions/areas of expertise

IFAD's Strategic Framework 2016-2025 sets out how the Fund will work over the coming decade so as to play a crucial role in the inclusive and sustainable transformation of rural areas. It articulates our contribution to the 2030 Agenda, including the larger role IFAD will play in supporting countries to fulfill their priorities relative to the Agenda.

The framework outlines that IFAD will work in ways that are bigger, better, and smarter: bigger, by mobilizing and leveraging substantially greater investment in rural areas; better, by strengthening the quality of countries' rural development programmes; and smarter, by further sharpening our efficiency and delivering results in a more cost-effective way.



The Framework sets three strategic objectives:

- increasing the productive capacity of poor rural people,
- increasing the benefits they derive from market participation,
- strengthening the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of their economic activities.

For 40 years, IFAD has worked directly with the world's poorest people living in some of the most remote regions of the world. IFAD pays particular attention to: women, youth, and indigenous people. IFAD's pioneering work in the direction of empowering people to lead their own development – and to realize their own dreams – is now the norm.

IFAD's community-driven approach means that the Fund is trusted by millions of small family farmers from all over the world. They contribute to project design. They invest their time and even their own money in projects. And they have seen the results – higher production, better income, better nutrition, and better lives.

IFAD's vast global experience of funding cost-effective and people-centered programs also make it the partner of choice for governments, development agencies, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations committed to ending poverty.

Partnerships

IFAD connects producers, the private sector, governments, and other players in the agricultural and rural sectors to everyone's benefit.

Through partnerships, IFAD invests in rural development as it brokers partnerships among the diverse parties working in development, and for South-South and triangular cooperation.

IFAD also collaborates with a number of research institutions to promote innovation, and then bring this knowledge into the programmes and projects it supports.

IFAD is continuously building relationships with a broad range of groups to ensure that the greatest collective support reaches rural communities.

Among such groups as:

- ambassadors and advocates,
- companies,
- foundations,
- governments,
- multilateral organizations,
- non-governmental organizations,
- producer organizations,

- research and academic institutions,
- United Nations agencies.

Key products related to the project implementation areas

IFAD supports innovative projects that target the extremely poor and the people affected by food-related insecurities living in rural areas. Its activities are inclusive of women, youth, and indigenous peoples.

IFAD's bottom-up approach is community-driven. Small-scale agriculture is central to its model – and to global food security.

For more information please see:

www.ifad.org



Images source: Transforming food systems for rural prosperity, Rural Development Report 2021

<https://www.ifad.org/en/rural-development-report/>

International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas

(ICARDA)

Who they are

The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) is an international organization undertaking research for development. ICARDA provides innovative, science-based solutions for communities across non-tropical dry areas.

Since its establishment in 1975, ICARDA has implemented research for development programs in 50 countries across the world's dry areas – from Morocco in North Africa to Bangladesh in South Asia.

Mission

To reduce poverty and enhance food, water, and nutritional security, and environmental health in the face of global challenges, including climate change.

ICARDA vision – are thriving and resilient livelihoods in the dry areas of the developing world with adequate incomes, secure access to food, markets, and nutrition, and the capacity to manage natural resources in equitable, sustainable, and innovative ways.

Priority directions/areas of expertise

Millions of smallholder farm families in dry areas need to become profit-making enterprises, which



Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas

will turn their communities into vibrant hubs of economic activity.

To achieve such transformation, ICARDA will focus on building and maintaining scientific rigor and excellence in research among its own staff as well as through capacity development activities undertaken in common with our strategic partners. This will be done through five Strategic Research Priorities and four Cross-Cutting Themes.

Strategic Research Priorities:

1. Collect, conserve, and use agricultural biodiversity;
2. Develop climate-adapted crops and livestock;
3. Build climate-resilient, integrated crop-livestock farming systems;
4. Promote sustainable value chains, supportive policies, and viable off-farm activities;
5. Support sustainable use and management of scarce water and land resources.

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IMPACTS IN 2020

**8383**

PEOPLE BENEFITED FROM
TRAINING COURSES

**172**

PARTNERSHIP
AGREEMENTS SIGNED OR
RENEWED

**117**

RESEARCH PROJECTS
IMPLEMENTED IN 55
COUNTRIES

**135**

ISI JOURNAL ARTICLES
PUBLISHED

**4K**

PLANT ACCESSIONS
REGENERATED

**743**

INTERNATIONAL NURSERY
SETS DISTRIBUTED TO
PARTNERS IN 40
COUNTRIES

**16**

ICARDA CROP VARIETIES
RELEASED BY NATIONAL
PARTNERS

**1147**

PUBLICATIONS AND
DATASETS

Cross-Cutting themes:

1. Scaling up proven technological packages;
2. Gender equality and youth engagement;
3. Capacity development;
4. Big data and ICT.

To achieve the mission and vision, ICARDA has set up three main goals, or System Level Outcomes (SLOs), which are also part of the overall CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework 2016-2030:

SLO 1: Reduce Poverty

Making an impact means research to generate higher, diverse, and more sustainable incomes through functional markets that result in a better standard of living for men, women, and children in the non-tropical dry areas of the developing world.

SLO 2: Improve Food and Nutrition Security for Improved Human Health

Making an impact means research to increase food and nutritional security, thereby improving human health for poor and vulnerable communities in non-tropical dry areas.

SLO 3: Improve Natural Resource and Ecosystem Services

Making an impact means research to develop equitable and sustainable management practices for land, water resources, energy, and biodiversity in non-tropical dry areas for generations to come.

Partnerships

Central to the success of ICARDA's new Strategic Plan 2017-2026 is a diverse set of partners with common goals. ICARDA recognizes the roles of different partners and clients. ICARDA engages with NARS, development partners, governments, and other change agents to ensure that the generated knowledge is put into use.

ICARDA works together with a core group of partners in joint initiatives. ICARDA also works with clients that directly use the outputs from our research agenda, including government decision-makers, development partners, investment banks, NGOs, and private companies. Finally, ICARDA works with the ultimate beneficiaries of the effort: smallholder households, value chain actors, and rural communities. ICARDA's work with partners and clients produces a range of outcomes that include the adoption of climate-resilient and water-efficient crops and livestock, better management practices, evidence-based policies, interventions to improve value chain performance, and more nutritious diets. ICARDA links with a plethora of players to scale up these outcomes and achieve thriving and resilient communities in dry areas.

In partnership with research institutions, NGOs, governments, and the private sector, IFAD's work advances scientific knowledge, shapes practices, and informs policy.

Key products related to the project implementation areas

ICARDA research focuses on the needs and priorities of smallholder farmers and the rural communities that depend on them for their livelihoods – with a view towards increasing agricultural productivity and developing opportunities for better market integration and economic growth. ICARDA also develops technologies and innovations that promote the sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity, creating greater resilience to climate change.

For more information please visit:

www.icarda.org



Consolidated Programme Implementation Unit (CPIU IFAD)

 Partner from the Republic of Moldova

Who they are

The Republic of Moldova is one of the first Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries to become a member of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

By launching of the first IFAD – funded Project in Moldova, i.e. the Rural Finance and Small Enterprise Development Project, the Government established, on 25 September 2000, by Government Decree, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) housed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAFI) with the full authority and responsibility for the Project management and coordination.

Consequently, with the start-up of new IFAD – financed Projects and Programmes, the Government has re-organized, on 29 of November 2005, the PIU into the Consolidated Programmes Implementation Unit (CPIU IFAD).

Mission

In Moldova, IFAD projects support the development of links between agricultural producers, markets, and suppliers. IFAD is attempting to improve the access of the rural population to well-needed financial services, develop market intermediaries, and enhance the availability of advice to financial institutions and businesses.




Accordingly, IFAD is promoting more resilient livelihoods in marginal rural areas by supporting climate-smart agriculture, economic diversification, talent retention, and access to rural finance.

IFAD's overall goal is to assist the productive poor in taking advantage of the opportunities emerging from the ongoing rural transformation in the country, to improve the well-being of Moldova's rural population and reduce poverty, to strengthen the resilience and improve economic opportunities for the rural poor food security and safety, vulnerability to climate change, to increase competitiveness and to reduce the flow of migration from rural areas.

Priority directions/areas of expertise


IFAD Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP 2019-2024) has two strategic strategies:


1. Improve the adaptive capacity of smallholders and agribusinesses through market-driven investments. This is done by enhancing farmer's resilience through investments in productive rural infrastructure and agro-systems;



IFAD Consolidated Programme
Implementation Unit


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Investing in rural people





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IFAD Consolidated Programme Implementation Unit

Grants

Credits

Technical support

2. Promote inclusive market linkages through enhanced access to financial services and markets in order to foster rural transformation.

IFAD sees strong potential to revitalize crop production and processing for both domestic and export markets. IFAD has systematically invested in agricultural processing and infrastructure rehabilitation in Moldova with a focus on climate-resilient infrastructure.

Partnerships

IFAD works with several organizations, including the World Bank, regional development banks, and other financial institutions, several of which jointly co-finance IFAD projects. It also provides direct financing through grants and loans on favorable terms.

The contribution of funders is essential:

- IFAD;
- The government of Republic of Moldova;
- Participating Financial Institutions;
- Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Global Environment Facility;
- The Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme.

The results obtained in the 20 years of activity are also due to the involvement of the trusted partners of CPIU IFAD, through which the IFAD Programmes were implemented in our country:

- The Government of the Republic of Moldova;
- Credit banking institutions;
- Non-banking credit institutions;
- Consulting companies;
- Farmers associations;
- Local Public Authorities.

Key products related to the project implementation areas (KM and Agriculture)

- Knowledge products to support policy dialogue, advocacy and visibility;
- Regular learning events, workshops, seminars, training sessions for Project's beneficiaries:
 - a. Seminars / Training for farmers, 11 farmers field schools created under which were trained 2 864 farmers in using of conservation agriculture technologies;
 - b. Information materials and training for target groups based on needs assessments (e.g., [Pilot Women Grant](#) brochure and [meeting organized](#) in order to inform target groups);
- Themed publications elaborated in order to promote resilience to climate change in the

agricultural sector, conservation agriculture, are placed on the [CPIU's website library](#);

- Documented lessons and best practices, articles, and videos, are consistently used in project implementation, and disseminated to other projects and partners, using different channels of dissemination: CPIU's website social media accounts ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#)).

For more information please see:

www.ucipifad.md.



State Agricultural University of Moldova

(SAUM)

 Partner from the Republic of Moldova

Who they are

State Agricultural University of Moldova (SAUM) is the oldest university in the country, founded in 1933 by the Decree of the King Carol II of Romania who promulgated the Law concerning the transformation of the Agricultural Sciences Section of the University of Iasi into the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences with its center in Chisinau. Since then, the university has passed through many changes within the complex history of our country. SAUM is the only Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the Republic of Moldova (RM) which trains specialists for the area of agriculture – one of the most important branches of the RM's economy. SAUM is the first HEI of Moldova that has enforced the Bologna Process. Among university graduates, there are presidents, ministers, diplomats, writers, poets, and many other outstanding representatives from our country and from abroad. During its existence, SAUM has trained more than 1,000 professionals in the agricultural sector for 85 countries. The internationalization of education is the main objective of the University and is reflected in the SAUM development strategy.

Mission

The mission of the university is to educate young people, to amass and nourish intellectual potential, and to train leaders of society capable



of creating and implementing innovations, which influence the overall scientific, cultural, and technological progress of the society.

Priority directions/areas of expertise

SAUM is the oldest university in Moldova that focuses on agricultural sciences. It consists of six faculties: Economy, Agronomy, Horticulture, Veterinary Medicine, Cadaster and Law, and Agricultural Engineering and Auto Transport. SAUM enrolls about 5000 students in 25 specialties, 25 specializations, and 27 scientific specialties.

During its existence, SAUM was also a spiritual center of agriculture. At present, the academic staff is formed consists of 322 teachers and researchers who have developed a broad experience in propagating the results of scientific researchers and new technologies among farmers.

SAUM is well known both in our country and abroad due to its prestigious academic staff, achieved scientific results, and professional training of competent and competitive specialists.



The auditoriums, offices, and services on our campus support the university's operations and represent the key pillar of our internationalization strategy.

The SAUM University Library is an important scientific library in the country. It contains around 800 thousand books and periodicals and databases (Agora, Sage, and others).

The SAUM Language Centre offers free language courses for university staff and students.

The SAUM IT Service Centre supports the SAUM research and teaching in all computer-related matters. The IT Service Centre is also responsible for administering and maintaining the local network, including Moodle (moodle.uasm.md/moodle), which is an open-source, virtual learning platform and is used in many courses at SAUM.

The innovation park with 8 specialized research centers and laboratories carries out applied scientific researches ordered by different enterprises and related to specific research areas of SAUM.

The infrastructure of SAUM consists of 9 teaching buildings, 14 student residences, 2 canteens, experimental didactic stations, the Republican Agricultural Scientific Library, Language center, Computer center, Publishing center, Laboratories, and sports facilities. Buildings & Grounds Maintenance provides comprehensive technical assistance for the entire university. Its scientific workshops support research and teaching in all matters relating to university facilities and equipment. The building maintenance unit ensures that university operations run smoothly.

The International Office is the hub for all matters relating to the university's international network. It is here that strategic concepts are developed and coordinated, and international partnerships are established and maintained. The International



Office also provides advising and support for students and researchers interested in going abroad and those interested in joining us from abroad. Last but not least, the university offers welcome services and international mobility and networking opportunities for researchers (and their families).

Partnerships

The Department of International Relations was set up in order to facilitate the process of internationalization of the Higher Educational system, disseminate the image of the University on the international level and strengthen the partnership with similar institutions and organizations abroad.

The international collaboration of SAUM has known a wider development since 1976, when the first 25 foreigners, representatives of 12 countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America were enrolled at the Faculty of pre-university training courses. More than 1,000 foreign nationals were trained at the faculties of SAUM.

The International Relations Department implements an active and permanent policy of collaboration with various Higher Education



Organizations and Institutions abroad. This active collaboration offers the possibility to participate in academic mobility for students and academic staff, as well as in professional training programs.

The development of the international dimension at SAUM, namely the efficiency of university management, introducing courses in foreign languages, adjusting curricula to international standards, creating scientific and research laboratories, attracting international lecturers, organizing international events, and strengthening relations between SAUM and the economic environment, is due to the impact of capacity building projects implemented with the support of the European Union programs. More than 30 projects within Tempus, Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus, the Czech Development Agency, and Erasmus + have been implemented at SAUM in recent years.

Key products related to the project implementation areas (KM and Agriculture)

During 8 decades of existence, SAUM became a well-recognized higher education institution both in our country and abroad, asserting itself by training about 50,000 well-known specialists, achieving scientific performances, as well as mentoring remarkable personalities who reached the highest summits of the professional hierarchy, becoming well-known in the country and abroad.

For more information please visit:
<https://www.uasm.md/>



Research Institute of Field Crops “Selectia”

 Partner from the Republic of Moldova

Who we are

The public Research Institute for Field Crops “Selectia” was officially founded on January 1, 1944, in the former USSR, in the Balti District, the Republic of Moldova. The Institute went through four organizational changes since its creation.

Mission

- Creation of varieties and hybrids of field crops with high biological quality, increased adaptability to weather conditions, drought resistance, tolerance to pests and diseases, etc.;
- Elaboration of technologies and systems of sustainable agriculture, including ecological and conservation agriculture, with the study of their influence on soil fertility and crop production;
- Implementation of the systems of crop protection for field crops, according to the technological stages of agricultural production in Moldova;
- Performing the biochemical analyses for breeding and seed material of winter wheat, winter and spring barley, soybean, peas, forage crops, and sunflower.

Priority directions/areas of expertise

Nowadays, the scientific activities and production processes of the institute are:

- Developing new field crop varieties, including hybrids, which are resistant to the main diseases and pests and tolerant to unfavorable environmental changes, and have high grain quality;



*Institutul de cercetări
pentru culturile de câmp
«Selectia»*

- Producing foundation seed, and multiplying certified seeds through subcontracts with private seed farms;
- Developing environmentally-friendly technologies for the production of field crops, which ensure the saving of non-renewable energy resources;
- Developing new, sustainable agricultural systems, which enable improvements in soil fertility and the production of organic products.

During the institute's 74 years of activity, 349 varieties and hybrids have been developed, out of which 160 were officially recognized, including but not limited to 17 varieties of winter wheat, 15 varieties of autumn barley, 16 varieties of peas, 18 varieties of soybeans, 12 varieties of beans, 18 hybrids of sunflower, and 6 varieties of sugar beet.

Partnerships

The institute collaborates in the creation of varieties (hybrids) and in the improvement of cultivation technologies with a series of scientific institutions from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Germany, Romania, USA, Hungary, Czech Republic, Italy, Turkey, France, etc. The Institute's collaborators actively participate in international and national competitions and conferences.



Since 2003, at the State University “A. Russo” has been inaugurated a Faculty of Natural Sciences and Agroecology. With the opening of this faculty, it became possible to include the scientific staff of the institute in the teaching process, which is common for university education around the world. Thus, the rich work experience gained by the scientific staff will be shared with the young generation of students, future scientific collaborators and specialists that the institute needs.

Key products related to the project implementation areas (KM and Agriculture)

- The laboratory for breeding and the technologies for growing cereal crops
- Laboratory for breeding, primary seed production, and technologies for growing leguminous and forage crops
- The laboratory for breeding, primary seed production, and technology of growing technical crops
- The group for the quality of production
- The laboratory for crop protection
- The departments of sustainable farming systems

For more information please visit:

<https://selectia.md/>



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Crops

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Sugar beet
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Sunflower
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The Institute for Development and Social Initiatives “Viitorul”

(IDIS “Viitorul”)

 Partner from the Republic of Moldova

Who they are

The IDIS “Viitorul” was established in June 1993 in Moldova. Positioned as a not-for-profit, public-benefit organization, IDIS is a liberal think tank. IDIS is a research, education, and outreach organization that activates in the field of economic analysis, governance, law, political sciences, strategic and organizational science.

Mission

To contribute to the growth of independent thinking environment in Moldova and in other emerging democracies; to assist the creation of a modern, viable and open market-economy, to assist the expansion of the civil society in which the citizens act together to express their own interests, to exchange information, to strive for mutual goals, and to influence the government.

Priority directions/areas of expertise

IDIS “Viitorul” carries out its activities through three departments:

1. Well Governed Public Sector Department operates as a resource center, specialized in research and training in the field of public administration (local and central).

Priority areas:

- strengthening judicial institutions;
- promoting effective decentralization;
- supporting the decisions and modernization shaping the policy of the public sector;
- ensuring accountability and performance-oriented support for central and local authorities;
- strengthening the administrative and political institutions based on European values;
- effective implementation of local and regional development strategies;
- public-private partnership, fiscal decentralization;
- the ability to build representative municipal organizations.

2. Functional Market Economy Department carries out regular economic analysis and forecast, tax awareness of citizens and tax policy assessment, monitoring social policies and poverty reduction.



Priority areas:

- consolidation of a competitive business environment;
- delivering economic education programs to enhance the application of democratic economic instruments;
- creation of representative associations of private entrepreneurship;
- promoting a performance-oriented, modern, and effective agriculture according to the European model;
- promoting policies and means to ensure energy security;
- increasing the competitiveness of the Moldovan economy through export promotion strategies and infrastructure development.

3. The Competitive Society Department is designed to promote performance standards in the assessment, development, and implementation of public policies (especially social) and to conduct sustained advocacy and lobbying for the processes of transformation and modernization of the Moldovan society.

Priority areas:

- supporting alternative political options and political pluralism;
- human capital development;
- strengthening social cohesion, welfare, and poverty reduction;
- facilitating the identification and dissemination of good practices;
- increasing the capacity of the civil society to direct social pressure, so as to increase the accountability and responsiveness of local and central authorities.

