



Government of the Republic of Moldova
Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development
P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development

SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT no. 3

on the implementation of the

„Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project”

Reporting period:
July 01 - December 31, 2023

Submitted by the Project Implementation Unit



February 13, 2024
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ARAP	Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan
ATU	Autonomous Territorial Unit
BoQ	Bill of Quantities
CERC	Contingent Emergency Response Component
CWSC	Citizen Water and Sanitation Committees
DED	Detailed Engineering Design
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EOI	Expression of Interest
ES	Environmental and Social
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
EU	European Union
FM	Financial Manager
GD	Government Decision
GoM	Government of Moldova
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
HBS	Household Budget Survey
HCF	Health Care Facility
HR	Human Resources
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LPA	Local Public Administration
NWSSDP	National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan
MCN	Moldovan Construction Normative
MER	Ministry of Education and Research
MH	Ministry of Health
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIRD	Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development
MIS	Management Information System
MTBF	Medium-Term Budget Framework
MWSSP	Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project
NORLD	National Office of Regional and Local Development
NAER	National Agency for Energy Regulation
NRW	Nonrevenue Water



NWSSDP	National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PDO	Project Development Objective
PIA	Project Implementation Agreement
PIE	Project Implementing Entity
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
POM	Project Operations Manual
RDA	Regional Development Agency
QCBS	Consultants Quality and Cost-based Selection
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SPN	Specific Procurement Notice
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
TTL	Task Team Leader
TUM	Technical University of Moldova
VAT	Value Added Tax
WB	World Bank
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WWTP	Waste Water Treatment Plant

Report:	SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT no. 3
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Executive summary

Project title	MOLDOVA WATER SECURITY AND SANITATION PROJECT
Project ID	P173076
Implementing Agency	The National Office for Regional and Local Development under Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development on the basis of Government Decision No 271 of April 20, 2022.
Project duration	August 05, 2022 – January 31, 2027
Reported period	July 01 – December 31, 2023
The Project Development Objective (PDO)	(i) to increase access to safely managed water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns, and to strengthen national and local institutional capacity for water supply and sanitation service delivery; (ii) in case of an Eligible Crisis or Emergency, respond promptly and effectively to it.
PDO Level Indicators or Outputs / specific objectives	PDO 1: Increase access to safely managed water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns (a) People provided with access to safely managed water services in selected rural areas and towns (number/gender disaggregated) (b) People provided with access to safely managed sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns (number/gender disaggregated) PDO 2: Strengthen national and local institutional capacity for water supply and sanitation delivery (c) National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (NWSSDP) with prioritized investment program and financing strategy developed and under implementation (text) (d) Number of participating operators demonstrating core institutional capacities for improved water supply and sanitation service delivery (Number).
Project Components:	Component 1: Increasing access to safely managed water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and small towns Subcomponent 1.1: Expanding Access and Quality of WSS services Subcomponent 1.2: Improving WASH facilities in public social institutions Component 2: Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels for WSS service delivery. Subcomponent 2.1: Building national institutional capacity for WSS Subcomponent 2.2: Improving performance of WSS service providers Component 3: Project Management and Coordination Component 4: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC).
Project partners, stakeholders and target groups	The target groups - participating WSS operators, and the population in selected LPAs from the three Development Regions: North, South and ATU Gagauzia Key partners of the project: MIRD, MSIF, RDAs, MoH, MoER, MoEnv, NAER, TUM, AMAC
Key achievements for reported period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation Agreement by P.I. NORLD, RDAs and LPAs from Rișcani rayon was signed; - Contract for the review and update of DED for the Cahul-Vulcanesti sub-project was signed and the first draft of the DED was received; - Contract for the preparation of the ESIA for the Cahul-Vulcanesti sub-project was signed and the draft of the ESIA Report was received; - Contracts for preparation of the <i>Employer's Requirements</i> and of the <i>Topographical and geotechnical survey and technical expertise of existing wastewater facilities</i> for the Soroca sub-project were signed and the activities are in progress; - Cooperation Agreements for WASH activities in 7 rayons were signed; - Contract, for design and BoQ development services in schools under WASH intervention, was signed and the activities are in progress; - Procurement procedure for preparation of the NWSSDP has been launched; - Public Consultations regarding the Law 303 was held; - The contract on preparation of the <i>Report on the assessment of the need to update/adjust the Moldovan Construction Normative</i> was signed and the Report was received;



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The contract on the preparation of the <i>Implementation Plan of Directive 91/271/CEE</i> was signed and the draft of GD and the <i>Implementation Plan of Directive 91/271/CEE</i> was received; - The contract for preparation of the <i>Government Decision on the approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems</i>, was signed; - The Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement with NAER was signed; - The Contract with the Technical University of Moldova was signed; - Creation of the <u>Local Water and Sanitation Committees (LWSC) under WASH subcomponent</u>
Key challenges/ risks for reported period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delaying in the process of change of the land use, for the construction of the sewage treatment plant in Soroca; - Lack of qualified personnel in the field or companies with the necessary experience to participate in tenders; - Delays in the process of changing the use of land from <i>agricultural land</i> to <i>land for construction</i> leads to delays in obtaining environmental agreements;
Project budget	<p>The project budget amounts to 46.5 million Euro, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financing Agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the International Development Association (ratified by Law 169/2022) in the amount of 44.1 million Euro; 2. Single Donor (Austrian Development Agency) Trust Fund Grant Agreement, signed between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / International Development Association (TF0B7739) in the amount of 1.5 million Euro. 3. Local contribution around of 0.881 million Euro.



Introduction

This Semiannual Progress Report covers the progress of the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project (MWSSP) implementation process during the 2nd semester of year 2023 (July 01 – December 31, 2023), and includes relevant data concerning Project Implementation Unit (PIU) activities under the Project.

According to the Financing Agreement, the Recipient shall furnish to the Association each Project Report not later than forty-five days after the end of the calendar semester, covering the calendar semester. According to the PAD the PIU, through its M&E specialist, with the support of the stakeholders, coordinates all data collection, consolidates, and integrates progress and results in semiannual project progress reports.

This is the third Report since the beginning of the project. The information, regarding the date of presentation of the Semiannual Progress Reports and the date of approval, are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Presentation and approval dates of the Semiannual reports of the MWSSP

No.	Reports	Reporting period	Intended submission date	Submission date
1.	Semiannual report no. 1	August 5, 2022 - February 5, 2023	March 5, 2023	March 05, 2023
2.	Semiannual report no. 2	February 5- June 30, 2023	August 15, 2023	August 01, 2023
3.	Semiannual report no. 3	July 01- December 31, 2023	February 14, 2024	

Source: developed by the PIU

The Report outlines the implementation progress of the sub-projects and components and the degree of project development objectives and specific intermediate result's achievement.

The purpose of the Progress Report is to:

- 1) report actual activities, achievements in terms of actual or foreseen outputs and outcomes within the implementation of Project's basic components;
- 2) report expenditures/investments/inputs that allow comparison with outputs;
- 3) maintain an efficient communication between NORLD/PIU, the World Bank (WB) and other stakeholders.

This report is prepared in the context of the implementation of M&E System of the MWSSP and present the results of the

- (a) monitoring of the performance of the project toward achievement of the PDO and result indicators on a semiannual basis and presentation of the results against the indicators in the Results Framework and procedures that are detailed in the POM.

- (b) implementation progress against all activities and the timely identification of bottlenecks.

The report contains 4 main chapters. The first chapter, PROGRESS TOWARDS THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES, describes the cumulative results of the MWSSP as of December 31, 2023. The second chapter, KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE REPORTING PERIOD, describes the results achieved in the reporting semester only (semester 2 of 2023). The third chapter describes the project management activities (financial management, procurement activities, social and environmental activities, communication and visibility and monitoring and evaluation etc.)



Water and Sanitation Sectoral Context

Overview of Water Resources and Access to Water Supply and Sanitation Services. Water security underpins much of Moldova’s ability to rekindle dynamism in its economy, realize health and well-being outcomes for its people, and achieve environmental goals. The World Bank’s Water Security Diagnostic and Future Outlook¹ showed that water security, rather than being constrained by water endowments², is limited by a lack of infrastructure, investments, financing, management capabilities, and enabling policies. The country requires significant investments across a range of water-dependent sectors if its growth and development ambitions are to be realized and resilience to economic and climate-related shocks increased.