Partnerships

The institutional maturity of IDIS “Viitorul” is also proved by its connection, for 26 years, to prestigious international professional networks, among which we can mention:

- PASOS (The Network of Institutes and Associations for Public Policy);
- TPN (Transitional Policy Network);
- NISPAcee (The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe, Slovakia);
- EPIN (Economic Policy Institutes Network of UNDP);
- NDRI (Network of Democracy Research Institutes) ICBSS (Black Sea Research Network);
- Stockholm Network;
- Danish Development Research Network;
- TRIALOG.

Key products related to the project implementation areas (KM and Agriculture)

- Knowledge management. A Guide for Universities and Research Institutions (2020);
- Knowledge management (2007);
- Food safety through a common informational system. Aspects of institutional research (2016);
- Impact of the future free trade agreement between Moldova and the European Union on the agro-food sector in Moldova (2016);
- Impact of the future free trade agreement between Moldova and the European Union on the agro-food sector in Moldova (2010);
- The evolution of the land agricultural market in the Republic of Moldova (2016);





- The agricultural subsidy system administered by the Agency for Interventions and Payment for Agriculture (AIPA) (2016);
- Reforming the subsidy system in agriculture: concrete results and failures (2016);
- The wine industry (2016);
- Development of the INDEX of the local business environment (2016);
- Financing of small-scale and medium scale enterprises in the Republic of Moldova: challenges, trends and future prospects (2016);
- Transition to international standards and norms in the sanitary and phytosanitary field on both banks of the Nistru river (2016);
- Germany's experience in agriculture and the opportunities for transfer of experience and expertise in Moldova. Publication prepared with the support of Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS). IDIS "Viitorul", Chisinau, 2016;
- Diagnostic study: exports potential of the agroindustrial complex. Elaborated within the project "Advocacy campaign in support of the Moldovan exporters of agricultural products" (2008), etc.

For more information please visit:
www.viitorul.org.

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IDIS Viitorul has launched for the first time the

Public procurement is an important area of the national economy, accounting for around 10% of GDP

[learn more →](#)

News

ACHIZITIILE PUBLICE IN VIZOR

U.S. "Moldova"

U.S. "AMBATAS"

U.S. "Jurnalul"

Reintegration policies

Public procurement course support

Investigations in public procurement

Best practices

Sociometric Laboratory

National Business Agenda

15 minutes of economic realism

EU-STRAT bulletin

The best and the worst local

Economic policies

Social policies

Regional policy

Governance transparency

People Watch

Democratic process

Hybrid power

Transparency of state – owned enterprises

Democracy

The Learning Route Methodology (PROCASUR methodology)



The Learning Routes¹ are a continuous training process in the field, one that aims to expand and diversify the local markets of technical rural services; including and giving value to the best experiences and knowledge of the institutions, associations, communities, and rural families.

Each Route is thematically organized around successful experiences, cases, and practices in local and rural development, in which the local users and operators become facilitators. By organizing workshops, interviews, conversations, and field activities, the Routes creates a space of individual and group learning for the visitors and the organizations that are being visited; they organize their learning elaborating their Innovations Plans that they aim to implement. Therefore, the impact of the Learning Routes is evaluated by its contribution to multiply and facilitate the adoption of the best solutions that expand the access of new and improved development services for the poor rural population.

Objectives

1. Training the human resources and increasing the social capital of the local organizations and the civil society;
2. Creation of an efficient regional market of technical assistance services and exchange of innovative experiences;
3. Add value to the accumulated knowledge of the executing organisms, IFAD projects, and the beneficiaries' organizations.

STAGE I

TO KNOW: CONSTRUCTION AND ORGANIZATION OF ACCUMULATED OR EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE BY LOCAL RURAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Selection of the team in charge of the Route's design

Selection of the team in charge of the technical and operational tasks for the Route's design. A requisite profile is created, the relevant professionals are screened, and a selection process is conducted based on quality.

2. Identification of the training needs of the Route's potential users

The aim is to identify precisely the universe of users for the services of each Learning Route, together with the specific demands for training, so as to achieve the design of one or several alternative learning processes, each one with direct user value. Through the review of current documentation, interviews with managers of projects and programs for poverty alleviation in the region, and advice from experts, relevant themes in demand by the players linked to rural development are identified. Priority is given to:

1. work with professionals, technicians, partners, and users of the projects in the region, and
2. the design and execution of Routes that underscore the heterogeneity of the rural world, attempting to achieve a shared diagnosis and pertinent action strategies which promote policy dialogue.

3. Selection of cases

Once the specific users are selected, the performances to be strengthened identified, and the main training needs – defined, the process of selecting pedagogically relevant cases to be included in the Route as local talent training service providers begins.

This stage proposes:

1. to determine through consultation with experts the principal contents in discussions related to the topics addressed, and to propose relevant experiences which are demonstrated to have user value, which can be considered state of the art;
2. to define learning goals in which productive, economic, social and/or cultural working practices are detailed, and over which a positive impact is sought;
3. to identify local and regional specialists on the topics of each Route as potential instructors;
4. to design the itinerary of technical knowledge to be implemented, the specific activities to be carried out in each place, and the mechanisms

¹ Basic steps in the design and implementation of a learning route 23th April 2009 www.procasur.org

to be applied for evaluating results;

5. to accomplish the operational planning of each Route, including administrative and financial aspects.

4. Systematization and preparation of the cases

Once the experience or case has become part of the activity, a process of participatory systematization is initiated in which the lessons learned, and the materials, presentations, and activities to be employed during the Route are prepared. At this stage, the protagonists of the cases reflect upon their own practices, an exercise that contributes to the construction of knowledge. The contribution of the case to the theme and the Route must be validated by experts.

For the effective valorization of knowledge, the process of systematization must not be external. It should be participatory and lead to capacity building for its human resources. Through the use of basic tools of systematization and the preparation of training activities, the skills of local talents are encouraged and the participation of peasants, micro-entrepreneurs, and citizen's groups in the markets for private training services and technical assistance, are encouraged.

5. The selection of local and regional experts

The selection of local and regional experts on the subject matter of each Route is a crucial task when beginning the design of training services, as is the management of updated information on key concepts and tools, and on the cases which demonstrate high levels of innovation and educational potential.

6. Dissemination, convocation, and application

Activities are disseminated through different channels, and through those of associated organizations, and are also published in the media, as well as in a web-fly or electronic bulletin which is sent to the directors of the organizations of potential users.

7. User selection

To select users, the information provided in the registration form is analyzed. Applications are ranked according to basic criteria.

8. Preparation for the trip

Support is given to the cases for their final preparations and users are introduced into the thematic and operational aspects of the Route:

1. activities in support of the case should be primarily concerned with the delivery of specific information about the group

they will represent, such as names, ages, nationalities, memberships, and organizational expectations; assistance in the preparation of documents, presentations, and activities; the dissemination of information regarding the activities, both within the organization and outside of it,

2. the activities to prepare the user are both technical and operational. Basic documentation is delivered via e-mail and through a Web page. In addition, a personal and institutional presentation is requested. This is based on a diagnostic pattern and is designed as an initial task for developing a more personalized service. On the operational side, a detailed itinerary and recommendations for each field visit are provided.

STAGE II

TO KNOW HOW TO, KNOWLEDGE EN ROUTE

1. Induction workshop

This is performed at the beginning of the Learning Route and offers an in-depth look at the approaches, concepts, tools, and experiences that are linked to the issues of the Route, providing a critical reflection of the practices of users and identifying their needs and expectations. Authorities which knowledgeable on the theme will participate, presentations relevant to the Learning Route will be made, working groups will be formed, and open discussions are to be held. It is also a motivational milestone in the implementation of the Learning Route.

2. Fieldwork

Corresponds to the field visits made to cases previously selected, systematized, and incorporated. Representatives of these experiences have been authorized to organize the training services according to the pedagogical requirements of the users of each Route. In this way, the principal actors are the associations and peasant communities who present their experiences, answer questions, and exchange information pertinent to their activities. In addition, other local actors such as technicians, field technicians, municipal authorities, association leaders, financial operators, merchants, and small entrepreneurs who have collaborated in the implementation of the experience participate. The purpose is for users to achieve a comprehensive view of the case, identify the factors that have facilitated the processes of innovation, and examine in greater depth the results obtained.

3. The panel of experts

Complementing the fieldwork is a panel that includes actors from civil society, the public

and private sectors, NGOs, academia, thematic specialists, and others with knowledge relevant to the subject.

4. Workshops for the development of Innovation Plans

During the Route, at least three workshops are carried out which are aimed at facilitating the adaptation of innovative products or services to the reality of users of the Learning Route. For this purpose, the Technical Coordinator has a teaching guide that covers the different parts of the trip, the participant's return to his or her organization, and participation in the Learning Community.

5. Case Summary Workshop

This workshop aims to review the cases, study their outstanding aspects, and examine the concepts and approaches analyzed and discussed during the Induction Workshop. The activity finishes with conclusions and recommendations on the daily program, focusing on the usefulness of each experience and discussions about the performances of the users of the Route. In addition, a commitment is made to generate a series of recommendations for the local talents who participated in each Route, recommendations drawn from a review of the case study conducted at the end of each workday.

6. Closing Workshop

The Route concludes with a workshop that discusses the main lessons learned during the Learning Route and the innovations available for adaptation. It provides a collective assessment of the experience and certificates of participation are awarded.

STAGE III

CAN DO: IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIONS

1. Activities to reinforce learning

With the aim of improving the impact of training at the organizational level, activities will be undertaken to reinforce learning, as well as socialization, and the transfer of contents and the skills acquired. These activities are designed in accordance with the characteristics of each group. They are designed as activities suitable for professionals, technicians, and others with basic connectivity, and involve the implementation of a Virtual Learning Community (VLC). If the connectivity and digital literacy requirements are not met, local support activities are implemented, including in the field and distance advice.

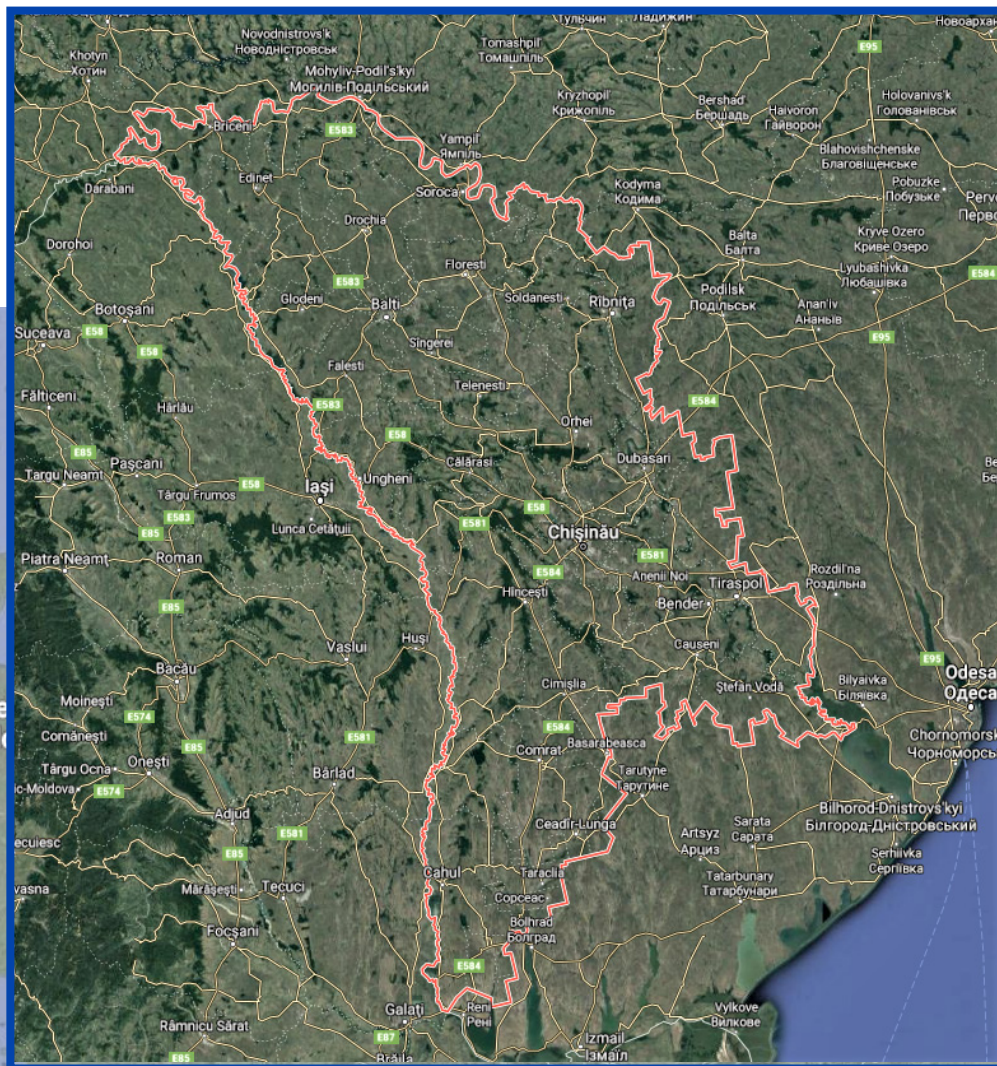
2. Innovation Plan

The design of an Innovative Plan results in improved incorporation of learning by users through an applied exercise and also provides a concrete product for the organization. To encourage the process of reflection and dissemination of learning – the development of the plan considers stages of dissemination and validation by the community and/or organization – a contest fund has been created which co-finances the execution of the best plans, with an amount, term, and activities clearly established.

3. Systematization and dissemination of the results of the Route

Using a systematic and uniform model for all the Routes, the main lessons generated by each case are presented. In addition, the basic documentation and complementary information of the Route, including the photographic and video record, and the presentations made by participants, local talents, and the technical crew, is designed to be disseminated through a web page and in DVD form. This material is distributed to local talents with the aim of returning the results to the community, and is also provided to users and other actors of relevance in the rural world.

Short description of the Republic of Moldova (geography and agricultural sector)



Geography

The Republic of Moldova lies in the central part of Europe in the northeastern Balkans. Moldova occupies an area of 33,843.5 km².

The capital of Moldova is Chisinau. On the North, East, and South Moldova is surrounded by Ukraine, and on the West, it is separated from Romania by the Prut River.

The climate of the Republic of Moldova is moderately continental. It is characterized by a lengthy frost-free period, short mild winters, lengthy hot summers, modest precipitation, and long dry periods in the south. The average annual temperature increases southward from around 8-9°C in the north to around 10-11°C in the south. The average annual precipitation varies between 600-650 mm in the north and the center and 500-550 mm in the south and the southeast.

The hydrographic network includes more than 3,000 rivers and rivulets, of which 10 exceed a length of 100 km. The main rivers are the Nistru (Dniester) (1,352 km, including 657 km within the borders of the country), the Prut (976 km, including 695 km within the borders of the country), the Raut (286 km), the Cogalnic (243 km, including 125 km within the borders of the country), the Bic (155 km), and the Botna (152 km). Moldova has about 60 natural lakes and 3,000 reservoirs. The largest Moldovan lakes are Beleu, Dracele, Rotunda, Fontan, Bic and Rosu, each with a water surface area exceeding 1 km². The largest reservoirs in the country, each with a water capacity exceeding 30 million m³, are Costesti-Stanca, Dubasari, Cuciurgan, Taraclia, and Ghidighici.

The soil cover of Moldova is fertile and of various types consisting of more than 745 varieties. Chernozem (from the Russian words for "black earth") occupies around 3/4 of the land area of the country. Brown and gray forest soils cover

around 11% of the country's land area. Floodplain or alluvial, meadow soils occupy around 12% of the land area of Moldova.

The flora of the Republic of Moldova is rich and includes more than 5.5 thousand species of wild-growing plants. The rich natural botanical diversity of the Republic of Moldova is strongly influenced by its geographic position and the characteristics of its topography and climate. At the landscape level, the territory of the Republic of Moldova is situated within three natural zones – forest, forest-steppe, and steppe. Forests occupy around 11% of Moldovan territory. Broad-leaved forests typical for Central Europe predominate. The largest forest tracts represented by the forest reserves "Codrii Moldovei" ("Moldova Codri", "Codri" – old forests) and "Plaiul Fagului" ("The Land of Beeches") are located in the center of the country. The forest ecosystems of the country contain 45 native species of trees, 81 native species of shrubs, and 3 native species of woody vines. Among the most common native species of woody plants growing in our forests are the English oak (*Quercus robur*), durmast oak (*Quercus petraea*), pubescent oak (*Quercus pubescens*), European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), European hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Russian elm (*Ulmus laevis*), sycamore maple (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), little-leaved linden (*Tilia cordata*), European white birch (*Betula pendula*), and the European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

The fauna of the Republic of Moldova is relatively rich and diverse. More than 15.5 thousand species of animals exist in the Republic of Moldova including 461 species of vertebrates and more than 15,000 species of invertebrates. The vertebrates are represented by 70 species of mammals, 281 species of birds, 14 species of reptiles, 14 species of amphibians, and 82 species of fish. The most common native species of mammals are the long-eared bat (*Plecotus*





auritus), serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), common hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), European mole (*Talpa europaea*), common shrew (*Sorex araneus*), Eurasian noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), Eurasian red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), common hare (*Lepus europaeus*), European suslik (*Citellus citellus*), spotted suslik (*Citellus suslicus*), house mouse (*Mus musculus*), Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), common wood mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*), yellow-necked field mouse (*Apodemus flavicollis*), red-backed vole (*Clethrionomys glareolus*), common field vole (*Microtus arvalis*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Eurasian deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*), stone marten (*Martes foina*), European polecat (*Mustela putorius*), and the least weasel (*Mustela nivalis*).

There are 5 scientific reserves in the country with a total area of around 19.4 thousand ha. Two forest reserves are located in central Moldova – the “Codrii” Reserve and the “Plaiul Fagului” (the Land of Beeches) Reserve. Two other reserves are located on the Prut floodplain – the “Prutul de Jos” (Lower Prut Biosphere Reserve) and the “Padurea Domneasca” (Royal Forest) Reserve. The fifth scientific reserve – the Iagorlac Reserve – serve for the protection and study of the unique aquatic ecosystem of the Nistru (Dniester) River.

Agricultural sector

The agricultural sector plays a central role in the country's economy.

The Republic of Moldova has unique land resources characterized by predominant black earth soils with high productivity potential and very high utilization rate (>75%), and a rugged topography (above 80% of the total arable land is located on hill slopes). The agricultural land area is 74.0% of the Republic of Moldova's total available land. The arable land area is 53.8% of the total available land. Only 13% of the arable land in Moldova is irrigated. Irrigation is difficult because the inappropriate water quality and the need for pumping make it too expensive. As a consequence, the costs of irrigation often exceed the value of its potential benefits. This makes the agriculture sector highly dependent on natural precipitation. Moldova could serve as a model example of non-irrigated crop response to the increasing drought tendency in southeastern Europe.

With a moderate climate and productive farmland, the agriculture sector has an important role in Moldova's economy: it represents 10.1% of the GDP and employs nearly 32% of the workforce (World Bank, 2019). Of the agriculture work force, around 25% are directly employed by agri-enterprises, while the other three-quarters are classified as self-employed (FAO). Moldova's main products are vegetables, fruits, grapes, grain, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, tobacco, beef, milk and wine.

The secondary sector represents 22.7% of the GDP, employing 16.6% of the active population.

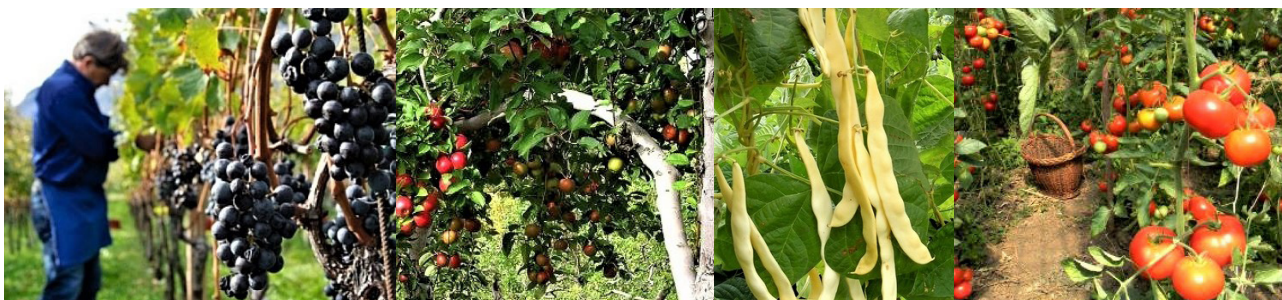


Table 1. Economic activity by sector

Breakdown of Economic Activity by Sector	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Employment By Sector (in % of Total Employment)	35.4	17.1	47.5
Value Added (in % of GDP)	9.9	22.8	54.2
Value Added (Annual % Change)	-4.3	7.3	3.9

Source: World Bank, Latest Available Data. Because of rounding, the sum of the percentages may be smaller/ greater than 100%.

Traditionally, the country's main industries have been manufacturing, agriculture and food processing, textile, apparel and footwear. This sector faces a double challenge: the loss of heavy industry since the self-proclaimed independence of Transnistria (a pro-Russian region) and the country's economic dependence on imported energy (due to a lack of energy resources in its territory).

The volume of activity in the utilities sector (electricity and natural gas supply mainly) reduced during the last years, whereas the core manufacturing sector performed significantly above the average (the manufacturing industry is estimated to contribute 11% of the country's GDP – World Bank). As a result, according to data from National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (NBS), Moldova's industrial output decreased by 3.7% in the period January-November 2019.

The GDP structure is progressively turning towards services, to the detriment of heavy industry and agriculture. The tertiary sector now represents nearly 55.4% of the GDP, employing half of the workforce (51.4%). It is driven by the insurance, legal consultancy and telecommunications sectors. The ICT sector is

also growing.

Agricultural activity in 2020

The National Bureau of Statistics informs that the global agricultural production in households of all categories (agricultural enterprises, peasant households (farmers) and households) in January-September 2020, according to preliminary estimates, amounted to current prices 21,000.5 million MDL, constituting 74.7% (in comparable prices) compared to the respective period of 2019. The decrease of the global agricultural production was determined by the decrease of the vegetal production by 35.5% and of the animal production by 2.8%, being felt the impact of the unfavorable climatic conditions from this year.

In the third quarter of 2020 agricultural production, according to estimates, decreased by 31.3% compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year, including vegetable production – by 36.0% and animal production – by 9.3% (see Table 2). The share of agricultural production obtained in the third quarter of 2020 is 72.4% of the total agricultural production obtained in 9 months 2020 (the share of the third quarter of 2019 in total 9 months 2019 is 79.1%).

Table 2. Dynamics of quarterly indices of agricultural production volume in households of all categories, in 2019-2020 (in % compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year)

	Quarter I	Quarter II	Quarter III	Quarter IV
Total agricultural production 2019	98.0	94.6	105.3	87.9
Total agricultural production 2020	102.4	94.4	68.7	x
Plant production 2019	103.6	91.0	108.4	87.4
Plant production 2020	89.2	72.9	64.0	x
Animal production 2019	97.9	96.0	93.1	90.0
Animal production 2020	102.6	102.0	90.7	x

Source: The National Bureau of Statistics.



Maps of the Republic of Moldova with the main points from the Learning Route



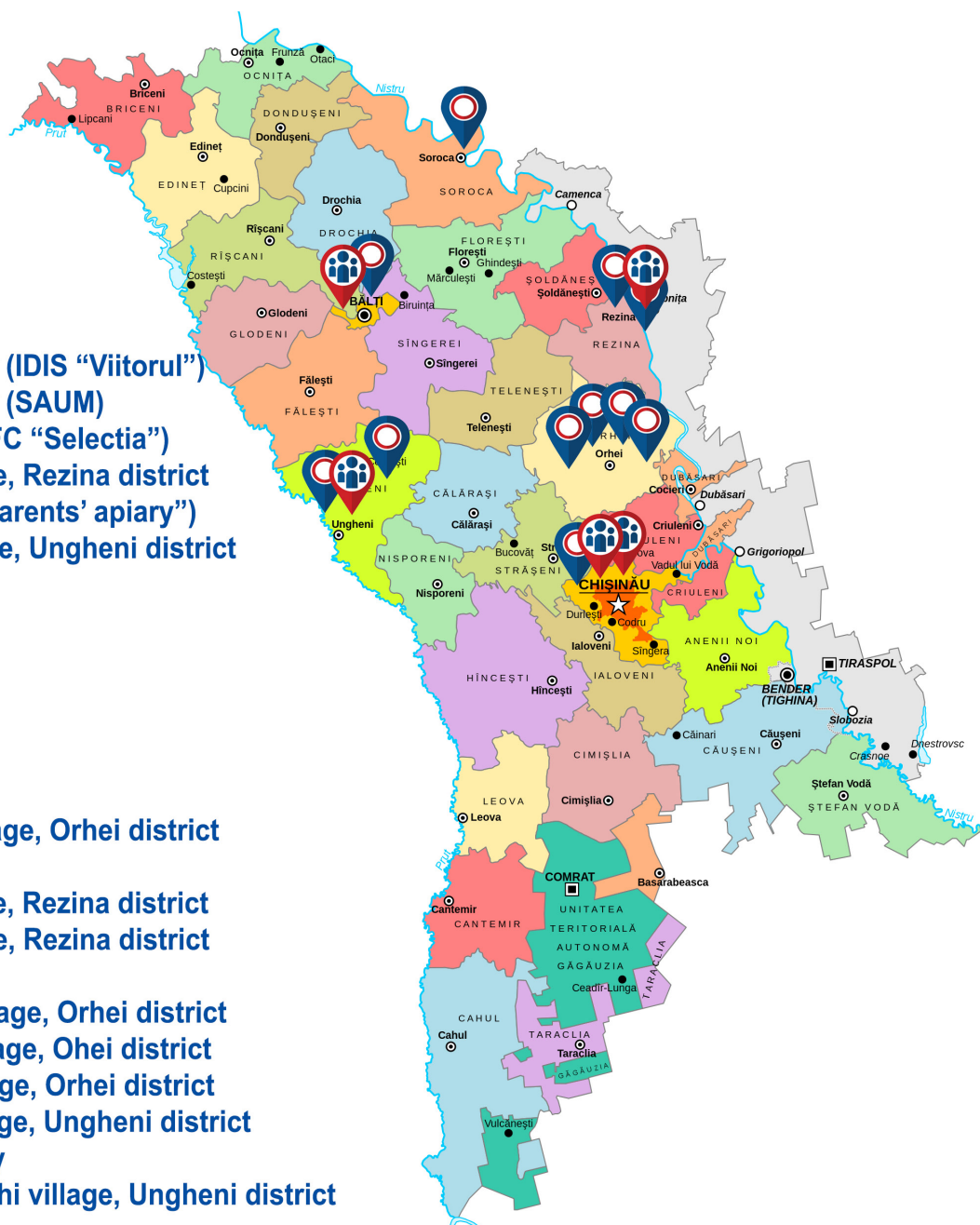
Case studies:

1. Chisinau city (IDIS “Viitorul”)
2. Chisinau city (SAUM)
3. Balti city (RIFC “Selectia”)
4. Lalova village, Rezina district (“At the grandparents’ apiary”)
5. Untesti village, Ungheni district (Cattle farm)



Visit locations:

1. Chisinau city
2. Bravicea village, Orhei district
3. Balti city
4. Lalova village, Rezina district
5. Tipova village, Rezina district
6. Soroca city
7. Trebujeni village, Orhei district
8. Butuceni village, Orhei district
9. Branesti village, Orhei district
10. Untesti village, Ungheni district
11. Ungheni city
12. Radenii Vechi village, Ungheni district



Learning route schedule (Agenda for face to face Learning Route)



Day	Time	Activity	Place
Day I	All-day	Participants' reception at the airport and transfer to a hotel in Chisinau (City Park Hotel)	Chisinau
Day II	8.30 – 9.15	Breakfast at City Park Hotel	Chisinau
	9.30 – 10.30	Opening ceremony Welcome speech Introduction of participants and expectations Induction workshop for the Learning Route Review of agenda, objectives, ground rules	Chisinau, IDIS "Viitorul"
	10.30 – 11.30	Presentation of the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) "Viitorul" Fieldwork. Case study 1. Case study: Women's empowerment and best practices sharing; Anthology of female success stories / knowledge management practices	Chisinau, IDIS "Viitorul"
	11.30 – 11.45	Coffee break	Chisinau, IDIS "Viitorul"
	11.45 – 12.20	The experts' panel. Invitation of the experts and stakeholders covering the subject: agriculture, women empowerment, youth and knowledge management	Chisinau, IDIS "Viitorul"
	12.20 – 12.45	Presentation: IFAD programme in Moldova	Chisinau, IDIS "Viitorul"
	13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break	Chisinau, La Placinte
	14.30 – 16.30	Fieldwork. Case study 2. Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with Smart Caffee at the State Agricultural University of Moldova, Chisinau	State Agricultural University of Moldova, Chisinau
	16.30 – 18.00	Visit of historical places in Chisinau (for example the Government, Presidency, Stephen the Great Central Park, The Triumphal Arch, National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History, etc.)	Chisinau
	18.00 – 19.00	Workshop for the development of Innovation Plans Case summary workshop (based on case study 1 and 2)	Chisinau, IDIS "Viitorul"
	19.00 – 20.00	Dinner Free time for the members of the delegation	Chisinau

Day	Time	Activity	Place
Day III	8.00 – 8.30	Breakfast at City Park Hotel	
	8.30 – 10.00	Departure from the hotel to Bravicea, Orhei	Bravicea, Orhei
	10.00 – 12.00	“BraviLacta” milk processing factory, production of mozzarella cheese, cream, soft cheese with greens, curd	Bravicea, Orhei
	12.00 – 13.30	Departure from Bravicea, Orhei to Balti	
	13.30 – 14.30	Lunch break	Balti
	14.30 – 16.00	Fieldwork. Case study 3. Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems. Visit of the experimental fields of “Selectia” Research Institute of Field Crops (Balti)	Balti, Selectia
	16.00 – 17.30	Departure from Balti to Rezina	
	17.00 – 18.30	Visiting at the cave of the Tipova Monastery complex (the biggest rupestrian monastery in Europe, 11th-12th century)	Rezina
	18.30 – 19.30	Accommodation at Hanul lui Hanganu Case summary workshop (based on case study 3)	Rezina, Hanul lui Hanganu
	19.30 – 20.30	Diner Free time for the members of the delegation	Rezina, Hanul lui Hanganu
Day IV	8.00 – 9.00	Breakfast at Hanul lui Hanganu	Rezina
	9.00 – 09.15	Departure from Hanul lui Hanganu to Lalova, Rezina	Rezina
	09.15 – 10.15	Fieldwork. Case study 4. Women empowerment. IFAD beneficiary. “La Prisaca” – Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse	Rezina, Lalova
	10.15 – 12.15	Departure from Rezina to Soroca	
	12.15 – 13.15	Lunch break	Soroca
	13.30 – 14.30	The experts' panel. High-Performance Orchard, Soroca	Soroca
	14.50 – 15.45	Visit at the Soroca Fortress. Soroca Fortress is a historic fortress in the Republic of Moldova, in the modern-day city of Soroca	Soroca
	16.00 – 17.30	Visit at the JSC Alfa Nistru Cannery. JSC “ALFA-NISTRU” is operating for about 50 years. From a small juice shop, he became a large-scale, 1800 hectares Industrial Union Cannery and Farmers Service Center. They are included in the list of the largest producers of canned fruits, vegetables, and juices in the Republic of Moldova.	Soroca
	17.30 – 18.30	Dinner Case summary workshop (based on case study 4)	Soroca
	18.30 – 21.30	Departure from Soroca to Chisinau	Chisinau
	21.30	Accommodation at a hotel in Chisinau (The Labor Institute)	Chisinau

Day	Time	Activity	Place
Day V	8.00 – 9.00	Breakfast at The Labor Institute hotel	Chisinau
	9.00 – 11.30	Departure from Chisinau to Ungheni, Untesti	Ungheni
	11.30 – 12.30	Fieldwork. Case study 5. Women empowerment. IFAD beneficiary. The cattle farm at Untesti, Ungheni	Ungheni, Untesti
	12.30 – 12.45	Departure from Ungheni, Untesti to Ungheni City	
	12.45 – 13.45	Lunch	Ungheni
	14.00 – 15.30	The experts' panel. Free economic zone, Ungheni	Ungheni
	15.30 – 16.30	Departure from Ungheni to Plaiul Fagului	
	16.30 – 17.30	Experts from Local Action Grup "CULA Sub-region" "Plaiul fagului" ("The Land of beeches") state natural reserve – with a total area of 5642 ha, of which the forests occupy 4639 ha, including formations with beech (272 ha), ash (1163 ha), sessile oak, and pedunculate oak (1039 ha), linden (169 ha), other species (169 ha). Sculpture Camp	Ungheni, Radenii Vechi
	17.30 – 19.00	Departure from Radenii Vechi to Chisinau	
Day VI	19.00 – 20.00	Case summary workshop (based on case study 5) Dinner Free time for the members of the delegation	Chisinau
	8.00 – 9.30	Test PCR	Chisinau
	10.00 – 10.30	Breakfast at The Labor Institute hotel	Chisinau
	10.30 – 11.30	Departure from Chisinau to Orhei	
	11.30 – 12.45	Visiting the "Orheiul Vechi" (the "Old Orhei") – the cultural-natural reserve at Trebujeni, Butuceni: the traces of the Geto-Dacian Fortress, the remains of the Defense Fortifications, the ruins of the medieval fortress Orhei, the eastern city "Sehr al-Cedid", the Tatar baths, the Museum of the Archaeological Complex Orheiul Vechi, the cave monastery and the cave at Butuceni, the local church, certain agro-touristic guesthouses.	Orhei
	13.00 – 14.00	Lunch	Orhei
	14.00 – 15.30	Departure from Orhei to Chisinau	
	16.00 – 17.00	Closing workshop Systematization and dissemination of the results of the Route	Chisinau
	17.00 – 18.00	Dinner Free time for the members of the delegation	Chisinau
Day VII	All-day	Participants departure from the hotel to the airport	Chisinau

Hosts experience and cross table of cases

Case no	Case name	What can we learn from this experience
1	Women empowerment and share best practices – Anthology of female success stories/ knowledge management	<p>Participant can learn from this experience how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – empower women and to promote and encourage women in social, political and economic activities; – evaluate and promote at the regional level women's activity with the best performances in the social and economic areas; – create and develop a regional network with the participation of women leaders and local public administration; – promote the results of women involved in regional development (social and economic); – raise public awareness on gender balance in the political and business sectors; – support, empower and enable newly elected women; – enhance the capacities of women; – motivate women and minority ethnic groups to participate in social, economic and political life; – strengthen the skills of women leaders from underrepresented groups and to advocate and to promote gender equality; – to identify, appreciate, promote and disseminate the best practices; – inspire and to implement successful and performant models; – share knowledge, skills, and experiences.
2	Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with smart caffè	<p>Through this experience participants can learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – improve the educational experience of students in general and prepare them for an active role in the labor market; – develop of new products, services, or functions; – adopt of new technologies and digital transformation; – establish partnerships with innovative start-ups; – talent search by testing professional expertise and soft skills of potential new employees in the real-life environment; – boost own team's creativity; – collect original ideas for the company's new marketing strategies and communication campaigns, etc.
3	Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems	<p>By visiting the "Selectia" participants can gain knowledge on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – proper soil management; – knowledge of good agricultural practices that contributing to obtaining high yields while minimizing costs for external inputs and reducing environmental pollution; – the influence of different crop rotation, fertilization systems, soil tillage and irrigation on soil fertility and crop production; – knowledge in the field of organic agriculture; – finding alternative ways for involvement of forage crops in rotation, including perennial legumes and grasses, is important for sustainable development of agriculture; – crop rotations enrich deeper soil layers with organic matter and increase crops' resilience to droughts; – the conservation agriculture cannot provide expected results without structural changes in the whole farming system, etc.

4	Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse	<p>Participant can learn from this experience how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - set up a farm, leased land, and to develop a business in agro-tourism; - development of rural tourism through apitherapy and other related activities (accommodation / reception of guests, tea made of medicinal plants, built a cellar, where they can taste macerated preserved foods, wine, honey processing laboratory and a space for the exhibition of products, etc.); - satisfy a wide range of interests for all types of age, gender, and areas in one place; - access and implement IFAD-funded projects; - Participate and promote produce within national big events (e.g. EarmarEco); - be motivated and like what you do; - If there is a desire, effort is made, dreams are followed, and beautiful results can be obtained - if there are difficulties along the way how to develop their business as much as possible; <p>motivate people to love nature, to love bees, rural tourism, to come to the countryside.</p>
5	Cattle farm	<p>Participant can learn from this experience how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - open a new business; - to get information, to see which are the most suitable breeds for a business; - take a loan with a portion of the grant from the bank; - to increase amount the necessary fodder; - solve the problem of storage and cool the milk; - how to discuss / negotiate with milk processing companies in order to procure the raw material (milk); - use the grant offered by CPIU IFAD; - develop and with small steps to move towards the business model they have envisaged; <p>no business evolves without difficulties, but it is these that make you stronger and more confident in your own strength.</p>

Cross table of cases

Case name	Who presents the case	Domain			
		Agriculture	Youth	Women empowerment	Knowledge management
Women empowerment and share best practices – Anthology of female success stories / knowledge management	Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) “Viitorul”, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova			X	X
Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with smart cafe	State Agricultural University of Moldova, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova		X		X
Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems	Selecția Research Institute of Field Crops, Balti, Republic of Moldova	X			
Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse	IFAD beneficiary. La Prisaca, Lalova, Rezina, Republic of Moldova			X	
Cattle farm	IFAD beneficiary, Ungheni, Untesti, Republic of Moldova			X	

Description of the study cases of the beneficiaries

Case study 1

Women empowerment and best practices sharing – Anthology of female success stories and knowledge management

Introduction. Background. Situation analysis

Moldova has made international commitments to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, by ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and various ILO Conventions. A series of national strategies and action plans have promoted gender equality. However, implementation lags behind, and women still face discrimination and inequality in social and economic life, lacking effective opportunities for participation in decision-making in public and private sectors.

Across Moldova, women are under-represented in leading positions in the government, politics, business, and civil society – despite their proven abilities as leaders and agents of change, and their right to participate equally in democratic governance.

Women's representation in Moldovan politics and decision-making processes is below international benchmarks. Roma women and women with disabilities are virtually excluded from representation in public life. Women are also underrepresented in the decision-making bodies in the private and civil society sectors.

Characteristics of entrepreneurs in Moldova

According to CEDAW observations, patriarchal attitudes and deeply rooted stereotypes on the roles and responsibilities of men and women in family and society persist. Such

attitudes limit women's educational choices and employment options. These include significant wage disparities, segregation into lower-paying occupations, unequal sharing of work and family responsibilities, etc. Of the total number of local entrepreneurs, the main share is formed of men (72.5%); the share of women constitutes only 27.5%. Thus, the number of male entrepreneurs is 2.6 times higher than that of the number of female entrepreneurs.