The National Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) Strategy 2014–2030³ references the National Climate Change Strategy and emphasizes the need to integrate climate considerations into planning and project design.

Access to WSS is lowest among European countries and constrained by large coverage gaps in rural areas, compounded by income status. Stark disparities continue to exist in access and quality of water and sanitation services between urban and rural areas. Reliable services are vital for industry and businesses and for people to live productive lives. However, almost a million Moldovans rely on shallow, often polluted, and drought-prone wells for drinking, while pollution from untreated wastewater and the large-scale alteration of natural ecosystems threaten system resilience.

Based on data from the National Bureau of Statistics at the end of 2022, the percentage of localities connected to a water supply system per total in the Republic of Moldova is 59.2. All 55 urban localities and 57.6% of 1478 rural localities are connected to a water supply system. The percentage of localities connected to a wastewater system per total in the Republic of Moldova is 8.6, with 92.7% for urban localities and 5.5% for rural localities⁴.

However, compared to other countries in the Danube region, the share of population with access to basic water and sanitation services in Moldova is low, and the gap between urban and rural remains one of the largest in Europe and is one of the key water security issues facing the country. The water quality of the rural piped system is often below quality standards due to lack of treatment and poor quality of groundwater. The rural-urban discrepancy in access to safely managed sanitation is large and the poorest segment of the rural population has the lowest level of service.

The discharge of untreated wastewater is widespread, polluting water sources and increasing the cost of treatment of surface water. Although recent investments in wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs)

¹ Smets, S. et al. 2020. Moldova Water Security Diagnostic and Future Outlook. Washington, DC

² Moldova receives large surface water inflows from the Dniester and the Prut: total water resources endowments are estimated at 4,952 m³/cap/year, above the level of water stress at 1,700 m³/cap/year, and current water withdrawals form only 5 percent of total endowments

³ Republic of Moldova (2020). Government Resolution No. 442 of 1 July 2020 regarding Amendments to Government Resolution No. 199/2014 on Approval of the Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy (2014–2030).

⁴https://statistica.gov.md/ro/activitatea-sistemelor-publice-de-alimentare-cu-apa-si-de-canalizare-in-anul-202-9780_60431.html



for major towns have been initiated⁵, many existing plants are out of use or obsolete. At the end of 2022, out of 907 localities with centralized water systems, only 132 have a functional sewer collection system, and 98 have some form of functional treatment plant⁶. Uncollected wastewater and septage forms a public health risk, exacerbated by climate change, when floodwaters combine with uncollected wastewater and cause overflowing septic tanks, exposing people to pathogens.

The water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) situation in many rural schools and health care facilities (HCFs) is poor, and the issue has gained visibility due to the COVID-19 pandemic. No comprehensive data on WASH in HCFs are available⁷, but preliminary data from the Ministry of Health (MoH) indicate that at least half of rural HCFs do not have safely managed sanitation and/or drinking water services and lack adequate hygiene⁸.

Institutional, Legislative, Financing and Performance context of WSS Services is characterized by:

- Institutional weaknesses underpin many of the infrastructure, service delivery, and finance gaps in the WSS sector.
- WSS sector performance is hindered by missing functions, lack of clarity on institutional roles, and poor coordination on infrastructure planning and implementation.
- Moldova's recently revised National WSS Strategy 2014–2030 endorses SDG target 6.1 and 6.2, sets national interim targets for 2024, and articulates strategic reform directions.
- However, expenditures in the past have been inadequate to reach national targets, biased toward urban areas, and reliant on external transfers.
- While Moldova has embarked on regionalization of services, regulatory reform, and a licensing system in the WSS sector, work remains to be done to improve this framework and its implementation.
- The current tariff framework and its slow implementation shows weaknesses that hinder sustainability and inclusivity of service delivery.
- Moldova's WSS systems, often built in Soviet times, are in poor condition due to lack of maintenance, undermining service quality and efficiency.
- The legal framework for sanitation is mostly aligned with the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD), but normative documents and enabling measures for improving on-site sanitation do not yet exist
- Overall, the water sector in Moldova suffers from a lack of specialized staff with experience in water infrastructure operation and management and implementation of investment projects

⁵ Including in Chisinau, as well as in other towns mostly with support of the EU/European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)/European Investment Bank (EIB) and the German Development Bank (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, KfW).

⁶<https://statistica.gov.md/ro/activitatea-sistemelor-publice-de-alimentare-cu-apa-si-de-canalizare-in-anul-2022>

⁷ The World Health Organization (WHO) intends to support the MoH with a national assessment on water supply, sanitation, hygiene, waste management, as per WHO/UNICEF (2018) core indicators for monitoring WASH in health care facilities in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

⁸ Different categories of health care facilities exist in rural areas, including health offices, health centers, family doctor office, and family doctor centers; all are supervised by a health district medical institution (often multiple supervisory institutions exist within one administrative district).



Project description and background

The Government of Moldova (GoM) is currently implementing a project supported by the World Bank (IDA) financing the **Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project (MWSSP)**. The Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project directly supports the Government's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal No.6: *to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene by 2030 through its Action Program and the National Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy 2014-2030*.

The World Bank's Water Security Diagnostic and Future Outlook⁹ showed that there are several pressing challenges to Moldova's water security, such as:

- (i) inequalities in access, inadequate quality of water supply in small towns and weak performance of service providers;
- (ii) poor environmental health and environmental pollution due to lack of sanitation and wastewater collection and treatment;
- (iii) weak institutions, fragmented financing streams and unresolved reform areas which hinder programmatic delivery of services.

The Project Development Objective(s) (PDO) is:

- (i) to increase access to safely managed water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns, and to strengthen national and local institutional capacity for water supply and sanitation service delivery;
- (ii) in case of an Eligible Crisis or Emergency, respond promptly and effectively to it.

Access in water supply and sanitation (WSS) is constrained by large coverage gaps in rural areas, compounded by income status. Compared to other countries in the Danube region, the share of population with access to basic water and sanitation services in Moldova is low. The gap between urban and rural remains one of the largest in Europe and is one of the key water security issues the country is facing. Based on JMP-data¹⁰, gains were made in rural water supply access to drinking water services from piped networks, from 33 percent in 2000 to an estimate 40 percent in 2017, while urban piped service remained almost stable at 85 percent.

Household Budget Survey (HBS) (2018) data provides the picture on national access to a public piped water supply being 70 percent, with urban access at 92.4 percent and rural access at 52.2 percent. However, the water quality of rural piped system is often compromised and is below drinking water quality standard. Those not served by public centralized systems rely on so-called self-supply, through private shallow wells. Around one in three people rely on self-supply for their drinking water with 80

⁹ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34809>

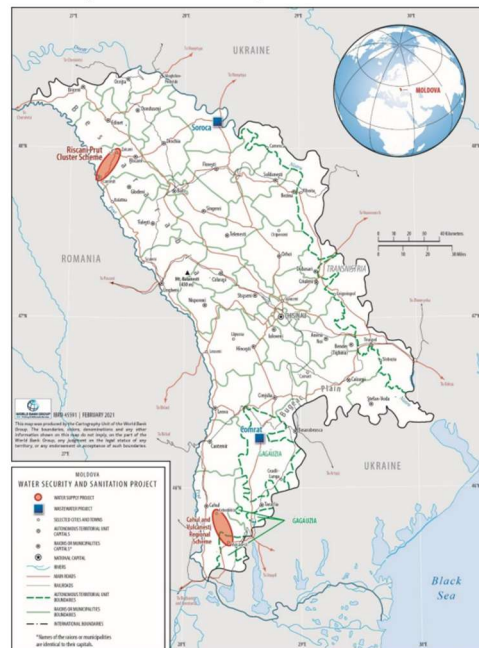
¹⁰ Joint Monitoring Program data is derived based on linear extrapolations using national survey data and JMP population estimates; discrepancies between nationally reported data can be found due to differences in estimation methods and definitions. See also: <https://washdata.org/data>



percent of wells not compliant with drinking water norms (e.g. nitrates, e-coli). The poorest quintile of the rural population faces the largest obstacles to get connected to a public system and is least able to invest in private piped supply by wells (9 percent), with 42.2 percent of the poorest households collecting water with buckets or carts. In 2018, out of a total of 1,220 centralized water systems, 1,168 were functional, although performance data is not systematically available.