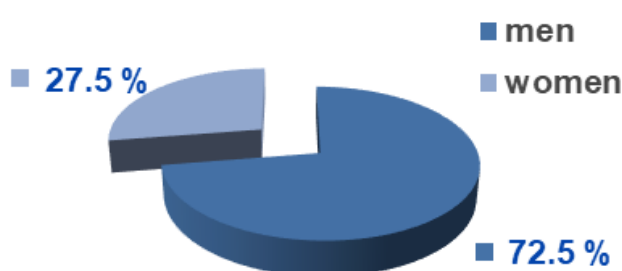


Figure 1. The share of men and women involved in entrepreneurship

Women in Moldova face specific education and labor market barriers. Persistent patriarchal attitudes limit their educational choices and employment options. Women also face discriminatory practices. These include significant wage disparities, segregation into lower-paying occupations, unequal sharing of work and family responsibilities, and limited access to childcare. Women entrepreneurs face barriers getting access to bank loans and to state-funded business and entrepreneurship development programs.

Women bring an enormous contribution to the Moldovan economy and to society overall. However, they face disproportionate barriers that limit their employment options and result in inequality in the labor market. These include significant wage disparities, segregation into lower-paying occupations, traditional expectations about their career choices, unequal



sharing of work and family responsibilities, overprotective maternity leave policies, and limited access to childcare.

In Moldova, the employment rate of women is 37%, compared to 43% in the case of men and women earn on average 12.4% less than men. For some groups, however, the employment rate is much lower: for example, only 15% of Roma women over 15 years old are employed, compared to 34% of non-Roma women. According to a study commissioned by UN Women and UNICEF in 2013, 9 out of 10 women with children under the age of 3, and two out of three women with children between 3 and 7 years old, are unemployed. On average, unpaid work occupies about 66 percent of women's total working time, and they perform nearly twice as much unpaid care work at home as men.

Women are under-represented in highly paid and in-demand sectors and are mostly employed in lower-paid jobs and in the most "feminized" sectors of the economy which include public administration, education, health and social assistance, trade, hotels, and restaurants. For example, women represent over 80% of the labor force in the health sector, while earning on average 13.5% less than men.⁴ Limited economic opportunities for women affect the entire society.

What is your history? Past experience in the field

IDIS "Viitorul" has implemented several projects in order to empower women and to promote and encourage women's social, political and economic activities while promoting gender equality in local communities of Moldova.

For example, IDIS has implemented the following projects:

The project:

Raising public awareness on gender balance in the political and business sectors, financed by the UNDP and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Specific objectives were:

1. Informing citizens about the existing social and economic realities from the perspective of human rights and gender equality;
2. Raising public awareness on women's rights, discriminatory practices, marginalization, and social exclusion to which women may be subjected by organizing an awareness and information campaign.

Some of the activities:

- In two public debates with the representatives of the Central, Local Public Administration, NGOs in the field, the Platform for Gender

Equality, donors, mass media, etc. organized, common models of development of the social economy in Moldova were identified, as well as common problems faced by entrepreneurs, including women and young people;

- A Policy Brief was elaborated and published on the topic "Development of the social economy in terms of promoting gender equality". About 600 IDIS subscribers have received the policy brief by e-mail;
- Articles in the Timpul newspaper, TV shows but also 10 newsletters were elaborated and disseminated on the topic "Equalities without Disparities";
- 5 press releases and 10 newsletters placed on the institutional site of IDIS www.viitorul.org, which usually has 500 unique visitors per day;
- 10 success stories of women in the political and economic sphere, as well as identified serious violations of gender non-discrimination principle in the socio-political and economic field.



The project:

Provision of Consultancy Services for the design, organization, and delivery of post local election seminars for newly elected women councilors at district and local level, financed by UNDP

The specific objective was to support, empower and enable newly elected women councilors at the local and district level with relevant skills and abilities to effectively exercise their duties, with due consideration to integrating gender equality, inclusiveness, and participation in the decision-making processes at local and district level.

The target group was:

- Newly elected women councilors (from different parties as well as independents, if there are any) from local public administration of first level (≈ 400 women);
- Newly elected women councilors (from different parties as well as independents, if there are any) from local public administration of second level (≈ 100 women).

The main activities were:

1. Organization and conduct of two training modules for newly elected local women councilors;
2. Organization and conduct of 10 study visits in a developed community ran by a woman mayor.

The topics taught in the first module included:

- Role and responsibilities of local councilors;
- Gender equality as a principle of human rights from the perspective of a councilor;
- Fundraising for local / district initiatives;
- The budgetary process at the local level;
- Code of conduct of local elected officials;
- Feminine leadership: methods and tools;
- Personal development and self-learning.

The topics taught in the second module included:

- The role and responsibilities of local councils, mayors, and civil servants in boosting the socio-economic development of the community;
- Gender Equality in national and international policies;
- Gender-responsive budgeting: mechanisms, principles and practical examples;
- Effective mechanisms of verbal and written communication within local government;
- Cooperation between local councils and district councilor's representatives of different political parties, independent forces. Mechanisms for conflict resolution;
- Ensuring transparency of decision-making within local government;
- The content and quality of public speaking from the perspective of the politician – an efficient mechanism for mobilization and influence of citizens;
- Advocacy and negotiations.



The project:

To design and provide training, coaching, and support for women candidates and potential candidates for local elections, funded by the UN Women in Politics Program, funded by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in partnership with the Eastern European Foundation (EEF) and the Partnership for Development, financial support of the Government of Sweden.

IDIS "Viitorul" was responsible for the provision of training, coaching and support aimed to enhance the capacities of women candidates and women prospective candidates who manifested their interest to run for office and for women candidates nominated on the lists by electoral parties.



IDIS "Viitorul" was responsible for the following tasks:

- Preparatory work, disseminating the call for applications and information regarding the situation of women in politics and in the decision-making area, and on the importance of their participation in the mentioned fields;
- To develop and deliver a series of needs assessment exercises for women candidates and prospective candidates, to find out the proper trainers who would ensure the delivery of the training sessions;
- To develop and deliver a series of capacity development training sessions for women candidates and potential women candidates from target communities and to provide individual on-going coaching and assistance for 25 women candidates for the position of mayor.



The project:

Civic education campaign to encourage the participation in local elections of women's groups in the northern region (Bratuseni, Pepeni, Sangerei Noi, Chiscareni, Tarnova (Rome), Pelinia, Chetrosu (Rome), Larga, Lipcani, Corlateni) and 3 cities of Gagauzia autonomy: Ceadar-Lunga, Vulcanesti and Comrat, financed by UNDP

The aim of the project was to motivate women's groups and minority ethnic groups from selected localities to participate in local elections and to cast their vote in an informed and motivated manner.



The project:

To strengthen the skills of a group of up to 30 active women leaders from underrepresented groups (Roma women, women representing ethnic minorities, women with disabilities, etc.) to advocate and to promote gender equality, financed by UN Women

Activities that were developed:

- Dissemination of the call for applications and information regarding the existing situation of the women from underrepresented groups in politics and decision-making area and on the importance of their participation in decision-making, and as advocates for gender equality;
- Design and delivery of 3 training sessions (2-day long) on different topics for up to 30 active women leaders from underrepresented groups, as well as carrying out in the last (second) day of training sessions informative visits to key institutions for the same groups of participants in order to facilitate the dialogue between women from underrepresented groups and duty-bearers aimed to raise the issues met by women and to find solutions for solving, and also to create relationships for further collaborations.



The project:

Best Practice Programme of Local Authorities in Moldova, financed by CoE

The Best Practices Programme for Local Authorities in Moldova was implemented by IDIS "Viitorul", with the financial support of the Council of Europe, since 2005 until now.

The aim of the program was to identify, appreciate, promote and disseminate the best practices among local authorities from Moldova, in order to improve the efficiency of local governance.

Participating at the Best Practice Programme, local authorities representatives had the opportunity to inspire and to implement, in their communities, successful and performant models. In this way, the local government can become more efficient, and the quality of life of residents can improve noticeably.

Good local practices meant success stories, partnerships, and innovation, and the Best Practice Programme was conceived in this sense, so as to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives by sharing knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Who are your target group and beneficiaries?

Within this case study, the target group and beneficiaries were women leaders involved in the social-economic activities in the regions, local representatives of municipalities from the Republic of Moldova, including regional development structures, civil society representatives, and the population of the regions, especially women.

Essence of the case study. What activities and results/achievements have been made? What are the tools applied to reach the purposes?

The aim of the case / project was to support regional development by encouraging women's social and economic activities and integrating gender equality in local communities of the Republic of Moldova.

The objectives of the project were to:

1. Evaluate and promote at the regional level women's activity with the best performances in the social and economic areas;
2. Create and develop a regional network with the participation of women leaders and local public administration;
3. Promote the results of women involved in regional development (social and economic).

In order to achieve the specific objective I. Evaluate and promote at the regional level women's activity with the best performances in the social and economic areas the following **activities and tools** were applied:

– **Project launching event**

The project “Regional development through equal involvement” was officially launched on 7 June 2019. A piece of news in this respect was published on the website – www.viitorul.org – in Romanian and in English: Success stories of women in the regions of Moldova, promoted by IDIS “Viitorul” and the Lithuanian Embassy. The news was also shared on the Facebook page of IDIS “Viitorul”, in mass media, etc.

– **Setting up a meeting with the Evaluation Board within the project**

We have created the Board of 5 members (representatives of Moldovan mayors’ association CALM, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, Chamber for Commerce and Industry, Organisation for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises and the donor’s community (the UNDP manager of the program that is working in local community development project).

On June 12, we held the first meeting of the Evaluation Board, where all 5 members were present together with the project team and experts. The agenda was focused on presenting the project’s aim, objectives, and activities. Then we discussed the organization of the national contest: evaluation and selection criteria, the announcement and the form, structure, and content of the participation, and also the evaluation criteria. We agreed with the Board members that after we release the announcement, it will be disseminated through their networks, local representatives, beneficiaries, and partners.

– **Organizing the national contest**

The national contest “Women success stories” was officially launched on 15 June, 2019. The purpose of the contest was to identify, promote and appreciate the success stories of women in the economic and social field, to make visible the successes of women in all regions of the Republic of Moldova by ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all.

In order to participate in the contest, participants

had to meet the following conditions:

- to be at least 18 years old and to be a citizen of the Republic of Moldova;
- to operate in one of the development regions of the country (North, Center, South, and ATU Gagauzia);
- to actively support the principles of gender equality and respect for human rights;
- to contribute to the increase of social inclusion, job creation, the involvement of women in socio-economic activities, the empowerment of other women in the community, and the facilitation of their access to social resources and services in the country’s regions;
- (applicable to section 1. Female entrepreneurship) to manage a business (including social) created by a woman, that has been active for at least one year;
- (applicable to section 1. Community Leadership) to carry out social, educational, and cultural activities as well as civic initiatives that promote and recognize women’s leadership and contribution to the community.

An announcement in this respect was published on the IDIS Viitorul website with the application form both Romanian and Russian.

The announcement was also published on the Moldovan civil society portal – www.civic.md and disseminated by Board members to their network, beneficiaries, and stakeholders as such local businesses, Chambers of Commerce in all regions of the country as well to the women’s start-up projects, implemented with the Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development support.

The announcement was delivered using various communication channels, starting with the institutional [website](http://www.viitorul.org), the Facebook page, mass-media (national, regional, and local), e-mail newsletters, being also sent to all 898 local authorities in Moldova, public institutions, regional development agencies, as well to the women’s start-up projects.



In just 10 days, 53 success stories were collected from women from all regions of the country.

The sections applied to women entrepreneurs and leaders in the development regions of Moldova were:

1. Female entrepreneurship;
2. Community leadership.

The examples of successful activities included organic farming, education and counseling, IT services, production, recreation, community involvement and development projects, volunteering, social services, promoting local traditions, and the list goes on.

The success stories submitted were assessed by the members of the Evaluation Commission according to the following criteria: initiative, innovation, efficiency, relevance, partnership, efficient resource management, impact, and sustainability.

"I was impressed by the success stories of women, among them being some inspiring initiatives. Once again we emphasize that in the regions of Moldova there is untapped female potential and these success stories would be a challenge for other women who still do not have the courage to start an activity or a business", said Iulia Costin, Secretary-General of State, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure of the Republic of Moldova.

Diana Rusu, head of the support and promotion department at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Moldova, added "In order to motivate them and improve the environment in which women in the region work, we need living examples to generate ideas, to encourage them and give them hope. And these examples are women leaders in the social and economic fields who can inspire confidence and offer hope, and who deserve to be followed".

In order to achieve the specific objective II. Create and develop a regional network with the participation of women leaders and local public administration, the following **activities and tools** were applied:

- **Organizing 1 round table** with women leaders in social and economic areas and local public administration with the aim to achieve greater involvement of women in social and economic life.

The potential of women in the Republic of Moldova is very important for society, but it is not capitalized at fair value. For society to become sustainable and prosperous, women need support, encouragement, and information, so as to be equally involved with men in decision-making and in solving community problems.



The round table discussions addressed issues related to women's involvement in the socio-economic development of the communities in the Republic of Moldova, current local policies that support women's involvement, as well as solutions to existing challenges. The event aimed to increase the involvement of women in the socio-economic life of the communities of the Republic of Moldova by raising awareness of the role of women in the sustainable local and regional development of the country.

Thus, the participants in the round table spoke about the opportunities and constraints facing Moldovan women and proposed a series of policy recommendations for a fair society.

– **Organizing the Open Days**

At the best practices initiated and implemented by women in social and economic field, following the evaluation were organized Open Days at their business, enterprise or public institution. Study visits and open day were in Straseni, Comrat, Chisinau and Singerei.



The success story of Valentina Casian, the mayor of Straseni, begins in 2011, when she was elected mayor of Straseni, being the first woman mayor in the history of the town. During the administration process of the City Hall of Straseni, the local public administration became a model in terms of integrity, but also in attracting foreign investment.



The success story of Daniela Dohotaru-Gritcan, the founder of Tech4Kids, begins in 2017, aiming to provide an alternative for educating preschool children to understand in-depth how technology works and how to manage it to stimulate development and not addiction. Educational programs are created according to a methodology that combines the classic structure of a lesson plan with teaching materials and the integration of technology in the most diverse aspects of the educational process. Child-oriented, the curriculum applied at Tech4Kids aims to revolutionize the way preschool education takes place.



The success story of Aliona Ivanenco, the founder of the speech therapy office, begins in 2014 and aims to contribute to the social integration and support provided to the community through psychological counseling and speech therapy services for children and adults in difficulty.

The purpose of the service is to provide support through concrete advice and working materials, in overcoming speech disorders to all children, so that they are treated in childhood and do not turn into wrong habits. Thus, during the five years of activity, the Office of Psychological Counseling and Speech Therapy offered over 8,000 speech therapy and counseling sessions in the five years of activity.



Svetlana Panaitova, president of the Gagauzia Women's Association. The Association was created in 1999 and aims to create a harmonious community in ATU Gagauzia, by implementing programs for women and vulnerable social groups of the population. The association works in different areas: humanitarian mission, gender equality, business training programs, information technologies, and training to prevent domestic violence and human trafficking. In the first five years, they had 7,000 beneficiaries throughout Gagauzia, while today this number is in the tens of thousands throughout the region.

In order to achieve the specific objective III. Promoting the results of women involved in regional development (social and economic) the following *activities and tools* were applied:

– **Designing, developing, and promoting 2 fact sheets / online posters**

The stories of women from all around the country were presented in fact sheets in order to promote women's success stories and other actions designed to help ensure genuine and equal participation of women in the country's regional development.





– **Elaborating the anthology of best practices**

All innovative practices discovered during the competition were presented in an anthology of success stories of women from all three regions of the country (north, south, center).

The anthology was structured in two parts according to the sections of the contest: female entrepreneurship and community leadership containing examples of 19 successful businesses launched and developed by women entrepreneurs and 34 stories of women leaders who manage to bring change in the community by example and involvement in various social, educational and cultural projects and initiatives.

– **Organizing the National Awarding Ceremony**

Women who provided the best samples of success stories were awarded at the National Awarding Ceremony. The ceremony was attended by 60 participants, including the mass media.

During the Women's Success Story Awarding Ceremony, 10 grand prizes and eight mentions were awarded. The contest participants were given prizes and diplomas.

Thus, the following grand prizes were awarded:

Section: Female Entrepreneurship:

- Aliona Ivanenco for the speech therapy and psychological counseling office in Singerei;
- Stela Cetulean, founder of the "Lefrucom" fruit and vegetable dryer, a company that patented dried pickles;
- Nona Deinego from the IT company "SoftGrup" from Balti, a company doing business with partners in the USA and Europe;

Section: Community leadership:



- Ana Donia, civic activist from Cimislia;
- Renata Gradinaru, the woman who brought the civic budget to Balti;
- Rodica Gutu, founder of the association of parents with orphan children "Shelter and Relief" in Ungheni;
- Svetlana Budistean, who has been leading the Youth Fund in the village of Varnita since 2013;
- Svetlana Panaitova, president of the Gagauzia Women's Association;
- Tamara Schiopu, the woman who created the "Ecolocal" Farmers Market in Moldova;
- Valentina Casian, the first woman mayor in the history of Strasenii.



Who were your partners and what networks are you part of?

Our partners were: Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania to the Republic of Moldova, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, the network of Women in the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM), Chamber for Commerce and Industry (CCI), Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises Sector Development (ODIMM), United Nation Development Program (UNDP), UN Women, IFAD, women, civil society organizations (CSO), mass media, etc.

How do you ensure visibility, promotion, and knowledge management?

Within the project were used the following products in order to ensure visibility: press releases, fact-sheets with successful stories of women's best social-economic practices, articles in mass media, etc. The main instruments to promote visibility were the website <http://viitorul.org> and the social media profiles – [@IDISViitorul](#), [@PBPMoldova](#). It should be noted in this regard that the FB page of IDIS – [@IDISViitorul](#) is followed by 4,122 people and has a monthly impact of 15,000 views and an average of 140 post shares. All these activities kept the action visible. The promotional materials have increased the visibility of the action, too. All the promotional materials developed within the project wore the logo of and made references to the funding institution.

We have ensured proper public dissemination, we have published the announcement through various channels, and we have participated in a radio broadcast (Radio Moldova). The press releases followed and precede all public events, in order to increase the visibility of the action. For example:

<http://www.viitorul.org/ro/content/dezvoltarea-durabil%C4%83-comunit%C4%83%C8%9Bilor-din-moldova-depinde-de-sus%C8%9Binerea-%C8%99i-implicarea-activ%C4%83>

<http://www.viitorul.org/ro/content/prim%C4%83ria-municipiului-str%C4%83%C8%99eni-%C8%99i-deschis-u%C8%99ile-pentru-%C3%AEmp%C4%83rt%C4%83%C8%99i-istoria-de-succes-primej>

<http://www.viitorul.org/ro/content/gr%C4%83dini%C8%9Ba-copiiilor-exploratori-tech4kids-descoperit%C4%83-de-idis-viitorul-la-ziua-u%C8%99ilor>

<http://www.viitorul.org/en/node/1816>

<https://www.trm.md/ro/fierbinte-show/fierbinte-show-25-iunie-2019>

<https://news.24.md/ro/news/istoriile-de-succes-ale-femeilor-din-regiunile-moldovei-premiata-lista-proiectelor-castigatoare-xrn1YEr5>

<http://news.ungheni.org/tag/istoriile-de-succes-ale-femeilor-din-regiunile-moldovei/>

[femeilor-din-regiunile-moldovei/](http://www.calm.md/en/istoriile-de-succes-ale-femeilor-din-regiunile-moldovei-premiata-in-cadru-unei-ceremonii-afla-care-sunt-proiectele-castigatoare/)

<https://www.calm.md/en/istoriile-de-succes-ale-femeilor-din-regiunile-moldovei-premiata-in-cadru-unei-ceremonii-afla-care-sunt-proiectele-castigatoare/>

<https://chamber.md/cci-a-rm-a-participat-la-ceremonia-nationala-de-premiere-a-femeilor-de-succes-din-tara-noastra/>

<http://provincial.md/actual/istoriile-de-succes-ale-femeilor-din-regiunile-moldovei-premiata-afla-care-sunt-proiectele-castigatoare>

What are the sources of funding?

The project "Local development through equal involvement" was implemented by IDIS "Viitorul" in partnership with the Embassy of Lithuania in the Republic of Moldova, with the financial support of the Lithuanian Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme.

What is your successful experience?

Through our project, we had an impact on the personal and professional development of women by helping them communicate with women from other regions, exchange their good and innovative practices, access finances, find partners inside and outside the country, etc.

We need to notice that:

- the local public authorities were interested to promote and support women from their communities;
- mass media was interested which means a lot for proper dissemination of the project activities;
- the Board members and IDIS partners have been responsive to our initiatives and very open to contribute with their expertise and supporting us in the dissemination of the project results;
- synergy was created among various actors at the national, regional, and local level;
- the initiative made known the remarkable experience and results of women, stimulated the motivation to produce innovations and changes in the community, and offered to the participating women, the public recognition of the economic and social successes;
- the initiative has contributed to the efficiency of regional governance and has supported communities delivering democratic governance and equitable conditions for the development and provision of public services;
- we have discovered and promoted the best practices in the social and economic field, implemented by women, thus contributing to the development of regions in the Republic of Moldova;
- the initiative has involved the exchange of experience in the social and economic field and lessons learned both by men and women as well as networking;

- the project implementation promoted motivation to create innovations and bring changes in local and regional communities and healthy competition among women with remarkable successes.

For the women from all regions of Moldova, the participation in the project brought:

- recognition of women's social and economic activities at local, regional, and national level;
- the opportunity to get feedback and recommendations on the achieved achievements;
- rewarding successes through recognition;
- exchange of experience with other active women in the Republic of Moldova.

What factors have facilitated and posed obstacles for the experience? What are the main challenges?

The risk of not finding good expertise was mitigated with the help of IDIS's own human and functional capacities sufficient to cover the expertise necessary to achieve the objectives of this project.

Analyzing the situation in the Republic of Moldova on the issue of equality between women and men, it was highlighted that the most problematic aspects are:

- empowering women in the political, economic, social;
- domestic violence.

The specific obstacles that stand in the way of female entrepreneurship are:

- Type of education;
- Poor social status;
- Insufficient knowledge of good practices;
- Difficulties in accessing funding;
- Lack of access to important technical, scientific, and business networks;
- Lack of real role models to send positive messages to women;
- Psychological barriers;
- Underestimating the profile of women entrepreneurs in the business world;
- Discrimination against women in the labor market, etc.

The project has encouraged local and regional authorities to promote women-led initiatives and disseminate the best examples of social and economic start-ups. This idea has represented a unique and great platform that encourages all women from local communities to believe in their ideas and business, and through this platform, women from all over the country have learned from each other, found solutions for their problems and community problems, and have replicated good initiatives in local communities, including those promoting the development of regions in Moldova.

We think that the idea of the project will continue, to emphasize the idea of innovation and equal participation, because only original initiatives can be considered great examples for other municipalities.

What lessons can we draw? What can we learn from your experience?

There are only positive lessons learned and the first one is the fact that Moldova and especially local communities need such initiatives. The second one is the openness of the institutions and organizations that agreed to voluntarily participate with their expertise and support as members of the Evaluation Board, which is highly appreciated by civil society.

With regard to the next steps, the recommendation would be to continue the implementation of such initiatives in order to provide other types of support to the practices/success stories that will be deemed as being most effective, innovative, etc., such as strengthening capacities programs (communication with the client, beneficiaries; access to finance (including project writing and management); how to create and develop partnerships), exchange of good practice among regions, communities but also at the international level, such as study visits, etc.

Participants can learn from this experience how to:

- empower women and to promote and encourage women in social, political and economic activities;
- evaluate and promote at the regional level women's activity with the best performances in the social and economic areas;
- create and develop a regional network with the participation of women leaders and local public administration;
- promote the results of women involved in regional development (social and economic);
- raise public awareness on gender balance in the political and business sectors;
- support, empower and enable newly elected women;
- enhance the capacities of women;
- motivate women and minority ethnic groups to participate in social, economic and political life;
- strengthen the skills of women leaders from underrepresented groups and to advocate and to promote gender equality;
- to identify, appreciate, promote and disseminate the best practices;
- inspire and to implement successful and performant models;
- share knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Case study 2

Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with Smart Caffes



Introduction. Background. Situation analysis

Fostering university-enterprise cooperation and entrepreneurship of students via SMART Caffes – SMART Project is part of the Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education, within the ERASMUS + Programme, more specifically to support the modernization, accessibility and internationalization of higher education in the Eastern European countries (EaPC): Armenia, Moldova and Belarus. The project will last for 48 months (from 10-15-2017 to 10-14-2021).

The “SMART Caffes” are conceived as open centers that welcome students, recent graduates who have initial ideas or creative potential, but who lack the skills and resources to realize it.

The core environment provides full hardware and software support, training, mentors and networks for the growth of student ideas. It also improves the educational experience of students in general and prepares them for an active role in the labor market.

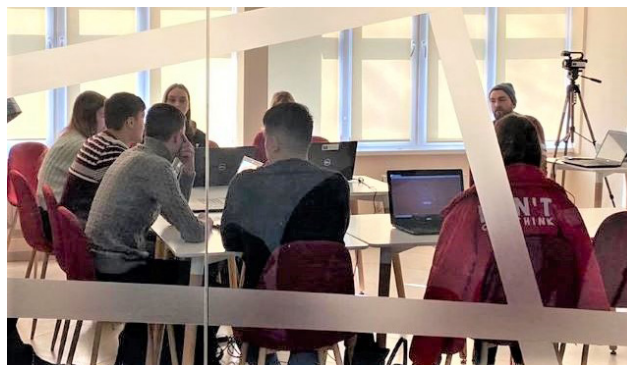
Not only are the SMART Caffes physical rooms but virtual spaces where innovative products & services can be conceptualized and validated then spun out into new initiatives.

SMART CHANNEL is a knowledge repository & collaborative playground for generating ideas and linking students and companies. It will be the cornerstone for developing functional Market place for ideas at regional level.

What is your history? Past experience in the field

Mission

To accomplish a boost of new enterprises, the entrepreneurial vibe should be nurtured during education. In all levels, pupils and students can participate in projects, aimed at entrepreneurial thinking. In higher education at most, students should have all the necessary means to be



immersed in entrepreneurship, such as one-on-one business coaching, legal aspects of becoming an entrepreneur, business modelling... regardless of their fields of study, as in any of those, entrepreneurship can be stimulated.

Vision

The vision of the SMART CAFE project is to create an entrepreneurial climate in which the threshold to start up a profit or non-profit business is lowered so that anyone feels up to the challenge. Next to that, people should feel empowered to undertake any challenge that they feel up to, because of the fostering of their entrepreneurial skills.

The SMART Caffes are expected to implement and use the open innovation concept as a tool to reach out and engage relevant external stakeholders such as business companies and non-governmental organizations for the purpose of generation and acceleration of innovation. In global terms, the notion of open innovation is not new at all and the first examples of crowdsourcing initiatives date back to the 18th century. Nevertheless, the reasoning behind the rise of open innovation and the increase of such initiatives across sectors and, in particular, in the Anglo-Saxon world during the last two decades are deemed rooted in a number of factors including globalization, product complexity, improved connectivity, the ICT advancement, etc.

In reality, companies engage in open innovation for either defensive or offensive reasons, hence they usually adopt open innovation as an avenue for reducing costs and risks or to leverage knowledge and expertise from outside the company to improve their competitiveness on the market (Brant & Lohse, 2014). An important



part of the SMART Caffes' portfolio includes research, liaison, and networking with a high number of companies and non-governmental organizations across Armenia, Belarus, and Moldova regardless of their motivation to adopt open innovation.

The concept of open innovation is considered a major novelty within the SMART project and the 13 SMART caffes are expected to introduce and proactively promote this business model across their academic communities, including SAUM.

The SMART Caffes are to operate as open innovation hubs linking SMART project universities' academic communities with potential innovation recipients from the business and non-governmental sectors, which have the capacity and are open and mature to accept and rely on knowledge and innovation generated beyond their entity's boundaries.

Who are your target group and beneficiaries?

The "SMART Caffes" are conceived as open centers that welcome students, recent graduates who have initial ideas or creative potential, but who lack the skills and resources to realize it.

Beneficiaries:

- 2182 Students and young entrepreneurs;
- 1290 Companies and organizations;
- 436 Mentors

Essence of the case study. What activities and results/achievements have been made? What are the tools applied to reach the purposes?

The general aim of the project is to increase the employment and self-employment potential of EaPC graduates and improve the innovation capacity of companies through the promotion of entrepreneurship, the creation of companies and the open innovation approach in collaboration between universities and companies.

Specific objectives are:

- **To set up, equip and network co-creative centers (SMART Caffes) which support students and researchers to generate, develop, market and commercialize their own innovative ideas through entrepreneurship and / or open innovation in three EaPC countries**

SMART CAFFES are a platform for generating, developing and commercializing innovative ideas through entrepreneurial route (start-ups) or in collaboration with companies (open innovation). It will bring students, researchers, entrepreneurs, SMEs, solution and service providers, users into co-creative environment, cross different perspectives and deepen understanding about complex interactions between technologies and market; and thereby substantially increase the likelihood for both high potential start-ups and successful open innovations. SMART CAFFES will be physical and virtual space where innovative products and services can be conceptualized and validated then spun out into new venture initiatives.



- **To foster students' entrepreneurship and creation of start-ups at university settings**

SMART CAFFES will foster the practical involvement of EaPC HEIs in entrepreneurial education putting students on the focus. SMART CAFFES are conceived as open hubs that welcome students, recent graduates who have starting ideas or creative potentials, but who lack skills and resources to realize those potentials. SMART CAFFES in different parts of EaPC HEIs will join forces by sharing knowledge, expertise and resources to help to students to expand their activities / ideas to the regional or even global market.

- **To introduce and implement open innovation as a new form of partnership among key stakeholders in the knowledge triangle in the region**

SMART CAFFES are a new model of a public-private-people partnership that fits to EaPC context and uses a regional approach. This physical and virtual space will foster the process of education-research-innovation by straightening the cooperation between universities and entrepreneurial / industrial sector, students (directly) with industrial sector and its requests.



- **To revise and adapt curricula to include entrepreneurial skills and problem-based learning**

Trainings elaborated in collaboration with EU teaching staff, EaPC teaching staff and entrepreneurs for SMART CAFFES will be partly included in teaching process at EaPC HEIs. Inclusion of SMART CAFFES into teaching process, not only entrepreneurially oriented students, but students at large will become an integral part of new product and service developments, and new venture creation and thus get chance to enhance own employability. Additionally, to support entrepreneurial and work-based learning and inclusion of SMART CAFFES in teaching process at least 20 subjects from different departments will be revised and adapted. These revised curricula will be

supported with development and publication of university-enterprise cooperation adequate teaching materials. Besides serving as a cross-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder platform for entrepreneurship, collaboration with industry, innovation and commercialization, SMART CAFFES at EaPC HEIs will offer a unique environment for problem- and work-based learning and improve educational experience for students at large and prepare them for active role at labour market.

The first phase of the project has been dedicated to identifying good practices existing in the member countries of the EU (Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, Germany and Belgium) with respect to the finances of innovation and new companies, as well as the practice of incubating and accelerate the newly created entities. A report has been generated at the end of the investigation.

[Reviewing best practice from EU \(living labs, pre-incubators, business accelerators\)](#)

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of best experience from the EU participating countries in the SMART project regarding finance of innovation and start-ups as well as the practice of incubating and accelerating

SMART TALK

Financing in agricultural and non-agricultural business development projects

with COVALCIUC INGA
- The IFAD Consolidated Programme Implementation Unit

25 May | 15:00 | ZOOM

The role of standards in the contemporary world

with NADEJDA BORTA
- Institute for Standardization of Moldova

11 May | 14:00 | ZOOM

About Financial education Ideas, Realities, Perspectives.

with Veaceslav Ionita and Liubomir Chiriac

06 Apr | 15:00 | ZOOM



start-up entities. The report provides a short introduction on the economy of each one of the participating EU countries, an overview of the start-up ecosystem in each one of them, a reference to funding mechanism and a presentation of a number of Best Practices in each country. Finally a list of contacts with mentors and coaches that can be potentially used by the EaPC partners is provided per country.

Also, was developed [SMART Caffes model for EaPC \(structure & focus, virtual & physical\)](#).

The purpose of the Manual is to guide those partnerships within a city that aim at fostering entrepreneurship. Key partners in such a consortium are of course the higher education institutions as they are the pivotal centre of innovation and education. They are the first line of contact for students who have an idea. Other partners are institutions and industry federations that support entrepreneurs, the local governments and other organizations that sustain entrepreneurship.

In order to achieve the specific objectives there are implemented different working packages with activities, for example:

WP1 Modeling the SMART Caffes

1.1 Reviewing best practice from the EU (living labs, pre-incubators, business accelerators)

1.2 Assessing local needs for training & services (entrepreneurial & industrial)

1.3 Developing SMART Caffes model for EaPC (structure & focus, virtual & physical)

WP2 Establishing the SMART Caffes

2.1 Setting up the equipment

2.2 Developing the virtual segment of SMART Caffes

2.3 Training PC staff on entrepreneurial skills (training of trainers)

2.4 Developing a set of training sessions

WP3 The SMART Caffes operation

3.1 Training SMART Caffes' users (students & companies)

3.2 Mentoring students' ideas & start-ups

3.3 Developing open innovations

3.4 Establishing a marketplace for ideas

WP5 Exploitation

5.1 Developing a sustainability strategy

5.2 Including SMART Caffes in the teaching process

5.3 Partnering with companies & governments

5.4 Applying for membership in the European Network of Living Labs

The SMART Online Hackathon is scheduled to take place at the project's final stage, namely in July 2021. The hackathon represents the SMART project's culminating activity within the project's key component of open innovation. Along with the training of students' entrepreneurial soft skills and the provision of targeted business start-up support, the development and proliferation of open innovation at the 7 EaPC HEIs is at the heart of the SMART Caffes' agenda.

SMART Online Hackathon Objectives

The online hackathon will be organized at the consortium level and will aim to showcase and promote the open innovation capabilities developed at the 7 EaPC HEIs, including SAUM, as a result of the SMART Caffes' piloting operation. Typically, a hackathon is a competition that encourages participants to come up with relevant and innovative solutions to a business or social problem. Hackathons' goals vary and may include, inter alia:

- development of new products, services, or functions;
- adoption of new technologies and digital transformation;
- establishing partnerships with innovative start-ups;
- talent search by testing professional expertise and soft skills of potential new employees in the real-life environment;
- boosting own team's creativity;
- collecting original ideas for the company's new marketing strategies and communication campaigns, etc.

During the project's hackathon in July 2021, SMART Caffes students and student teams from across the involved seven EaPC HEIs, including SAUM, will be made to create through brainstorming and put forward ready-to-use solutions to issues identified by a real-life large company based in the EU that admits struggling to address diverse challenges linked to leadership, competitiveness, efficiency, financial sustainability, green agenda, etc. The two-day online event will aim to recognize the

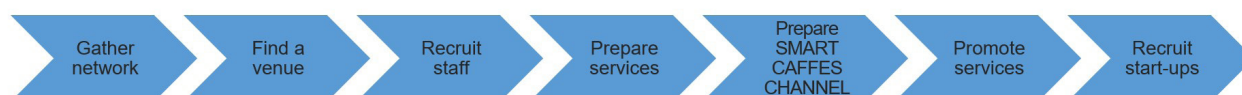


Figure 1. The steps for successful SMART CFFES

most innovative and forward-thinking SMART caffe students from the 7 EaPC HEIs, including SAUM, who will then be named the SMART Open Innovation Champions. During the hackathon, participating students and student teams will be given the opportunity to collaborate and exchange ideas with peers in the framework of dedicated breakout sessions, thus fostering their creativity, critical analytical competencies, and teamwork skills. In addition, they will receive online support from mentors with proven professional expertise in the company's sector, thus expanding their professional knowledge.

Additionally, the hackathon will engage participating students in a large-scale training activity promoting learning-by-doing, and thus enhancing their practical skills and knowledge about the open innovation business model. Finally, the participants will be given the

opportunity to pitch the solutions they have come up with in the course of the hackathon, thus receiving a platform to promote their skills and competencies.

Successfully start-up SMART Caffes, you need first to establish the SMART Caffes partnership or consortium in your city. Next this partnership needs to find the physical location that can be transformed into a SMART Caffe. Then the partnership should appoint the necessary staff who can then prepare the services and prepare the website and communication. This will enable the promotion of the services and hence the recruitment of the start-ups and student entrepreneurs can begin.

Successful incubation programmes consist of several elements that cannot be embedded solely in the curricula:

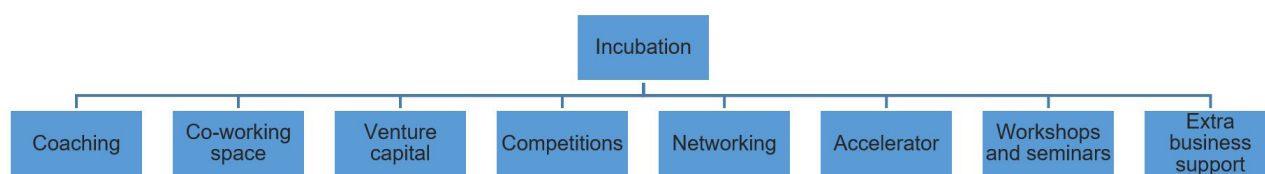


Figure 2. Elements of successful incubation programme

1.6. Who are your partners and what networks are you part of?

The project is coordinated by The International Hellenic University (IUH) along with State Agrarian University of Moldova (SAUM) and has a total of 15 entities associated with the project (12 higher education institutions and 3 NGO) and several project associated partners.

EU Partners:



Partners Countries:



How do you ensure visibility, promotion, and knowledge management?

A dissemination strategy started with the launch of the project website and a series of activities in various fields and formats (e.g.: DW 4 Dissemination. 4.1 Developing & maintaining the project website; 4.2 Developing & publishing promo materials; 4.3 Organizing dissemination & networking events; 4.4 Running EaPC students' start-up competition; 4.5 Starting up an annual regional conference etc.).

The website was launched from the beginning

of the project in 2018 has several sections for its correct dissemination. Through the different pages, we find all the necessary information for entrepreneurs, the curricula of their trainers and the subject they will teach, or different success stories to motivate them www.smartcaffes.eu.

More information about the national Smart Caffes on the national Facebook group of the project in [Armenia](#), [Belarus](#) and [Moldova](#).

Also was created a communication matrix for SMART CAFFES.