In response to these challenges, the Project Development Objective (PDO) of the MWSSP is **to increase access to safely managed water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns, and to strengthen institutional capacities for water supply and sanitation service delivery**. Strengthening institutional capacities for water supply and sanitation service delivery refers to both national level planning and sector development capacities, as well as to improved operational efficiency and delivery at utility level.

Figure 1. The map of the MWSSP



Source: Project Appraisal Document of the MWSSP

The MWSSP has four components:

Component 1: Increasing access to safely managed WSS services in selected rural areas and towns This component will develop new and rehabilitate existing WSS infrastructure and WASH facilities in rural areas and towns, thus expanding access and quality of services for households, businesses, and public institutions and supporting resilience. Component 1 supports climate adaption through (a) providing reliable centralized water supply protecting vulnerable households from drought and poor water quality; (b) improving wastewater systems, sanitation, and WASH facilities, reducing environmental exposure to pathogens exacerbated by flooding, particularly in towns facing frequent flooding; and (c) ensuring climate-resilient design of all infrastructure for robust functioning under extreme weather events. It consists of two subcomponents:



Subcomponent 1.1: Expanding access and quality of WSS services. This subcomponent will finance climate-resilient investments in towns and rural areas. This includes the following:

- (a) **Water supply investments:** Expansion and rehabilitation of the regional water systems for water supply production and distribution, and service connections for LPAs in selected districts, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents; technical supervision; and citizen engagement activities. This refers to water supply infrastructure in two preliminarily identified subprojects, that is, regional water system expansion for LPAs in Cahul District and the ATU of Gagauzia and a regional water supply system with a surface water treatment plant in Riscani District. Many LPAs, particularly in the south (Cahul) as well as in the northern part along the Prut (Riscani), face shortages of water in the summer, with shallow wells/springs posing a challenge such as in the Prut cluster villages, in the Vulcanesti town, and other villages in Cahul District.
- (b) **Wastewater investments:** Expansion and rehabilitation of wastewater systems in selected towns, including the construction and rehabilitation of sewer networks and service connections, and the construction of new wastewater treatment plants, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents; technical supervision; and citizen engagement activities. This refers to two preliminarily identified subprojects in Soroca and Comrat towns. There are areas in the Comrat town that face frequent flooding, and the Soroca town is also vulnerable directly on the right bank of the Dniester. The project will support the assessment of flood risk and impact at the household level and, in addition to ensuring resilient design of infrastructure, provide measures to reduce the impact of floods where possible.
- (c) **Pilot for on-site household sanitation:** selected rural or peri-urban villages, will benefit from the improvement of on-site household sanitation following a demand-led approach through the provision of technical assistance, the implementation of information campaigns, and the carrying out of civil works. The pilot will be co-financed through the ADA grant. This pilot will demonstrate the use of climate-resilient low-cost technologies for rural sanitation.

Subcomponent 1.2: Improving resilient WASH facilities in public social institutions. This subcomponent will finance works, goods, consulting services, non-consulting services and training/workshops to realize climate-resilient WASH facilities in HCFs and education institutions and implement hygiene education and behavior change communication program.

Component 2: Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels for WSS service delivery. This component focusses on institutional capacities of national and subnational entities and WSS operators for management, planning, regulation and reform implementation, and performance improvement of service providers for green, resilience, and inclusive service delivery. At the national



level, development of plans, policies, and regulatory documents will support climate adaptation through climate-resilient planning, and at the local level, performance improvements will deliver climate benefits through reduction of NRW and improvement of energy efficiency. It consists of two subcomponents:

Subcomponent 2.1: Building national institutional capacity for WSS. This subcomponent aims to strengthen critical functions of facilitating and implementing WSS sector reform, investment planning and monitoring, and sector modernization and build capacities to this end of the assigned lead unit/entity within MIRD's structure. It finances goods, non-consulting services, consulting services, and training/workshops for activities that strengthen institutional capacities for planning, financing, economic regulation, performance monitoring, professional development, and the revision and development of new policies and normative documents.

Subcomponent 2.2: Improving performance of WSS service providers Subcomponent 2.2 will finance works, goods, consulting services, non-consulting services, and training to support the implementation of a prioritized rolling multiyear PIP of selected WSS operators involved under Subcomponent 1.1. WSS operators will carry out annual assessments on PIP implementation and KPIs, including publication of results and feedback rounds with customers. The financing for selected WSS operators will be allocated based on results. Investments and TA activities identified in the PIPs are based on utility diagnostics and include, but are not limited to, the following: improving technical and commercial operations, improving financial management (FM), HR management, and organization and strategy aspects, including improving asset management systems and inventories, energy efficiency, NRW reduction programs, water metering practices and equipment to improve climate resilience, water safety, and business continuity, and enhancing responsiveness to customers.

Component 3: Project management and coordination. This component will finance operational costs, consulting services, non-consulting services, goods, and training to finance the overall project management cost, including the project team at the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), implementation support consultants at the regional level within MIRD's RDAs for environmental and social standards implementation, and, at the national level, MIRD as the project implementing entity (PIE). It will finance training costs, including for capacity building in procurement, environmental, and social standards, specialized short-term implementation support consultants, financial audits, project communication and citizen consultations, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Component 4: Contingent emergency response component (CERC). A provisional zero-amount component is included, which will allow for rapid reallocation of credit/loan proceeds from other components during an emergency under streamlined procurement and disbursement procedures. This component allows the Government to request the World Bank to recategorize and reallocate financing from other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs.



Institutional and Implementation arrangements

The basic legal documents of this Project are: the **Financing Agreement of the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project (MWSSP)** between the Republic of Moldova and the International Development Association, ratified by Decree of the President of the Republic of Moldova No 368 of 09.03.2022 approving the signing of the Financing Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the International Development Association for the implementation of the Project "Security of Water Supply and Sanitation in Moldova", and also the Law no.169/2022 for the ratification of the Financing Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the International Association for Development and **Single Donor (Austrian Development Agency) Trust Fund Grant Agreement**, signed between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / International Development Association (TF0B7739) in order to realize the "Moldova water security and sanitation project".

The project is implemented by the National Office for Regional and Local Development under MIDR on the basis of Government Decision No 271 of 20.04.2022.

The *Project Appraisal Document (PAD)*, as per Report No: PAD4095, including all the World Bank policies, institutional, financial, procurement, technical, social and environmental conditions and the *Project Operational Manual* for the implementation of MWSSP are the basic documents guiding the project implementation activities.

The following WB Standards and Rules are considered relevant to the Project:

✓ *Regarding **Environmental and Social Standards** issues:*

- ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
- ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions
- ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and management
- ESS4 Community Health and Safety
- ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restriction on land Use and Involuntary Resettlement
- ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources
- ESS10 Stakeholder Engagements and Information Disclosure

✓ *Regarding **Procurement** issues:*

- the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing (IPF) Borrowers – Procurement in IPF of Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, and
- with the Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, as on July 1, 2016

✓ *Regarding **Financial Management** issues:*

- Disbursement Guidelines for Investment Project Financing, dated February 2017
- MWSSP Disbursement Letter



- Financial Agreement ratified under the Law No 169 on June 23, 2022, and via Presidential Decree 528 on July 07, 2022

Project Implementation Agreement (PIA). The PIA has been signed by the MIRD and NORLD/PIU on August 02, 2022. It includes the responsibilities of each institution in the implementation of the project, the PIU's commitments to implement the project in accordance with this agreement, the Environment and Social Standards, the Environment and Social Commitment Plan, the Anti-Corruption Guidelines, the Procurement Regulations, and the Project Operations Manual (POM), as applicable.

Project Coordination Group (PCG). The PCG was established by MIRD via a Ministerial Decree issued on December 14, 2022, with structure and functions as per the POM prepared by PIU and approved by the Bank team, with the objective of coordinating the implementation of the Project and endorsing its annual implementation plans.

The PCG will have several members representing among others MIRD, MoER, MoH, MoEnv, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and other relevant entities. The PCG will convene at least annually to review and endorse the project's annual program or upon request as and when required. The POM includes composition and responsibilities of the PCG.

Members of PCG of the Project have the rights, but not limited to:

- Propose topics for current or future PCG meetings;
- Request, if necessary, the inclusion of complex subjects related to the objectives of the Project or the involvement of certain independent experts;
- Present the views on each of the issues raised during the meeting;
- Give a separate opinion on certain items on the agenda of the Council meeting, with the request that it be appended to the decisions adopted.

The main responsibilities of the PCG, but not limited to:

- Participate within the meetings when planned or / and convened ;
- Respect the principle of objectivity in the process of examining the subjects on the meeting's agenda;
- Inform the members in the case of a conflict of interest, in accordance with the provisions of the legislation on conflict of interest (*if the case*);
- Review materials related to the topics discussed / proposed in the meetings;
- Approve the annual planning documents;
- Review and comment on the content of minutes and decisions approved during the meetings.

Implementation Support Agreements. The RDAs, which have comparative advantage and experience in the implementation of WSS infrastructure as well as local presence, will be the employers of major civil works under the project. The Bank Team provided comments on the draft Support Agreement developed by the NORLD/PIU, between MIRD, NORLD / PIU and the RDAs North, South and Gagauzia. The agreements provide details on:



- (i) the roles and responsibilities for the implementation of sub-component 1.1 of the Project,
- (ii) cooperation mechanism between the parties, and
- (iii) RDA's commitment to implement its relevant part of the Project. The agreements also specify the agreed local government contributions towards the civil works, which will be transferred by the LPAs in the PIU Account, and the responsibilities of all parties at each stage of the project implementation process.

The above agreements, with MIRD, NORLD, RDAs, were sign on March 22, 2023.

Trust Funds supported Activities. On March 03, 2023 was hold a workshop on Governance and Technical Advisory Support by SKAT Consultants. More than 30 representatives of WB, MIRD, North RDA, South RDA, Gagauzia RDA, PIUs /NORLD and Riscani Rayon Council attended the workshop.

On June 16, 2023, the second workshop was held with the participation of 34 representatives of the WB, Embassy of Japan, MIDR, South RDA, Gagauzia RDA, PIU/NORLD and LPAs from Cahul, Comrat, Vulcanesti and Soroca. The issues that were discussed: technical assistance for WS infrastructure management (management delegation contracts, tariff application, licensing and capacity building of operators) as well as technical assistance to optimize design and incorporate resilience into the regional water supply system.



1. PROGRESS TOWARDS THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1.1. Component 1. Increasing access to safely management water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns

This component will develop new and rehabilitate existing WSS infrastructure and WASH facilities in rural areas and towns, thus expanding access and quality of services for households, businesses and public institutions and supporting resilience. Component 1 supports climate adaption through:

- (a) providing reliable centralized water supply protecting vulnerable households from drought and poor water quality;
- (b) improving wastewater systems, sanitation, and WASH facilities, reducing environmental exposure to pathogens exacerbated by flooding, particularly in towns facing frequent flooding; and
- (c) ensuring climate-resilient design of all infrastructure for robust functioning under extreme weather events.

It consists of two subcomponents.

1.1.1 Subcomponent 1.1 Expanding access and quality of WSS services

a) Water supply investments

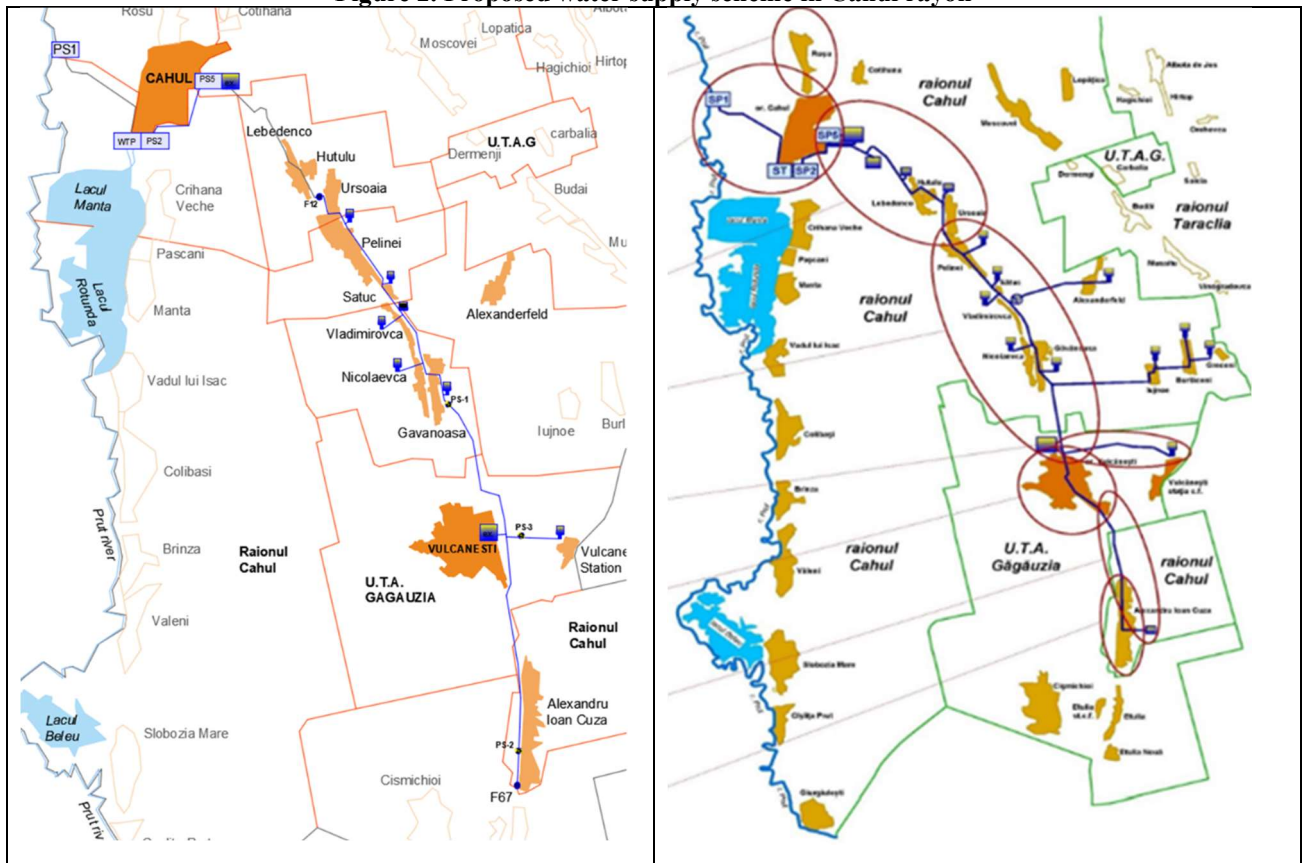
Expansion and rehabilitation of the regional water systems for water supply production and distribution, and service connections for LPAs in selected rayons, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents; technical supervision; and citizen engagement activities. This refers to water supply infrastructure in two preliminarily identified subprojects, that is, regional water system expansion for LPAs in Cahul District and the ATU of Gagauzia and a regional water supply system with a surface water treatment plant in Riscani Rayon. Many LPAs, particularly in the south (Cahul) as well as in the northern part along the Prut (Riscani), face shortages of water in the summer, with shallow wells/springs posing a challenge such as in the Prut cluster villages, in the Vulcanesti town, and other villages in Cahul District

a.1. Expansion and improvement of water supply services in Cahul and Vulcanesti rayons.

The Cahul water supply subproject represents a construction for the expansion of the water supply system in Cahul Rayon (using Prut water) to connect villages in several LPAs in Cahul Rayon as well as Vulcanesti town (ATU Gagauzia).