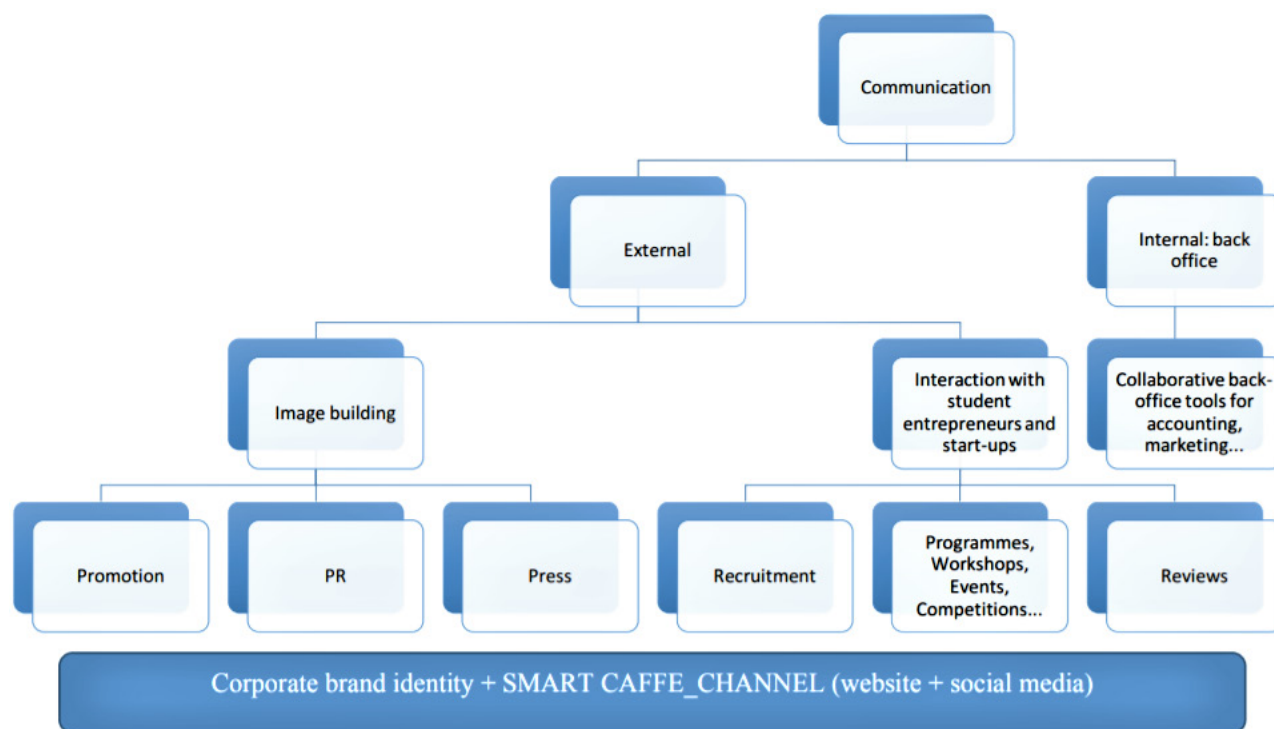


Figure 3. Communication matrix for SMART CAFFES

External communication

The external communication for the SMART CAFFES consists of several elements. First, SMART CAFFES focus on their image building by investing in promotion, PR and press. Apart from that, SMART CAFFES maintain an open communication with their “customers”, the student entrepreneurs and start-up that participate in coaching, events etc. Here they distinguish above-the-line and below-the-line communication. Above-the-line communication focuses on interaction with our target market for specific events and goals. Below-the-line communication is about image building and establishing the SMART CAFFES as a top of mind brand for entrepreneurship. All elements are summed up in a communication strategy and a communication plan, which consists of the following elements:

- communicative goals and objectives,
- target markets,
- (market research),
- strategy for image building and interaction,
- cognitive, affective, emotive, conative objectives,
- message: storyboard / moodboard,
- action plan: choice of media = what, where, when, how, how often...

Promotion

Promotion focuses on all channels that they deploy to communicate about the SMART CAFFES and its initiatives by using a 360° – degree approach and a multichannel strategy in order to reach all potential stakeholders involved. In the communication strategy, SMART CAFFES

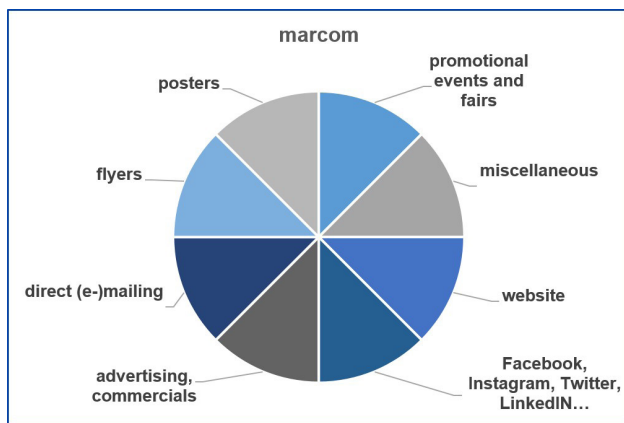


Figure 4. 360° Multichannel Strategy

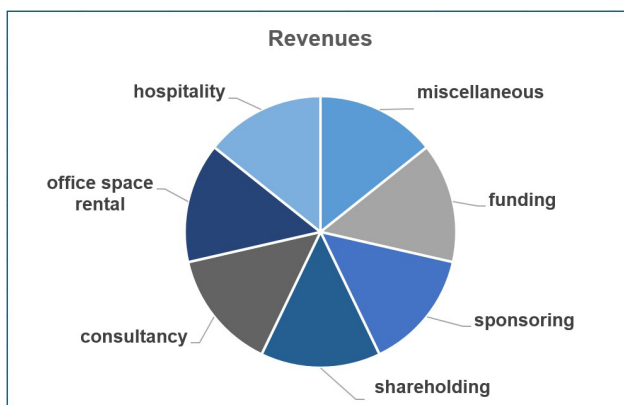


Figure 5. Revenues Model for SMART CAFFES

choose the necessary media for promotion and to what extent they will be applied. At first, they focus on online communication (website and social media), along with printed communication (flyers and posters) and direct emailing (e.g. if possible, by using the existing university online platform or intranet). Whenever there is an opportunity, the business coach can also present the SMART CAFFE to students in promotional events and fairs, e.g. in the beginning of a new academic year or in classes.

What are the sources of funding?

SMART is a European project encompassed within the Erasmus + program, within the types of projects is included in the Strategic Partnership projects in the field of Higher Education – Capacity Building.

There are six sources of revenue for Smart Caffees.

What is your successful experience? What benefits of Open innovation?

The benefits of Open Innovation are:

1. With open innovation, a company can get very large input from students as individuals and start-ups, especially taking into account that the Network of Smart Caffes is present in

Armenia, Moldova, Belarus, and Georgia;

2. Engaging relevant audiences. Engagement of proper target groups with different skills and knowledge;
3. The overall costs in open innovation represent small investments in relation to the potential number of ideas and the potential input received from our students and start-ups, which is especially important for companies in the downturn;
4. Involving customers in Research and Development (R&D). Open innovation opens the door for involving students and start-ups within established Smart Caffe and those registered on www.smartchannel.org in the R&D process from the very beginning, namely in the process of designing products or services according to market need, as well as getting very valuable feedback and other types of inputs;
5. Improve Public Relations (PR) and brand value. Open innovation impacts improve considerably the marketing aspects of the company through the improvement of its PR and its brand recognition, including thanks to the promotion activities performed by the Network of Smart Caffes within its social and media channels;
6. Gain customer karma. Knowing that the company cares about the opinions and social development thanks to the collaboration with leading Higher Education Institutions around the world, the members of the society raise their commitment towards the brand, and thus open innovation is a tool for accumulating karma or “goodwill” within society in general;
7. Chance for lucrative partnerships. When collaborating with the students and start-ups of different profiles, the partnership can be very symbiotic in nature, enriching Higher Education Institutions, companies, students, and start-ups;
8. Finding new talent; Open innovation is a great tool for reaching talents outside the company.

What factors have facilitated and posed obstacles for the experience? What are the main challenges?

The factors have facilitated – the core environment with full hardware and software support, training, mentors and networks for the growth of student ideas. It also improved the educational experience of students in general and prepare them for an active role in the labor market.

The table with the main risk and obstacle is below:

Table 3. The main risks and obstacles

	Growth driven	Free driven	Independent
Start-up phase	Scale-up	Start-up	Pre-start-up
Formats	- Accelerator programme - Investment - Use of office space	- Incubator coaching - Use of co-working space, meeting rooms	- Use of co-working space, meeting rooms - Courses
Risk	High	Medium	Low
Number of participants	Limited	Average	Open to anyone
Selectivity	High	Medium	Low
KPIs for SMART CAFFES	Internal Rate of Return (IRR) Valuation of participants Investment in participants	Occupancy rate Revenues from events and hospitality	Number of participants in coaching Number of start-ups Amount of activities embedded in courses in higher education Number of participants in competitions
Duration	Limited and intensive programme for a couple of month	On average, support could last up till a year or two	Not specified: not all pre-start-ups will launch

What lessons can we draw? What can we learn from your experience?

Provide full hardware and software support, training, mentors and networks for the growth of student ideas. It will also improve the educational experience of students in general and prepare them for an active role in the labor market.

Estimated fields of intervention and collaboration:

- operational efficiency; new product lines;
- lower costs;
- becoming more innovative from the core;
- building strategic partnerships.

From this experience you can learn how to:

- develop of new products, services, or functions;
- adopt of new technologies and digital transformation;
- establish partnerships with innovative start-ups;
- talent search by testing professional expertise and soft skills of potential new employees in the real-life environment;
- boost own team's creativity;
- collect original ideas for the company's new marketing strategies and communication campaigns, etc.



Case study 3

Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems

Introduction. Background. Situation analysis

Agriculture is one of the most important pillars of Moldova's economy. With sustainable crop production reliant upon the availability of pest/disease/drought-resistant varieties that perform well under local conditions, production requirements can only be addressed through the conservation of local plant genetic resources and the availability of varieties of plant genetic material.

During the activity of the institute, a wide range of varieties and hybrids were obtained to different field crops. Also, experimental data were obtained from long field experiments on crop rotation and permanent mono cropping, long-term field experiment with irrigation, long-term field experiment with studying different fertilization systems, polyfactorial experiment and experience on organic farming.

What is your history? Past experience in the field

"Selectia" (EN tr.: "Selection") Research Institute of Field Crops was founded in Balti according the Decision of Council of Peoples Commissars nr.337 from 01.01.1944 in former USSR under the initial name "Selectia" Experimental Station of SSR Moldova. In 1956 on the base of this Station in Balti and the section of Crop Science which belonged to the Academy of Science of Moldova the Moldavian Research Institute in Agriculture was founded. In 1961 the institute was transformed in the Moldavian Research

Institute for Crop Breeding, Seed Production and Technology of Field Crops. In 1972 it was transformed in the Research Institute of Field Crops. During the whole period of activity (during 75 years) in the "Selectia" RIFC 357 varieties and hybrids were bred, including 163 varieties and hybrids registered in Moldova and abroad.

Who are your target group and beneficiaries?

The "Selectia" beneficiaries are farmers, students and researchers. The "Selectia" goal is to obtain scientific results that will serve as a basis for the elaboration of recommendations for farmers and teaching materials for the training of young specialists in the field of agriculture.

Essence of the case study. What activities and results / achievements have been made? What are the tools applied to reach the purposes?

"Selectia" Research Institute of Field Crops is a public institution deals with the breeding and production of field crop seeds. The Institute also develops technologies and agricultural systems capable of ensuring the sustainable development of agriculture.

The institute has six laboratories:

- **The laboratory of breeding and technologies of growing cereal crops**

The laboratory was founded in 1944. The main directions of activity are creation of new varieties of winter wheat and winter barley, primary seed production for registered and perspective



varieties of winter wheat, winter barley, spring barley, oats and proso millet. Simultaneously the terms and rates of sowing for new created varieties of winter cereal crops are studied. From the foundation in the laboratory were created 40 varieties of winter wheat, 18 varieties of winter barley, 5 varieties of spring barley. Among the best varieties created in the laboratory, which proved their performance in different trials both in Moldova and abroad we can mention the following varieties of winter wheat: Beltskaia 32, Dnestrovschaia 25, Piticul, Dnestreanca, Belceanca 5, Belceanca 7, Dumbravita, Columna, Izvoras, Alunis, Capriana, Select, and others.

- **Laboratory of breeding, primary seed production and technologies of growing leguminous and forage crops**

The Departments of Leguminous crops and Forage crops which have been unified in the nowadays laboratory were founded in 1944 simultaneously with the foundation of the State Experimental Station for Breeding. A considerable contribution in plant breeding for leguminous and forage crops have made such plant breeders as: V. Gordienko, I. Procofiyev, N. Golban, V. Corobco, E. Vetrova, V. Kazanji, I. Tcacenco, etc. During 75 years of activity in the laboratory were created and registered 68 varieties of leguminous and forage crops, including: 13 varieties of peas, 25 varieties of soybeans, 12 varieties of dry beans, 13 varieties of winter vetch and spring vetch, 4 varieties of alfalfa, one variety of Galega officinalis. The share of such varieties in the structure of sowing area of legumes and forage crops in Moldova consists 80-90%.

- **The laboratory of breeding, primary seed production and technology of growing for technical crops**

The laboratory includes two groups: one for breeding and technology of growing sunflower and the other one for sugar beet. The group for breeding and technology of growing sunflower

was founded in 1977. In this period 14 hybrids of sunflower were created and registered. The oil seed production potential of the created hybrids is more than 5.0 t/ha and oil content reaches 49.0-54.0 per cent. The yield record 6.92 t/ha was achieved by hybrid MPC 8506 in the Republic of Belarusi. The laboratory has elaborated and improved the methods of parental lines seeds and seed F1 production and the technology of sunflower for oil seeds growing. The group of breeding, primary seed production and technology of growing sugar beet was organized in 1,960.28 varieties and hybrids have been created. The technologies of growing sugar beet and direct and indirect methods of seed production have been worked out.

- **The group of the quality of production**

The laboratory was founded in 1956. In diferent times the laboratory was directed by Irina Hlevniuc (1956-1957), Vera Shemeleov (1957-1961) and Iosif Nishchii (1961-1990), Mihai Taran (1990). The laboratory makes the biochemical analyses for breeding and seed material of winter wheat, winter and spring barley, soybean, peas, drybeans, forage crops and sunflower. Besides, by using the method of electrophoresis the laboratory determines the type of the seeds for parental lines and the degree of hybridity of sunflower seeds of the first generation. The laboratory is involved actively in the creation of some varieties of winter wheat, barley, soybean, drybean and alfalfa with the improved qualities of production.

- **Laboratory of crop protection**

Since the foundation the laboratory worked out and implemented the system of crop protection for field crops, according the technological stages of agricultural production in Moldova. During the last 30 years systems of crop protection for cereal and leguminous crops, forage crops, sunflower and sugar beets have been worked out and implemented as component parts of technologies of growing field crops. Annually 2.8-3.2 thousand samples of local breeding material and 500-800



samples from different countries are evaluated both on natural and artificial backgrounds of infestation. Researches from the laboratory are coauthors of 23 varieties and hybrids with high tolerance to the most dangerous diseases. Annually the group is doing trials for at least 65-75 samples of different chemicals from the leading world chemical companies. Such trials allow to recommend the most efficient chemical preparations with low negative impact on the environment.

• The departments of sustainable farming systems

The Department was founded in 1944. The Department is conducting researches in long-term field experiments with different crop rotations and permanent crops, systems of fertilization and irrigation in crop rotations. The duration of such experiments is more than 50 years. Since 1989 the new polyfactorial experiments have been initiated on action and interaction of crop rotations, systems of soil tillage and fertilization, without using chemicals for pest, weed and disease control. The results obtained in longterm field experiments have been used for the elaboration of farming systems in Moldova, for publication of many books on crop rotations, irrigation, systems of soil tillage and fertilization in crop rotation, weed management and others. They are used also for practical training of farmers during seminars, for educational work with students and post graduated students. The accumulated scientific knowledges allow making the transition to a more sustainable, including ecological farming systems.

Who are your partners and what networks are you part of?

“Selectia” Research Institute of Field Crops participates in several national and international research projects. The institute is in close collaboration with “Alec Russo” Balti State University from the national level. At the international level they have more collaboration with different institutions from many European countries, due to European Research Program Horizon 2020. Also, outside this Program they have collaboration with Technical University from Munchen (Germany); Central Control and Testing Institute for Agriculture (Czech Republic), The Donau Soja Association (Austria), International Center for Researches in Drought Areas and other.

How do you ensure visibility, promotion and knowledge management?

As tools for disseminating the scientific information obtained serve: scientific publications, monographs, national and international scientific conferences, seminars with the participation of farmers, public lectures, university courses, webinars, etc.

The promotion of knowledge is achieved through dissemination and publication on website.

On June 17-18, 2021 was organized seminars for agricultural producers from Soroca and Edinet districts on the experimental fields near the Balti municipality of the institute. The agenda included visiting long-term field experiences on crops, permanent crops and studying



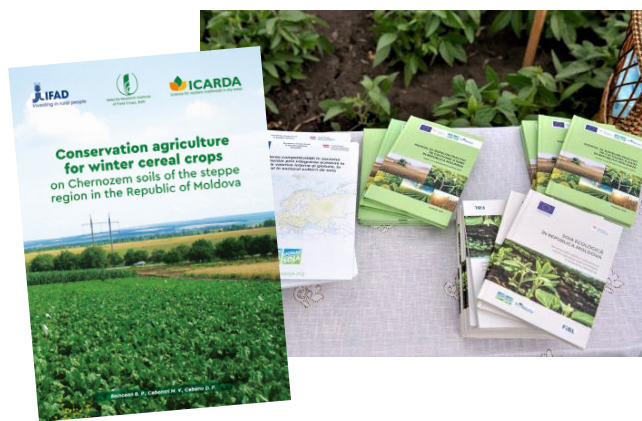
different fertilization systems, tillage, as well as experiences on organic farming and conservative farming system. Other topics include testing wheat, barley and pea varieties, as well as using chemicals to control diseases, pests and weeds.

The short materials was disseminated through nation post and also posted on social media <https://www.facebook.com/teleradiomoldova/posts/389734071138836/>.

On June 4, 2021, agricultural producers from Ungheni district visited the experimental fields of the Research Institute for Field Crops "Selection". The purpose of the visit was to get acquainted with the latest scientific achievements in the field of improvement of autumn cereals (wheat and autumn barley) and peas for grains.



Selectia Research Institute of Field Crops has participated in different exhibition, for example at the International Specialized Exhibition "MOLDAGROTECH" (autumn), XXXV edition, held in parallel with the International Specialized Fair-Exhibition "FARMER" (XXI edition) during the agro-industrial week (October 17-20, 2018).



Also the participants / beneficiaries can find information about the activities and results of Selectia through different media sources.

For example on specialized agro portals, for examples:

https://agrotv.md/ploi-in-exces-parerea-expertilor-in-agricultura/?fbclid=IwAR1ZKmoZ49MX23qp6EWrbUnz9h_IFeJk8s4qGIEAGFI_J95UfLwX5UfvYyl

https://agroexpert.md/rus/partnerskie-materialy/boris-boincean-daca-vara-va-fi-friguroasa-si-ploioasa-vor-fi-unele-probleme-la-recoltarea-cerealelor?fbclid=IwAR03J-0YIGZ-n4yyo-iasvqmVJt3JwD1du6Pi_ObMivFTXAJW9fqdvYShdc

https://agrobiznes.md/chicu-in-vizita-la-iccc-selectia-aici-avem-un-patrimoniu-pe-care-daca-il-pierdem-nu-o-sa-ne-ierte-nici-a-9-a-generatie-de-moldoveni.html?fbclid=IwAR2Ue_ZJVFnsWJf24xMswSfmMVTVC9yghusNj7j7Ja-n-0I3lbg5-UVww3I

<https://agrotv.md/actualitatea-la-raport-noul-sezon-agricol-i-cc%82ntre-realitate-s-cc%a6i-as-cc%a6tepta-cc%86ri/?fbclid=IwAR3xvgK8mqgALVFbqB9lweOWcmf7x7GwoHtPolHJ5bFnc23H3nPeCh2yRfa>



On youtube and social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=409816396743990>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVY-8R4A84E>

Local and national mass media:

<https://www.btv.md/ro/nemtii-cointeresati-de-selectia/?fbclid=IwAR0W6k4j07hfpQ9cnpP6cx4TORlhBVQWYMQAYkc3nb2ZZrBOfma1IE-Ukig>

<https://agora.md/stiri/74608/guvernul-promite-sa-ofere-o-noua-sansa-la-viata-ramurii-de-producere-a-semintelor-are-un-potential-economic-mare>

What are the sources of funding?