Figure 2. Proposed water supply scheme in Cahul rayon



Source: 1. Draft ESIA December 2023; 2. 2019_10_18_Factsheet_WSS_Cahul_Project

Identified villages and towns face significant water supply access and quality challenges. Water supply in Vulcanesti town and other villages in the south suffers from frequent shortages due to droughts, and deep groundwater is polluted and not compliant with drinking water norms (non-potable water). The beneficiaries of the mentioned subproject are the following localities: (i) Pelinei commune (including Pelinei and Satuc village), (ii) Gavanoasa commune (including Gavanoasa, Vladimirovca and Nicolaevca villages), (iii) Alexanderfeld village, (iv) Alexandru Ioan Cuza village, (v) Vulcanesti Town and (vi) and Vulcanesti Railway Station with a total number of 23823 beneficiaries.



Table 2. General data on beneficiary localities from the Cahul and Vulcanesti subproject

Locality	ATU	Population in 2023 based on <i>statistica</i> *	Population in 2023, based on ESIA data**	Households in 2022, based on <i>statistica</i> *	Total households in 2023, based on ESIA data***	Uninhabited households, in 2023, based on ESIA data**
Pelinei	Pelinei, Cahul rayon	1 602	2 187/ de facto 2 163	673	870	98
Satuc						6
Alexanderfeld	Alexanderfeld, Cahul rayon	1 102	1316	614	535	23
Gavanoasa	Gavanoasa, Cahul rayon	1 690	2 405/ de facto 2 019	830	825	25
Vladimirovca						
Nicolaevca						
Alexandru Ioan Cuza	Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Cahul rayon	1 974	2 468	824	824	78
Vulcanesti town	Vulcanesti, Administrative Territorial Unit Gagauzia	12 054	15 213	5168	5 733	129
Vulcanesti Railway and the Free Economic Zone (FEZ)		448	234		121	N/A
Total		18 870	23 823	8 109	8 908	359

Source: **statistica.md*

**Draft ESIA_Cahul_Vulcanesti_dec_2023 (data presented by the Local Mayoralties). tab 6-13

***Draft ESIA_Cahul_Vulcanesti_dec_2023 (data presented by the Local Mayoralties). tab 6-21

Based on the data, presented by the Consultant that is preparing the ESIA, around 4% of the households in the targeted localities are inhabited, with the highest value for Pelinei 11.7%. (table 2)

Table 3. General data on water supply system connections in the localities from Cahul - Vulcanesti subproject

Locality	Households, based on FS 2014. ESIA data**	Number of households connected to public water service**	Connection rate, %	Length of water distribution networks, km**	Designed connection points based on ToR
Pelinei	835	20+38=58	7.9	1	707
Satuc	35			1	35
Alexanderfeld	535	512	98	12	
Gavanoasa	462				468
Vladimirovca	114				149
Nicolaevca	249				255
Alexandru Ioan Cuza	824	474	53	25.1	
Town of Vulcanesti	5 733	3 739	88	72.6	
Vulcanesti Railway and the Free Economic Zone (FEZ)	121				128
Total	8 908	4 783			1742

Source: ***Draft ESIA_Cahul_Vulcanesti_dec_2023. tab 6-21

**Draft ESIA_Cahul_Vulcanesti_dec_2023, tab. 5-5



The localities for which water distribution networks will be built and which will be connected to the main water supply pipeline are: Pelinei, Gavanoasa, Vladimirovca, Nicolaevca and Vulcanesti Railway and the Free Economic Zone (table 3).

Localities to be connected to the main water supply pipeline, that already have water distribution networks are: Satuc, Alexanderfeld, Alexandru Ioan Cuza and Vulcanesti town.

Water supply infrastructure components are planned, within the subproject, as shown in the table 4 below.

Table 4. Water supply infrastructure components that are planned for the subproject “Expansion and improvement of water supply services in Cahul and Vulcanesti rayons”

Item	mu	Quantity, unit
from the water source		
Main water pipeline	km	2x48.3=96.57
Disinfection stations	unit	9
Pumping/ Repumping stations	unit	3
Pelinei village		
Water supply distribution networks	km	22.8
Water tank (50m ³)	unit	2
Satuc village		
Water supply distribution networks	km	0
Water tank (25m ³)	unit	1
Gavanoasa village		
Water supply distribution networks	km	17.3
Water tank (50m ³)	unit	2
Vladimirovca village		
Water supply distribution networks	km	7
Water tank (25m ³)	unit	2
Nicolaevca village		
Water supply distribution networks	km	8.6
Water tank (25m ³)	unit	2
Vulcanesti railway Station and Vulcanesti Free Economic zone		
Water tank (50m ³)	unit	2
Main water pipeline	km	4.4
Water supply distribution networks	km	4.65

Source: Version I of the design for Cahul -Vulcanesti subproject

Since the beginning of the project, the following actions were carried out:

1) concerning the signing of the Cooperation Agreement

- The Cahul Rayonal Council Decision no. 10/06-V (on the participation of the Cahul Rayon in the MWSSP and the conditions to be fulfilled) was approved on December 15, 2022;



- The LPS's Council Decisions (regarding participation in the MWSSP and the conditions to be fulfilled) were approved by the Local Councils as follows:
 - ✓ LPA Gavanoasa (Decision no. 5/1 on December 06, 2022);
 - ✓ LPA Pelinei (Decision no. 7/9 on November 21, 2022);
 - ✓ LPA Alexanderfeld (Decision no. 8/1 on December 02, 2022);
 - ✓ LPA Alexandru Ioan Cuza (Decision no. 10/2 on December 12, 2022)
 - ✓ LPA Vulcanesti (Decision no. 9/30 on December 22, 2022)
- The Cooperation Agreement was signed on March 15, 2023, by the P.I. NORLD, RDAs and LPAs;

2) concerning the adjustment of the detailed engineering design and bills of quantities

- The ToR for DED & BoQ adjustment was developed and was received "No objections note" from the WB experts by STEP on March 13, 2023.
- Since the activity includes the update of the existing technical engineering design, it was decided to proceed to Direct selection. The Request for Proposal was issued to the Consultant on March 17, 2023. The composition of the Evaluation Committee was approved on May 04, 2023 by NORLD Order No. 14. The contract was signed on July 14, 2023.
- The Kick-off meeting was organized on July 25, 2023. During the meeting, representatives of: LPAs from Cahul rayon, the Rayon Council, MIRD, NORLD and the Consultant were present.
- The *Inception Report* was received on August 04, 2023. On August 15, 2023, the meeting took place with the representatives of the design company, LPAs, South RDA and the Rayon Council regarding the process of updating urban planning certificates and approvals to be connected as well as other aspects regarding the updating of technical documentation. PIU comments on the *Inception Report* were sent on August 18, 2023. The answers to the comments were received on August 22, 2023. As a result of receiving the Consultant's comments, it was decided to organize a clarification meeting, with participation of NORLD representatives. On August 24, 2023, the meeting with the representatives of the design company regarding the Centralizing Table of divergences to the *Inception Report* took place. The minutes of the meeting were drafted and sent to the Consultant on August 29, 2023. On September 05, 2023, the Consultant submitted the *Inception Report*, revised according to what was agreed during the meeting. PIU submitted their comments to the revised *Inception Report* on September 10, 2023. On September 13, 2023, the PIU received the email with *no comments*, on the *Inception Report*, from the WB experts. On September 14, 2023, the NORLD notification regarding the approval of the *Inception Report* was sent to the Consultant.
- On October 17, 2023 the Consultant submitted for review and comments the *Resettlement Screening Report*. On November 14, 2023 comments on the report were sent to the Consultant. On December 26, 2023 the *Resettlement Screening Report* received the "no



objection note” from the WB TTL. On December 28, 2023, the NORLD notification (letter no. 02-23/2991 dated December 28, 2023) regarding the approval of the *Resettlement Screening Report* was sent to the Consultant.

- On November 6, 2023 the official letter no.337, of the National Agency for Archaeology, with the positive approval of the route of the main water pipeline, was received. This was the response to the NORLD’s letter no. 02-23/2038 on November 01, 2023.
- The Consultant requested additional works (connection to the main water pipeline of 2 designed reservoirs in the Vulcanesti town). On November 07, 2023 was received the MIRD’s letter no. 19-5663 regarding the acceptance of the proposal to include additional works in ToR, specified in the NORLD’s letter no. 02-23/2043 on November 03, 2023.
- Version 1 of the detailed engineering design (*Main water pipeline Cahul-Lebedenco-Pelinei-Gavanoasa-Vulcanesti (villages) – Alexandru Ioan Cuza and water supply distribution networks of the villages Lebedenco, Hutulu, Ursoaia, Pelinei, Satuc, Gavanoasa, Vladimirovca, Nicolaevca and connection of the Vulcănești railway Station and “Valcanes” Free Economic Zone*) was received on November 14, 2023. The version 1 of the reviewed and updated detailed engineering design was approved by the concerned LPAs as follows: (Rayon Council by the letter no 648 dated December 28, 2023; LPA Alexanderfeld by the letter no. 136 dated December 27, 2023; LPA Alexandru Ioan Cuza by the letter dated December, 2023; LPA Gavanoasa by the letter dated December 28, 2023 and LPA Pelinei by the letter no. 458 dated December 28, 2023 and JSC Apa-Canal Cahul by the letter dated December 29, 2023.

3) concerning the preparation of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment & Environmental and Social Management Plan

- The ToR for Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) & Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) was developed and “No objections” note from the WB experts was received by STEP on March 15, 2023.
- Specific Procurement Notices were published 3 times (March 21, 2023; April 07, 2023 and April 21, 2023). The composition of the Evaluating Committee was approved on May 04, 2023 by NORLD Order No. 14. The contract was signed on July 14, 2023
- The kick-off meeting was organized on July 25, 2023. During the meeting, representatives of: LPA from Cahul rayon, the Rayon Council, MIRD, NORLD and the Consultant were present.
- On August 10, 2023, 2 meetings were held on Public Consultations regarding the implementation of the Social and Environmental Impact Assessment (in Vulcanesti town and in the Cahul rayon)
- The *Inception Report* was received on August 14, 2023. On August 24, the *Inception Report*, with the consultant’s answers to the PIU’s comments, was received. On September 05, 2023 the *Inception Report* was sent to WB experts for comments and suggestions. On September 25, 2023, the environmental and social experts from the WB informed the PIU that there are



no suggestions and comments regarding the *Inception Report*. On September 26, 2023, the NORLD Notification regarding the approval of the *Inception Report* was sent to the Consultant.

- The first draft of the *ESIA / ESMP Report* was received from the Consultant on November 03, 2023. On 15 November 15, 2023 the draft *ESIA/ ESMP Report* was sent to the WB experts for comments and suggestions; On December 06, 2023 the comments from WB experts were received and on December 08, 2023 the draft *ESIA / ESMP* was sent to the Consultant for the comments approach. On December 28, 2023 the Consultant submitted the *ESIA/ESMP* with integrated comments.

4) concerning the preparation of Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan

- Preparation of the Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP) was initiated in November.
- A meeting with LPAs (regarding people affected by the project: temporary use of private land during the construction of the pipeline) was held on December 15, 2023 to explain the steps to be taken for elaboration of the ARAP (Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan).
- On December 19, 2023, official letters were sent to the LPAs requesting information on the owners of the affected land. Also at that time, a reminder was sent to the relevant town halls with a list of the public land subject to change of use from "agricultural land" to "land for construction of the WS infrastructure assets".

5) concerning Local Water and Sanitation Committee (LWSC).

- Creation of Citizen Water and Sanitation Committees (CWSC): for 5 LPAs the decisions of the Local Councils approved and 5 minutes, related to the first CWSC meeting elaborated; 5 CWSC information activities were carried out.

Table 5. Data on the establishment of CWSCs and the training carried out for the Cahul-Vulcanesti sub-project

Locality	No of the decision of establishment	Date	Date of minutes of the first meeting	Date of CWSC training
Cahul-Vulcanesti sub-project				
A.I. Cuza	Nr. 3/3	07.04.2023	04.05.2023	11.05.2023
Alexanderfeld	Nr. 4/5	13.04.2023	18.04.2023	11.05.2023
Pelinei	Nr. 4/9	02.05.2023	17.05.2023	18.05.2023
Gavanoasa	Nr. 2/9	03.04.2023	17.05.2023	18.05.2023
Vulcanesti	Nr. 4/9	31.05.2023	31.05.2023	08.06.2023

Source: developed by the PIU staff

After the appointment of the CWSC the first meeting was conducted and were elected the President and the Secretary of the CWSC, a person responsible for gender issues and a person responsible for the GRM at local level.



a.2. Expansion and improvement of water supply services in the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon.

The Riscani water supply subproject represents the construction of a new regional water supply system, taking water from the Prut River, treating it and transporting it through main water supply networks to the beneficiary localities.

Table 6. General data on beneficiary localities from the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon

Locality	LPA	Population in 2023 based on <i>statistica.md</i> *	Population in 2014, based on GIZ data**	Households in 2022 based on <i>statistica.md</i> *	Households in 2014, based on GIZ data**
(i) Costeti town	Costeti	2 876	2221	1833	829
Duruitoarea			379		178
Proscureni			172		100
Pascauti			998		450
Damascani			389		145
(ii) Duruitoarea Noua	Duruitoarea Noua	712	880	431	250
Dumeni			230		82
(iii) Varatic ¹¹		1 609	2238	818	900
(iv) Horodiste		593	922	412	385
(v) Petruseni		899	1089	446	481
Total		6 689	9 518	3 940	3 800
Total (excluding Varatic)		5 080	7 280	3 122	2 900

Source: **statistica.md*;

**GIZ Feasibility Study for the aggregation of water supply services in the Prut Cluster, Riscani rayon with wastewater collection and treatment service options, 2014

The locality, for which water distribution networks will be built, and which will be connected to the main water supply pipeline is Pascauti (table 7).

Localities to be connected to the main water supply pipeline, that already have water distribution networks are: Costesti, Duruitoarea, Proscureni, Damascani, Duruitoarea Noua, Dumeni, Horodiste and Petruseni.

Table 7. General data on water supply system connections in the localities from the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon

Locality	Households, based on GIZ data**	Number of households connected to public water service	New connections following project implementation	Water supply existing system components	
				Length of water distribution networks, km**	Water tank
(i) Costeti town	829	664	450	1-2.5 (it is not functional)	1un x50m ³
Duruitoarea	178				
Proscureni	100				
Pascauti	450				
Damascani	145				
(ii) Duruitoarea Noua	250	167			
Dumeni	82				
(iii) Varatic	900				
(iv) Horodiste	385	205			
(v) Petruseni	481	220			