Research funding is provided through research projects. The “Selectia” Institute has obtained a state-of-the-art seed drill that allows the sowing scheduled on plots with different sowing rules and with various intervals between rows, thanks to a support from the European Union.

What is your successful experience?

The main successful experience:

- obtaining highly productive varieties and hybrids with increased drought resistance;
- monitoring the change of soil fertility under the action of crop rotation, application of different soil fertilization systems, irrigation and different types of soil tillage;
- elaboration of crop protection measures, etc.

What factors have facilitated and posed obstacles for the experience? What are the main challenges?

The lack of financial resources for the acquisition of modern agricultural equipment and the employment of young specialists creates difficulties in the development of the Institute.

The main challenges facing the Institute at the moment are:

- insufficient financial resources;
- obsolete equipment;
- lack of young staff;
- the lack of the possibility to secure the living places for the young specialists.

“Selectia” Research Institute of Field Crops has participated and is currently participating in various national and international research projects. The presence of a large number of highly qualified specialists contributed to achieving the established goals.

Challenges for farmers

Agriculture in the Republic of Moldova has been facing a number of challenges in recent decades, caused by both traditional agriculture practices and effects of climate changes. Growing environmental issues, like soil degradation, water pollution, reduced biodiversity, require re-evaluation current agricultural methods.

What lessons can we draw? What can we learn from your experience?

By visiting the “Selectia” experiences participants can gain knowledge on:

- Proper soil management;
- Knowledge of good agricultural practices that contributing to obtaining high yields while minimizing costs for external inputs and reducing environmental pollution;
- The influence of different crop rotation, fertilization systems, soil tillage and irrigation on soil fertility and crop production;
- Knowledge in the field of organic agriculture;
- Finding alternative ways for involvement of forage crops in rotation, including perennial legumes and grasses, is important for sustainable development of agriculture;
- Crop rotations enrich deeper soil layers with organic matter and increase crops’ resilience to droughts;
- The conservation agriculture cannot provide expected results without structural changes in the whole farming system. Efforts should be directed towards respecting crop rotations with a higher diversity of main and cover crops, inclusion of perennial legumes and grasses in rotation; and proper management of farmyard manure and crop residues for restoration of soil fertility.

Case study 4

“At the grandparents’ apiary” – development of rural tourism through apitherapy and other related activities (beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, centrifugal honey extraction, greenhouse, etc.)

Introduction. Background. Situation analysis

For nine years (2011-2019), honey production in the Republic of Moldova has been, with small fluctuations, increasing, registering values from 2.8 to 5.7 thousand tons per year (Table 4), according to official data. The share of honey production in total agricultural production in the Republic of Moldova reached 0.5% in 2016.

According to the estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the production volume in the Republic of Moldova reaches over 4.4 million USD annually and is in 54th place, as calculated based on the average for the years 2009-2013.

At the end of 2019, there were about 182.1 thousand bee families in the country, registered according to official documents, so compared to 2011, when the number was only 105.2 thousand bee families, it has increased by 73%.

Over 99% of the beekeeping sector in the country is privately owned, and the average size of an apiary is about 27 hives. The largest producers have more than 400 hives, although the number



of these producers is small. The average local honey production is about 27 kg for a hive per year.

The main types of local honey are produced from flowers of acacia, linden, sunflower, buckwheat, rapeseed, and mixtures of flowers (poly flora). Other by-products of the industry, such as pollen and propolis, are usually used by beekeepers for their own needs.

Maximum 15% of the total volume of honey produced in the Republic of Moldova is consumed locally. The remaining about 85% of production

Table 4. Honey production (bee honey)

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Thousand tons	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.5	5.2	5.0	4.5	5.7



volume is currently exported. For our country, the main market is that of the European Union, which buys over 90% of exported honey, and in 2015 the ratio was 98%. The main destinations of local honey are Italy, Germany, France, Slovakia, as well as some smaller, but still considerable markets such as Romania, Poland, Denmark, etc.

Bees play an important role in pollinating crops and wild plants, helping to sustain biodiversity and ensure food security.

Apitherapy is a new trend in the honey business in the Republic of Moldova. It is a special experience that can attract thousands of tourists from around the world, but it can also be a beneficial refuge for domestic tourists.

In the Lalova commune, the development of the village takes place only through tourism, as the locality has the great privilege of being situated on the bank of the Nistru river.

Domestic tourism is very important for stimulating financial sustainability and supporting the investment of SMEs among providers of accommodation services and activities. Almost 50% of Moldovans now living in Chisinau still have close ties with rural communities, and increased urbanization determines the demand for rural and natural tourism. The diaspora is also a source of growth for tourism, both as domestic tourism and for receiving tourism.

The growing urbanization of the Moldovan population has renewed the country's interest in rural life and nature-based experiences, as they are not known to the younger generations. According to a Eurostat study on agro-tourism, about 80% of tourists who practice rural tourism are residents of the country, the attractions being "close to home, but farther than the places usually visited".

What is your history? Past experience in the field

After about 15 years spent abroad and several more years at the helm of his hometown, Mihail Gotornicean from Lalova village, Rezina district, a music teacher, decided to make his passion for bees a way of life. Mr. Gotornicean loved bees and everything related to them since he was a child. His mother told him that his grandfather practiced this activity. Several years ago, he received as a gift from an old man from the village 3 bee families, which, over the years, he had multiplied. When the garden next to the house was no longer enough and in order not to endanger the neighbors, they decided with their wife to register in 2018 a peasant household. They requested a plot of land, but the local council did not allow them to lease and then they applied for another plot of land with fewer advantages, outside the village (a pasture between the Lalova and Tapova villages). They wanted to get busy in the field of tourism. The Gotorniceans loved the work in the apiary so much that they decided to make it a way of life.

The of the houses came to them once, being in Romania at the Putna Monastery, where they saw similar houses destined for people's rest, only without bees. Mr. Gotornicean came up with the idea to put the bees to live in the foundations of the houses. With a lot of work and desire, love and dedication began the history of this beautiful accomplishment.

Who are your target group and beneficiaries?

My aim to satisfy a wide range of interests for all types of age, gender, and areas. I want to provide a nice rest for the whole family so that the children could spend a happy time and give their parents time to relax, and so that their grandparents could find health in nature and in beekeeping houses. Of course, novice beekeepers could also learn something from this practice.



Essence of the case study. What activities and results / achievements have been made?

What are the tools applied to reach the purposes?

The essence of this case is that in 2018 Ms. Ludmila Gotornicean set up a farm, leased land, and decided to develop a business in agro-tourism. In the beginning, she had set up an apiary and began to deal intensely with bee families. Taking into account the fact that they needed a space for themselves, but also a place for tasting and presentation of bee products, they decided to expand.

Thus, they built and arranged in a traditional style a house in which there is a room for accommodation / reception of guests, while on the terrace tea made of medicinal plants grown on the territory is served, and small festive meals are organized.

The couple has also built a cellar, where they can taste macerated preserved foods, wine, and also special plums from Lalova that are registered in the National Register of Protected Geographical Indications.

Through the IFAD Program, they built a hall with a honey processing laboratory and a space for the exhibition of products.

Also, within the project, 4 houses were built. The houses are not for rest, but for a more special therapy, which uses the hum and energy of the bees. These are wooden houses with beds located right on the beehives. As the insects work, ie produce honey, they transmit energy and vitality to patients without a sting.

On the territory, several species of trees have been planted, as well as several species of medicinal plants, because the teas from medicinal plants are well suited to honey, and in 2021 they built a greenhouse where they grow their own decorative vegetables and flowers, and also a space for preparing dishes over an open fire.

For the children, the Gotorniceans prepared a place for pigeons and hens, they built a zip line, they set up a playground, and in the summer a swimming pool is installed.

In the nearby forest, they have built a gazebo and a few huts for those who love tourism but not having to carry and set up a tent. The family business will not stop here. The Gotorniceans are planning to increase the number of accommodation places and set up a campsite, build a swimming pool, a rainwater collection system, and a system for irrigation from such waters, but also to create and develop other beautiful things.





Who are your partners and what networks are you part of?

Ms. Gotornicean participated in various training programs: "Apiculture", organized by private company "ProConsulting SRL", "Good practices for adapting the beekeeping sector to climate change", organized by NGO "ACSA" and CPIU IFAD, etc.

During a seminar, Ludmila Gotornicean found out about the non-reimbursable financing opportunity available, for regional women, within the IFAD Programs. She applied, and in addition to the grant resources, received advisory support at all stages, including the preparation of the file. Thanks to the received financial support, she has managed to build a hall for collecting and



processing honey, to procure a high-performance honey extraction centrifuge, but also to install several beekeeping houses. Through AIPA subsidy they bought some bees, hives, and queens.

With the help of the UNDP Migration and Local Development project, they created an association of lalovans from all over the world, with the help of which they write and implement projects.

IarmarEco 2020 Caravan was organized by EcoVisio and funded by the Development Facility of the European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE DF) under the EU4Business initiative, IM Swedish Development Partner and Sweden. In this context IarmarEco has invited Ludmila Gotornicean to participate at this event.

How do you ensure visibility, promotion and knowledge management?

The Gotorniceans and their daughters help them with the maintenance of a Facebook page. They have also organized an official opening where the press participated and then published various articles about them, for example:

<https://agroexpert.md/rus/articole/video-terapie-cu-albine-o-prisaca-deosebita-inaugurata-in-lalova-raionul-rezina>

<http://www.ucipifad.md/en/success/istoria-familiei-gotornicean-eram-cei-mai-fericiti-atunci-cand-am-gustat-prima-miere-produsa-de-albinutele-noastre/>
<https://agrobiznes.md/eram-cei-mai-fericiti-atunci->



cand-am-gustat-prima-miere-produsa-de-albinutele-noastre-istoria-familiei-gotornicean.html
<https://agrobiznes.md/apiterapie-gratuita-la-prisaca-bunicilor-din-lalova-rezina-infiintata-de-un-profesor-de-muzica.html>
<http://tvrmdova.md/social/idei-inedite-in-turismul-autohton-o-familie-din-nordul-nordul-republicii-moldova-propune-turistilor-apiterapia/>

Ms. Gotornicean participated in various exhibitions in which she presented their products and also advertised their “La prisaca bunicilor” (“Grandparents’ Apiary”). For example, Ms. Gotornicean has participated on October 10, 2020 at the IarmarEco Caravan. IarmarEco 2020 Caravan was organized by EcoVisio and funded by the Development Facility of the European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE DF) under the EU4Business initiative, IM Swedish Development Partner and Sweden.

The partners are the ones who promoted them but most of the visitors come by recommendation. The Gotorniceans have not yet focused on advertising, as they were in the process of construction and development. Also, the Gotornicean couple understood, from the very beginning, that in order to have more visitors, the whole locality of Lalova needs to become well-known.

What are the sources of funding?

The Gotornicean couple started from scratch, without money, sometimes even with debts, without knowledge in the field, because no one in their family had any studies in agriculture (Gotornicean spouses come from the field of culture and education). They invested their own money, from their salary, borrowed money from relatives, and also bought hives and bees, for which they were subsidized by the state. Then they applied to different projects and courses. For example, with the financial support of CPIU IFAD and USAID they had the opportunity to build a hall, beehives and bought a high-performance centrifuge.

What is your successful experience?

Their successful experience is that they managed to start a small business on their own, at home, in the family. Their successful experience is based on a lot of work, perseverance, dreams, and desire to do beautiful things. The people who guided them, but also the project opportunities offered by IFAD and USAID, were like a springboard for them.

What factors have facilitated and posed obstacles for the experience? What are the main challenges?

This area is almost ignored by the local public authority, which moreover creates difficulties for them.

One of the existing problems in the beekeeping sector is the intoxication of bees as a result of the chemical treatment of agricultural plantations, vineyards, orchards, etc.

Another difficulty is related to the climatic factor. The production of honey and other bee products is closely dependent on weather conditions, which, if unfavorable (cyclonic rains, low temperatures, persistent strong winds, etc.), can significantly affect both the normal activity of working bees and the secretion of flower nectar, which inevitably leads to decreased production.

The big challenge is that in 2019-2020 many bee families have died and the Gotornicean spouses must find a solution to deal with this situation and find solutions to restore the apiary.

What lessons can we draw? What can we learn from your experience?

If there is a desire, effort is made, dreams are followed, beautiful results can be obtained. Even if they encountered difficulties along the way, the Gotorniceans want to develop their business as much as possible. They aim to diversify the services to interest visitors of various formats. It is a special apiary, where guests can benefit from apitherapy and can enjoy bee products but also tinctures unique in the country. The Gotornicean family wants to motivate people to love nature, to love bees, rural tourism, to come to the countryside.

Participants can learn from this experience how to:

- set up a farm, leased land, and to develop a business in agro-tourism;
- development of rural tourism through apitherapy and other related activities (accommodation / reception of guests, tea made of medicinal plants, built a cellar, where they can taste macerated preserved foods, wine, honey processing laboratory and a space for the exhibition of products, etc.);
- satisfy a wide range of interests for all types of age, gender, and areas in one place;
- access and implement IFAD-funded projects;
- Participate and promote produce within national big events (e.g. EarmarEco);
- be motivated and like what you do;
- If there is a desire, effort is made, dreams are followed, and beautiful results can be obtained;
- if there are difficulties along the way how to develop their business as much as possible;
- motivate people to love nature, to love bees, rural tourism, to come to the countryside.

Case study 5

Cattle farm

Introduction. Background. Situation analysis

Currently, the dairy industry is one of the important branches of the agri-food sector. This branch aims to provide the population with safe, harmless high-quality dairy products.

Cattle breeding in the Republic of Moldova had the highest degree of development during the years 1989-1990. During these years the number of cattle has reached the count of 1,112 thousand heads, including cows – 402 thousand heads. In comparison, in 2019, the total number of cattle was 124 thousand heads, of which 81 thousand were cows. Thus only in the last ten years, the cattle herd has decreased by about



33%, including the milking cow herd by about 43 percent (figure 6).

At the same time, there are some positive trends in the dynamics of the development of commercial cattle farms. Thus, starting with 2014, despite the decrease in the total number of cattle, including cows, the number of animals raised in agricultural enterprises increased from 12.3 thousand in 2014 to 18.5 thousand in 2019, or by about 60 percent (figure 7).

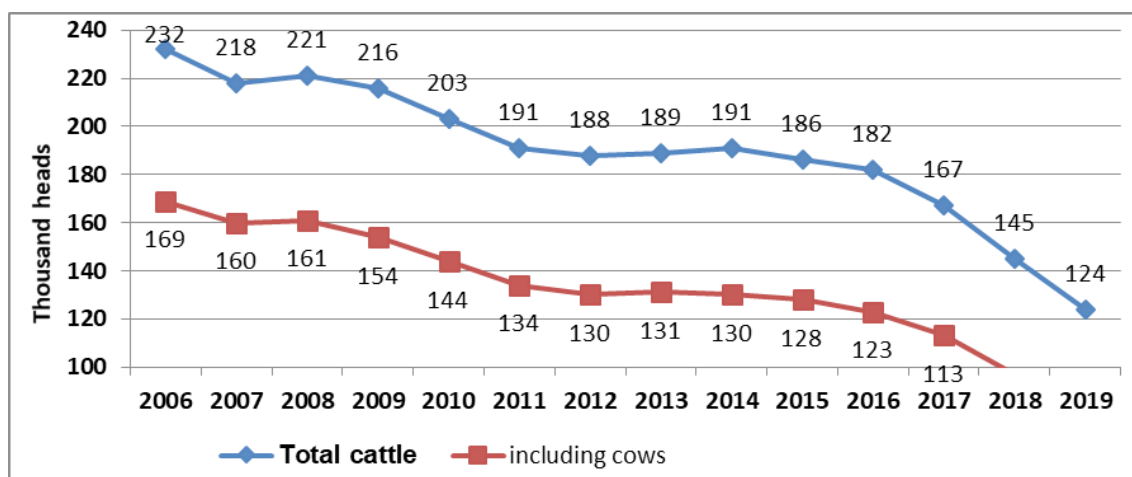


Figure 6. The dynamics of the cattle herd 2006-2019, thousand heads

Source: National Bureau for Statistics.

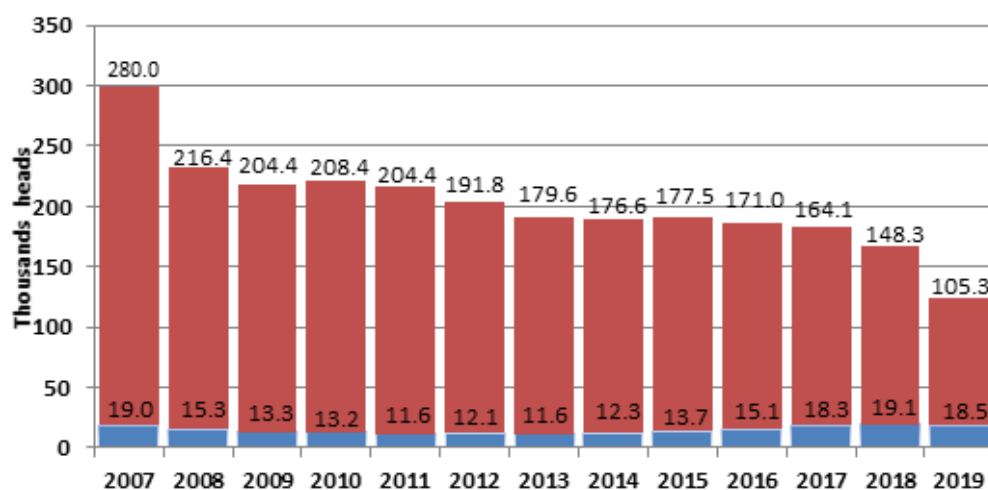


Figure 7. Cattle herd dynamics by household categories, 2007-2019, thousand heads

Source: National Bureau for Statistics.

The total production of cow milk decreased from about 1,503 thousand tons in 1990 to about 332 thousand tons in 2019 or more than three times.

The milk market in the Republic of Moldova has a number of specific characteristics which makes it difficult to develop.

Thus, the analysis of the situation in the sector denotes the following:

- the number of milking cows is constantly decreasing;
- 95% of the herds of cows are maintained in the individual households of the rural population (around the peasants' houses); the productivity of the animals is affected as a result of the unbalanced food rations;
- the sanitary-hygienic and ecological situation in the rural localities of the country has worsened because in the peasants' households the processing of animal manure is not carried out, which in turn pollutes the soils and terrestrial waters;
- the milk produced in the individual households is a seasonal and inferior quality product and is difficult for it to provide the processing capacities with raw material in autumn and winter, as well as to ensure the manufacture by the processing enterprises of qualitative and competitive production.

In the Republic of Moldova, milk processing enterprises procure the raw material through milk collection points. The main suppliers are individual households which provide about 95% of the total volume of collected milk.

What is your history? Past experience in the field

Elena Cojocaru and her husband are the people who grew up in the countryside and knew what it means to take care of animals.