¹¹ Varatic will participate in the project as a partner



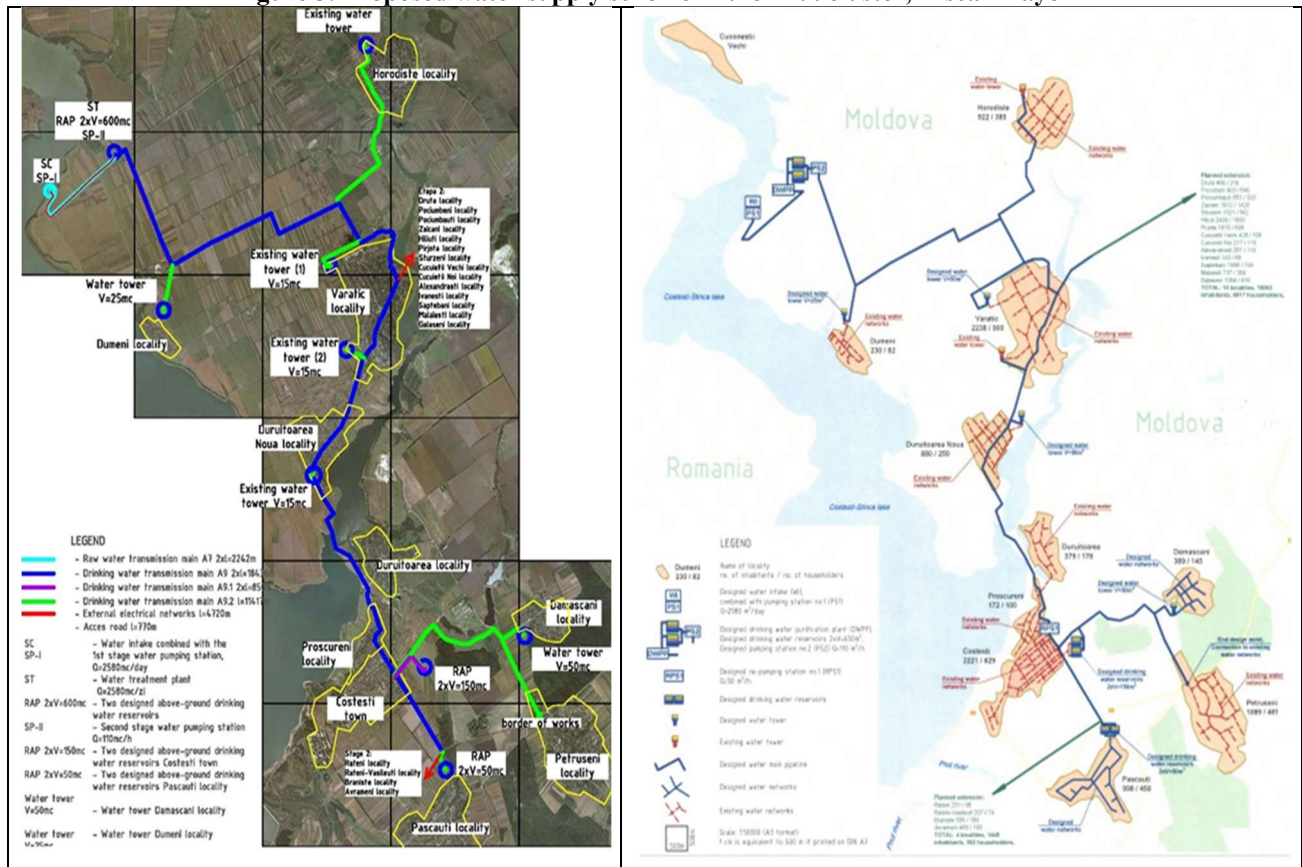
Locality	Households, based on GIZ data**	Number of households connected to public water service	New connections following project implementation	Water supply existing system components	
				Length of water distribution networks, km**	Water tank
Total	3 800	1 956	450		
Total (excluding Varatic)	2 900	1 256	450		

Source: *statistica.md;

** GIZ Feasibility Study for the aggregation of water supply services in the Prut Cluster, Riscani rayon with wastewater collection and treatment service options 2014

The beneficiaries of the mentioned subproject are the following localities: (i) Costesti town (including villages which are part of the town: Duruitoarea, Proscureni, Pascuti and Damascani), (ii) Duruitoarea Noua commune (including Duruitoarea Noua and Dumeni villages), (iii) Varatic village, (iv) Horodiste village and (v) Petruseni village with a total number of 9518 beneficiaries.

Figure 3. Proposed water supply scheme in the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon



Source: GIZ Factsheet_WSS_Riscani_Project_12.12.2019 and GIZ Feasibility Study for Aggregating Water Supply Services for "Prut" Cluster of Riscani Rayon

Water supply infrastructure components that are planned, within the subproject, are shown in the table 8.



Table 8. Water supply infrastructure components that are planned for the subproject “Expansion and improvement of water supply services in the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon”

Item	mu	Quantity	Note
Water treatment plant		1	
Main pipeline for raw water	km	2.29x2=4.58	consists of two pipes
Main potable water pipeline	km	24.5x2=49	consists of two pipes
Water tank 650 m ³	unit	2	
Water tank 150 m ³	unit	2	
Pumping stations	unit	2	
Pascauti village			
Water distribution networks	km	11.2	
Water tank 50 m ³	m ³	2	
Disinfection station	unit	1	
Connections	no	450	

Source: Design “Improvement of water supply and sewerage services in Pascauti, Damascani, Proscureni, Galaseni, Malaiesti and Hiliuti localities from Riscani Rayon”. Object no. 06/18. Explanatory memorandum. Chisinau 2019

Number of inhabitants for localities from Prut Cluster from Riscani Rayon was approved according to the *Feasibility Study for Aggregation of Water Supply Services in Prut Cluster, Riscani rayon with options for wastewater collection and treatment services* (28 settlements in the Western part of Riscani rayon, located in the zone of Prut River)”

The raw water from the Prut River will be captured through the water intake, which consists of fish protection structure, two parallel pipes and the first stage water pumping station. The capacity of the water intake was adopted, taking into account the number of inhabitants from 28 localities (Prut Cluster) from the Riscani Rayon

Table 9. Data regarding designed capacity of the water treatment facility for Prut Cluster, Riscani Rayon

	Total no. of inhabitants	q _{sp} , l/c/d	Q _{day avg} , m ³ /day	K _{day max}	Q _{day max} , m ³ /day	Technological water losses for WTP, (20%)	Capacity of water intake, m ³ /day
Water intake	26,019	70	1,821.33	1.25	2,276.66	455.30	2,732.00
Water treatment plant	26,019	70	1,821.33	1.25	2,276.66	455.30	2,732.00

Source: Design “Improvement of water supply and sewerage services in Pascauti, Damascani, Proscureni, Galaseni, Malaiesti and Hiliuti localities from Riscani Rayon”. Object no. 06/18. Explanatory memorandum. Chisinau 2019

Since the beginning of the project, the following action were carried out:

1) concerning the signing of the Cooperation Agreement

- The drafts of the Local Council decisions and the Cooperation Agreement to be signed by the P.I. NORLD, RDA and LPAs were prepared;
- In December 2022, were approved the Local Councils Decisions of all LPA, except LPA Varatic. This was an implementation risk of the subproject, due to a negative decision of the Varatic Local Council from the Riscani Rayon to participate in the project. To mitigate this risk and in order to convince the LPA representatives and the population of the Varatic village, the PIU team realized the following actions:



On April 27, 2023 the PIU team participated in the Public Consultations in Varatic in order to present the project to the population and explain the advantages of joining the project

On May 23, 2023, was held a meeting with MIRD, RDA North and Riscani Rayon Council regarding the participation of the Varatic commune in the project. The representatives of Riscani Rayon Council made a commitment to pay the contribution for the Varatic in order to continue the implementation of the project. On the basis of the provisions of the minute of the meeting (signed by all participating parties) and the decisions approved at the meeting on 23.05.2023, the following were drawn up:

- a. Draft decision of the Riscani Rayon Council;
- b. Draft decision of the Varatic Local Council;
- c. Draft decision of the other LPAs;
- d. Draft Cooperation Agreement, where the Varatic LPA ensures participation as a partner and will issue the necessary permit documents for the construction of the main pipeline.

On June 12-16, 2023 the need for the continuation of the sub-project was discussed with the World Bank's representatives - the MWSSP team leader and coordinator.

On June 26, 2023, the PIU representatives participated in the meeting of the local council of Varatic to discuss the mechanism of participation of the locality in the project as a partner, because the main pipeline crosses the intra-village of the locality and it is the necessity to ensure that the LPA will issue the necessary permit documents (urban planning certificate, construction permit, etc.) if necessary.

- As a result of the actions taken, the LPA's Council Decisions (regarding participation in the MWSSP and the conditions to be fulfilled, according to the PIU/NORLD letter no. 02-23/765 from 08.06.2023) were approved by the Local Councils as follows:
 - 1) LPA Petruseni (Decision no. 2/2 on June 12, 2023);
 - 2) LPA Horodiste (Decision no. 05/02 on December 09, 2022);
 - 3) LPA Varatic will participate in the project as a partner (Decision no. 03/01 on June 26, 2023);
 - 4) LPA Duruitoarea Noua (Decision no. 04/01 on July 05, 2023);
 - 5) LPA Costesti (Decision no. 05/04 on July 14, 2023);
 - 6) The Decision No 03/17 was approved on June 16, 2023 of the Riscani Rayon Council amending the Decision of the Rayon Council no. 01/03 on January 13, 2023 regarding Cooperation Agreement to be signed by the P.I. NORLD, RDA and LPAs;
- The decisions of the LPAs from Riscani were submitted to the PIU on July 24, 2023.
- The Cooperation Agreement was signed on October 03, 2023.