Who are your target group and beneficiaries?

Milk processing companies are the target group because they procure the raw material (milk) through milk collection points. The main suppliers are individual households which provide about 95% of the total volume of collected milk.

Currently, sanitary-veterinary authorizations are issued by the National Food Safety Agency (ANSA) to 702 collection points, located mainly in the northern area – 562, the central area – 55; and respectively the southern area – 85, which, for the most part, belong to the processing enterprises, and 58 of them belong to other economic agents.

The mechanism for collecting milk at milk collection points consists of receiving milk from

both natural persons holding milking cows and legal persons, the testing, storage, and cooling of milk in cooling tanks with appropriate equipment and temperature monitoring devices, and the subsequent transportation of the milk to the processing units; the basis for the delivery of milk for processing is its compliance with quality indices, as well as the proof regarding the health status of the animal, as indicated in the veterinary health certificate.

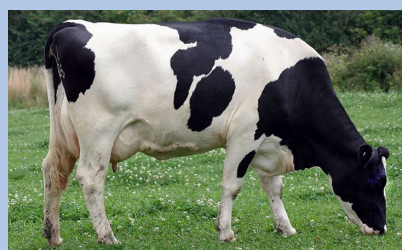
Essence of the case study. What activities and results / achievements have been made?

What are the tools applied to reach the purposes?

In 2017 they decided to open a new business, to buy an old room in the village, which several years ago was a cow farm and was the only one in the whole complex that was not destroyed.

They first bought a few cows from the people in the village, but they failed to get the results they expected. They started to get information, to see which are the most suitable breeds for a business and so they ended up taking a loan with a portion of the grant from the bank and buying dairy cattle.

They bought Simmental and Holstein cows, which give 15-16 liters of milk in a single milking,



- Holstein Breed



Simmental - Breed



but of course such outputs depends on the food they eat. The cows are raised exclusively for milk, and to have quality milk they are fed with balanced fodder.

Ms. Elena Cojocaru has her own land but has also rented another plot of land. In total, about 60 hectares are being worked to increase amount the necessary fodder. For the winter, more silage is prepared to lighten the cattle's food.

In order to grow their business and reach the number of animals they currently have (60 heads), they needed support and, first of all, financial resources (from projects, partnerships but also loans).

In order to develop, they decided to use the grant offered by CPIU IFAD, which they obtained at the beginning of 2018 – a grant in the amount of 280 thousand lei, from which they purchased some of the animals. With the increase in the number of animals, the need arose to store milk. Thus, they bought a refrigerator so that they could store and cool the milk they sell wholesale to a processing factory in the Calarasi district.

Subsequently, from the financial resources obtained from a Bank, they managed to procure a second-hand tractor so that they could process the land and a mill, also second-hand, in order to grind and obtain the fodder for their cattle.



Who are your partners and what networks are you part of?

The partners include milk processing companies (for example Alba Moldova, Lapmol, etc.), the banks that have lent them (for example Procredit), but also CPIU IFAD, which offered them a development grant in 2018, the commercial banks from which they took loans, but also various factories with which they collaborate in order to sell wholesale milk.

How do you ensure visibility, promotion and knowledge management?

Elena Cojocaru put less emphasis on visibility, promotion, and knowledge management, but now she realizes that they are necessary components for the future development of the business. Articles about the cattle farm can be found in the following sources:

<http://www.ucipifad.md/en/success/ferma-de-bovine-a-elenei-cojocaru-provocari-si-oportunitati-de-dezvoltare-a-unei-afaceri-de-succes/>

<https://agrobiznes.md/ferma-de-bovine-a-elenei-cojocaru-provocari-si-oportunitati-de-dezvoltare-a-unei-afaceri-de-succes.html>

What are the sources of funding?

- CPIU IFAD, from which the farm obtained at the beginning of 2018 a grant amounting to 280 thousand MDL;
- Loans from banks (for example from Procredit – 400 000 MDL);
- Own sources of income from marketing, etc.

What is your successful experience?

They managed to develop, and with small steps to move towards the business model they have envisaged.

The protagonist considers that “no business evolves without difficulties, but it is these that make you stronger and more confident in your own strength”.

Ms. Elena Cojocaru hopes that one day the farm where she works with the whole family will become a modern one, and her children will work in better and more suitable conditions.

What factors have facilitated and posed obstacles for the experience? What are the main challenges?

It was very difficult for them at first, because the cattle were bought on a loan. They did not realize from the beginning what the problems would be and were not very prepared for this business.

The first problem they faced was the lack of food for the cows, so they had to buy it.

A big drawback is that they do not have the special equipment to be able to clean the stable, so they have to do it manually. The special equipment costs quite a lot, but they hope that one day they will be able to buy it, as well as the equipment for preparing powdered fodder, this being more suitable for the cows. Although they can't afford it now, they are confident that they will succeed in the future.

“One of the problems we face is the selling price of milk, which is quite low for the work I do”, said Ms. Elena Cojocaru.

What lessons can we draw? What can we learn from your experience?

Participants can learn from this experience how to:

- open a new business;
- to get information, to see which are the most suitable breeds for a business;
- take a loan with a portion of the grant from the bank;
- to increase amount the necessary fodder;
- solve the problem of storage and cool the milk;
- how to discuss / negotiate with milk processing companies in order to procure the raw material (milk);
- use the grant offered by CPIU IFAD;
- develop and with small steps to move towards the business model they have envisaged;
- no business evolves without difficulties, but it is these that make you stronger and more confident in your own strength.

Visit locations

Chisinau

Chisinau is the capital and largest city of the Republic of Moldova. Chisinau was founded in 1436 as a monastary village; the city was part of the Principality of Moldova.

The city is Moldova's main industrial and commercial center, and is located in the middle of the country, on the river Bac, a tributary of the Dniester.(Nistru) According to the results of the 2014 census, the city proper had a population of 532,513, while the population of the Municipality of Chisinau (which includes the city itself and other nearby communities) was 700,000.

Chisinau is the most economically prosperous locality in Moldova and its largest transportation hub. Nearly a third of Moldova's population lives in the metro area.

“BraviLacta”

The “BraviLacta” milk processing factory was established in 1997. The company “BraviLacta” is the only producer of Mozzarella in Moldova. In addition to mozzarella, other dairy products are made at the factory in Braviceni – cream, soft cheese with greens, curd, etc. Every day the factory processes about 10 tons of milk. Over the years, in addition to milk processing, the company





has initiated a number of other activities, such as services, trade and agriculture. Thus, about 200 jobs were created.

The company has participated in various exhibitions organized in Kiev and Iasi, undertook several business visits and study in Italy, Romania, USA, Czech Republic, Poland, Turkey, etc. trying to find out all the secrets from foreign producers. There he also became acquainted with the new technologies for cheese production and with the necessary equipment for this purpose.

“Alecu Russo” Balti State University

“Alecu Russo” Balti State University was founded in 1945 and presently has become the center of the University Complex which embraces all levels of education: pre-university, university, post-university. The university complex includes State University, Retraining Center for school and lyceum teachers, Ion Creanga Lyceum and Pedagogical College. The University structure is made up of eight faculties.

The interuniversity partnerships and collaborations established by the university are materialized in implemented international projects. Participation in international projects allows the university employees to make themselves familiar with the opinions of the people in charge of Higher Education in the European zone, to share their own experience and to disseminate the acquired positive practice. Simultaneously, increased attention is paid not only to the problems that Higher Education in this country faces, but also to the strategies of solving them.



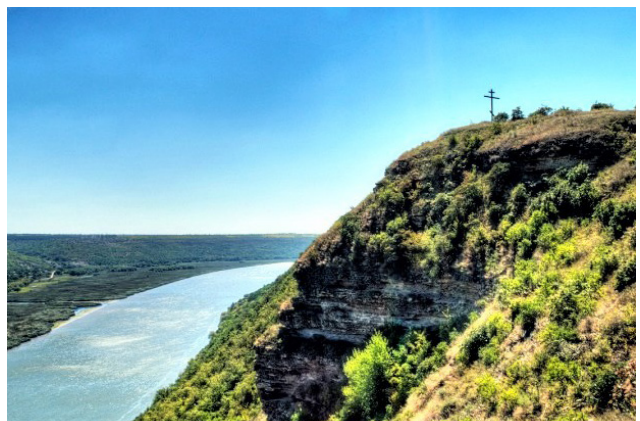
“Hanul lui Hanganu”

“Hanul lui Hanganu” (“Hanganu’s Inn”) is located in Lalova village, from Chisinau city is 100 km and from Rezina city 40 km distance. Hanul lui Hanganu is situated near two of the most visited tourist areas of Moldova – Tipova and Saharna – rural pension “Genealogical” seems to be the perfect solution when you want to forget all your worries and everyday problems.



Tipova landscape reserve

The Tipova landscape reserve is considered is defined by a specific character of a relief and hydrological objects (falls and thresholds) and socio-cultural objects (a rocky monastery XII-XIV-th centuries, traces geto-dacian fortresses) and in whole a landscape.





Soroca Fortress

The Fortress Soroca is located in the centre of Soroca city approximately 160 km north of Chisinau. The castle forms part of the old medieval chain of castle fortifications along the Dniester River running through Moldova with Khotyn to the North, Bilhorod Dnistrovsk to the South. This chain consisted of several fortresses on the Dniester River, two smaller forts – on the Danube and three in the north of the country. Thus, the borders were well protected by this “stone belt of fortresses”.

The entire building has a diameter of 30 meters, 4 meters for the towers. Each tower has 4 level, the first two lower ones were used for artillery. The walls are 3 meters thick and we can find signs of a previous ditch. The main entrance tower had 3 doors.

“Alfa Nistru” Corporation (Cannery)

“ALFA-NISTRU” is operating for about 50 years. From a small juice shop, it became a large-scale, 1800 hectares Industrial Union Cannery and Farmers Service Center.

“ALFA-NISTRU” is included in the list of the largest producers of canned fruits, vegetables and juices in the Republic of Moldova. Its production areas are located in the north of the country – Soroca district.

The cannery brings to market about 40 units of vegetables, fruits and berries production “VIS”:

- Rich in vitamins compotes and jams
- Canned corn and green peas
- Juicy pickled vegetables



- Juice in “Tetra-Pack”, made from natural fruits, berries and tomatoes and apple juice concentrate;
- Nectar-and mashed fruit, berries and vegetables;
- Vegetables, berries and frozen fruit.

The company also sells fresh fruit, vegetables and berries.

“Orheiul Vechi” (“The Old Orhei”)

The cultural, natural and landscape reserve “The Old Orhei” includes a series of historical and cultural monuments and natural landscapes in the gorge of Raut River. This area has been populated and partially urbanized since Paleolithic and Neolithic periods. The central sector of “The Old Orhei” complex enjoys the status of “Historical and archaeological Reserve” and the western sector enjoys the status of “Landscape Reserve”.

It is famous for its well preserved cave monasteries. This territory was isolated from the outer world and it is supposed that, at the time when Christians came here, the caves were been already cut in the rocks by prehistoric tribes who had lived in the area. The Christians probably used the existing caves but the expansion of monastic life in the later middle ages and frequent Crimean and Budjak Tatar raids forced the monks to go deeper into inaccessible cliffs. They expanded the existing caves and created new ones. Some caves are well preserved nowadays.



The Trebujeni landscape reservation

The Trebujeni landscape reservation is part of the natural cultural complex “The old Orhei”. The reservation has a unique landscape of a peerless beauty and scientific value, serving as a visit card of our land’s nature. Around the Trebujeni village, the river meanders strong, the shores are steep, sometimes reaching a height of over 100 m. The natural reserve is bordering the famous historic and archaeological monument – “The Old Orhei”.



The wine cellars of “Pivnitele Branesti”

Branesti Winery is arranged in an old limestone mine, the galleries of which extend over a distance of 70 km and are arranged on an area of 75 ha. The entire architecture is built at a depth of 60 meters, which favors keeping a constant temperature of 12-14 degrees throughout the year and a humidity of 90-92%. To the natural conditions is added the mastery of the people who turn the grapes into a bǎlic liqueur. The winery has about 800 ha of vines located in a beautiful area of forest, on the coast of the Old Orhei, in the Romanesti and Tudora villages.

Most wine production is exported to China, USA, Poland, Germany, Romania, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Baltic States, etc.

They set out to develop wine tourism and bring something new to the market. The first underground hotel in the Republic of Moldova “The Stone Age”.

“The Stone Age” tourist complex of Branesti Winery is unique in its own way, starting from the geographical location, with the design of the galleries, the shapes of the cases and ending the indescribable atmosphere. We want to offer tourists the opportunity to experience life in the cave, as it was in the Stone Age, with small interventions of the modern.

Tourists will have the opportunity to discover the underground galleries, to taste wine in the rooms specially arranged for tastings, to rent houses for storing wine, to participate in cultural events, which will be organized in the performance hall of resort and experience life in the stone age.



Soon the hotel rooms, the SPA area and “The Stone Age” restaurant will be ready, where there is no internet access and telecommunications, so tourists will fully enjoy life in the cave, away from the noise of civilization and daily worries (at the entrance to complex is connected to mobile telephony).



Ungheni City

Ungheni is a city in Moldova, situated in the west-center on the bank of the Prut river. The city extends on a length of 9 km along the border with Romania, being situated at a height of 62 meters above the sea level.

Situated closely to the European Union on the river Prut, the city of Ungheni is a locality full of history. The first document dates from August 1462. An old document of Stephen the Great certifies “the village of Unghiul [...] below Filfoe on Jijia river”. So, initially, the locality was called Unghiul (angle), probably because the river Prut made here a perfect angle.

The total area of the locality is 16.4 sq. km. The area is relatively small, because the city has no agricultural land.





Free Economic Zone, Ungheni

In 2002, in the industrial area of Ungheni City was founded the Free Economic Zone “Ungheni-Business”. The strategic geographical location of the economic zone favors the attraction of domestic and foreign investments. Being situated on the border with the EU, it increased the interest of the foreign investors, and the location in the northwest of the city of Ungheni with access to railway, makes possible the connection between the north, center and the south of the Republic and also with other countries.

There are 36 active residents in the Free Zone with investments in various sectors, where the whole necessary infrastructure already exists for business development (access to local and international highways, track access to European and Russian type, customs and tax advantages, water supply, sewage systems, telecommunications and heat charge, gas, electricity, warehouses).

<http://www.freezone-ungheni.md/>

The LAG “CULA Sub-region”

The “CULA Sub-region” Local Action Group (LAG CULA) includes 14 town halls, incorporating 34 villages with a total population of 23,013 inhabitants. LAG CULA is a new entity set up at the request of the participating localities for the purpose of solving a series of acute local and sub-regional development problems for the benefit of the communities in the Cula area, Ungheni district.

The strategy of the LAG CULA Sub-Region is based on a bottom-up approach, which complements the policies of the Republic of Moldova in the field of rural development, development planning strategies at the level of localities included in the sub-region. Following an intense process of consultations with the leaders of the communities of the “CULA Sub-region”, business people, local authorities, groups of local action and other relevant actors, the LAG CULA Strategy (2018) appeared.

Within the strategy, several development opportunities were identified:

1. Strengthening ecological agriculture and organic farming in fruit growing, beekeeping and fish farming;
2. Establishment of Vocational Training and Training Centers based on the reform of vocational education;
3. Bringing investment in quality agricultural production and services: encouraging rural entrepreneurship;
4. Strengthening the administrative and financial capacity of the LPA and active involvement in the development of the LAG;
5. Development of business infrastructure to increase the flow of foreign investment;
6. Exploring the excellent ecosystem for the development of tourism services by creating and capitalizing on a system of pensions and integrated tourist services;
7. Development of road infrastructure, microfinance, entrepreneurial activities.



Local Action Group – LAG

Local Action Group (LAG) – a non-profit organization that is created on the basis of a territorial partnership, established at local level between the public, civic and entrepreneurial sector, with the status of legal person, non-profit, in order to develop and implement strategies local development under the LEADER approach, and in which none of the three sectors can have more than 49% of the voting rights at decision-making level.

LEADER program – state program, administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, in which LAGs can request funding, based on an operational plan and an appropriate budget, from the National Fund for Agriculture and Rural Development.

LEADER in the Republic of Moldova – Key Numbers

32

32 Established LAGs

300

Involved rural areas

35%

National coverage of LAGs

400

Local development projects

250

Local development projects currently implementing

“Plaiul fagului” (The Land of Beeches) state natural reserve

The State Natural Reserve “Plaiul Fagului” (“The Land of Beeches”) was created on 12 March 1992 aiming for the conservation, regeneration, environmental recovering, studying one of the most picturesque and most representative forest ecosystems in the the area of Codrii.

The total surface of the reserve is 5,642 ha, of which the forests occupy 4,639 ha. The territorial-administrative structure includes 5,387 hectares of natural tree, including the formations of beech (272 ha), ash (1,163 ha), holm oak (1,039 ha), linden (169 ha), other species (169 ha).

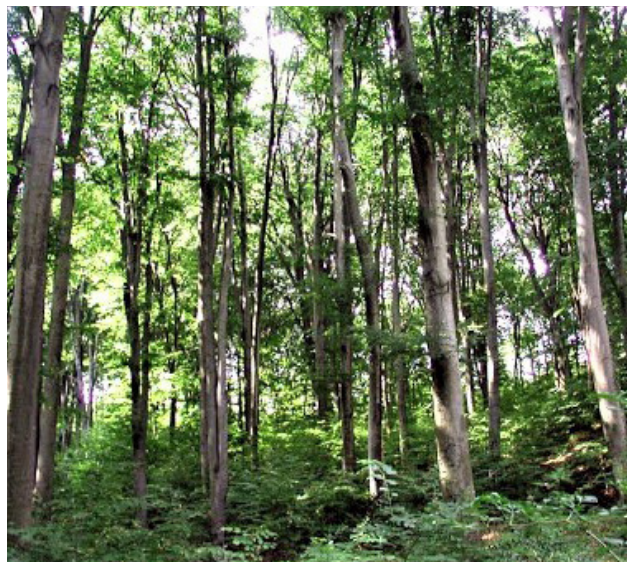
The reserve specific landscape diversity: narrow ridges with deep valleys, steep slopes (consequences of landslides), cold and crystalline water springs, which feed on rivulets, rivulets affluents of the rivulet Telita, which flows into the Bac river.

The providing scientific collaborators is performed with the Academy of Sciences, other institutions and with their own powers.

The flora includes 909 species, including 645 species of vascular plants, 151 species of fungi, 48 species of lichens, 65 species of moss.

The fauna. At this stage in the reserve are recorded: 42 species of mammals, about 140 species of birds, 7 – of reptiles, 8 – of amphibians. Recently, wildlife reserve was enriched with the noble stag, the deer-in-spots and the roe deer.

The Reserve “Plaiul Fagului” is a natural picturesque landscape object, a precious treasure of the Nature of Moldova. The territory of the reserve is partly accessible for the ecotourism. But first of all this natural ecosystems complex, biodiversity sanctuary, is an object of research, a laboratory in the open air.



Local Action Group – LAG

It contains two components:

- support for the functioning of LAGs;
- supporting the implementation of local development strategies.

The implementation of the LEADER approach in the Republic of Moldova has started in 2016. Various organizations, which work for local development, have been carrying out the facilitating process of the LAGs creation.

The innovative character of LEADER/CLLD can be seen as a way to promote the development of new solutions for organizing local / rural societies. This innovation is to (re)discover local resources by the community and fructify them with new knowledge and technologies. It is fostering change-making to reinvent local prosperity. The extended local impetus of change, the rethought community actions by newly created partnerships and newly added value to local products and services mean that the local community responds more effectively than was previously possible to old and new development opportunities and constraints.