2) concerning the updating of the detailed engineering design and bills of quantities

- For the purpose of the review of actual situation on October 09, 2023, the PIU engineers and environmental specialist made a field visit to Costesti. As a result, the detailed description of the water supply systems in the LPA Costesti was made.
- For the purpose of the review of the *ToR for updating of the design*, on October 16, 2023, the PIU engineers made a field visit to Costesti, Pascauti, Damascani and Duruitoarea Noua. As a result of the field visit, the NORL's official letter no 02-23/2034 on November 01, 2023



with the proposals for adjustment of the ToR was prepared and sent to the MIRD for approval; The ToR were approved by MIRD representatives by the official letter no. 19-5731 on November 09, 2023 and pre-approved by WB experts on November 17, 2023.

- The composition of the Evaluating Committee was approved on June 29, 2023 by NORLD Order No. 24.
- On December 13, 2023 a meeting was held with representatives of the LPAs of Riscani Rayon on the presentation of the ToR for the updating of the design and ESIA.
- Until the December 31, 2023, the ToR were approved by the concerned LPAs.

3) concerning the preparation of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment & Environmental and Social Management Plan

- The ToR for developing the ESIA was elaborated and submitted to the WB experts for review and pre-approving on July 27, 2023. The ToR was pre-approved by the WB experts on August 01, 2023
- ToR were sent through STEP for review on November 17, 2023. The "no objection" note was received by STEP on December 07, 2023;
- The composition of the Evaluating Committee was approved on June 29, 2023 by NORLD Order No. 24.
- It was prepared so called Preliminary Environment Impact Assessment to seek the decision of Environmental Agency about the necessity to conduct full scale EIA. On May 05, 2023 the Riscani Environmental Inspectorate requested additional information, which was provided on May 10, 2023. The response regarding the need for EIA was received on May 19, 2023 by the letter of the Northern Environmental Agency no. 18/175/2023 on May 19, 2023 addressed to Riscani Rayon Council, Economy Department.

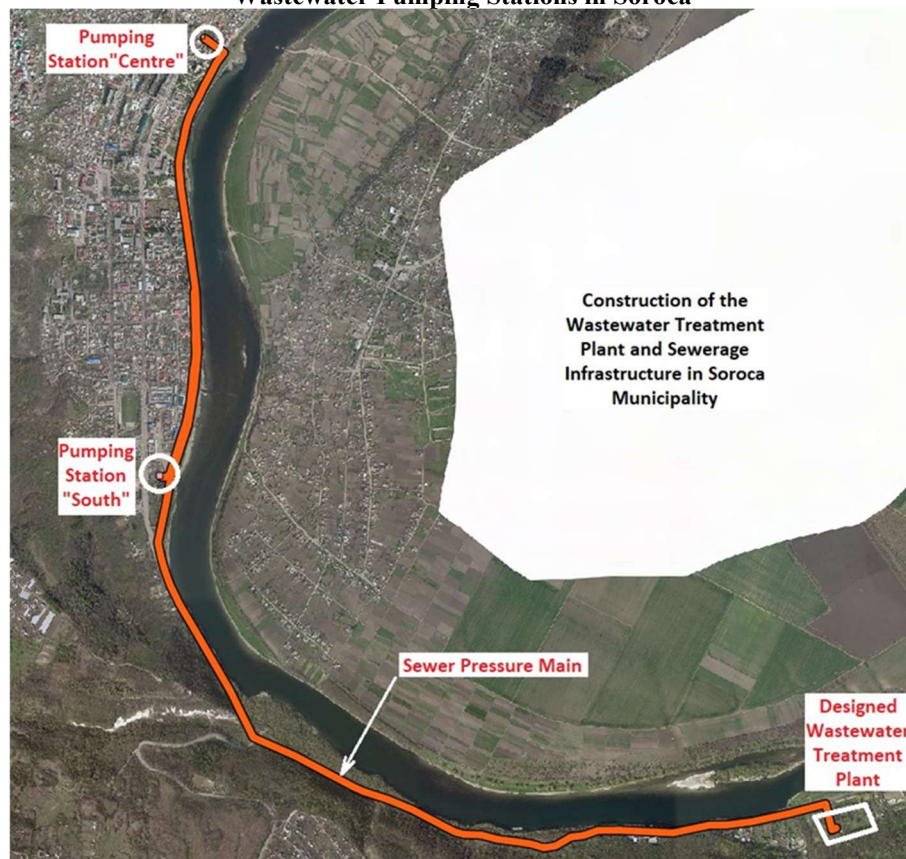


b) Wastewater investments

Expansion and rehabilitation of wastewater systems in selected towns, including the construction and rehabilitation of sewer networks and service connections, and the construction of new wastewater treatment plants, including the preparation of relevant technical studies and management documents; technical supervision and citizen engagement activities. This refers to two preliminarily identified subprojects in Soroca and Comrat towns. There are areas in the Comrat town that face frequent flooding, and the Soroca town is also vulnerable directly on the right bank of the Dniester. The project will support the assessment of flood risk and impact at the household level and, in addition to ensuring resilient design of infrastructure, provide measures to reduce the impact of floods where possible.

b.3. Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Soroca. The Soroca subproject represents construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant as well as construction of the sewer pressure main pipe in Soroca town. Currently untreated wastewater directly pollutes the Dniester River, the main source of water for downstream settlements and is identified as a national priority for prevention of waterway pollution.

Figure 4. Layout of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Pressure Sewer and Wastewater Pumping Stations in Soroca



Source: Developed by the PIU/NORLD engineers

Table 10. Wastewater infrastructure components that are planned for the subproject “Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Soroca”

Item	mu	Technical characteristic	Quantity
New construction			
Wastewater treatment plant	unit	2,300 m ³ /day	1
Centre wastewater pumping station	unit	2+1 pumps, 36 l/s, 50 kW	1
South wastewater pumping station	unit	1+1 pumps, 4.4 l/s, 1 kW	1
Wastewater collection pressure networks in 2 lines	km	DN400	5.8
Wastewater collection pressure networks	km	DN90	0.83
Access road to the treatment plant	km		3
Connection of the treatment plant to the electricity networks	km		Est. 2.5
Connection of the treatment plant to the water supply networks	km		Est. 2.5
Other components for STAGE I, depending on the availability of financial sources			
Rehabilitation of existing wastewater networks	km		3.9
Small wastewater pumping stations	unit		2
Connections	unit		388

Source: Feasibility Study and ESIA for Soroca Sanitation Project, 2021

For this subproject the following equipment/works are foreseen:

List of equipment/works for Soroca Wastewater Treatment Plant and Main Sewer Pipeline

1.a. Wastewater treatment plant: Screens; Aerated grit chamber; Imhoff tanks; Intermediate pumping station; Trickling filters; Secondary clarifier; Sludge drying beds; Disinfection unit; Pipelines; Power supply and electrical installations; SCADA system, control system and measurements; Plant buildings; Utilities; Laboratory Equipment & Ancillary Supplies; Access road to WWTP and landscaping and outside installations.

1.b. Main Sewer Pipeline: Pipe; Automatic screen, chamber; Central pumping station; South pumping station; Automations system; Power supply of the Pumping Stations; Manholes; Installation works and Landscaping and access road¹²

It has been estimated that only 42% of the population of Soroca town is connected to the sewerage system. All the multi-storey buildings are connected to the existing sewerage system, whereas only 24% of the individual houses and 21% of economic agents and budgetary institutions are connected.

Table 11. Number of active water and wastewater connections in Soroca

	Number of active water connections 2020 baseline	Water coverage ratio*	Number of active wastewater connections 2020 baseline	Population Wastewater coverage ratio*
Soroca	9,333	66%	5,902	42%
Villages	2,177	50%	0	0%
Total JSC “Regia Apa Canal Soroca”	11,510	62%	5,902	32%

Source: JSC “Regia Apa - Canal Soroca”

¹² Feasibility Study and ESIA for Soroca Sanitation Project, 2021



In order to realize all the planned activities for the implementation of the Soroca subproject, since the beginning of the project, the following actions were carried out:

1) concerning the signing of the Cooperation Agreement

- The Soroca Municipal Council Decision no. 22/2 (on the participation of the municipality of Soroca in the MWSSP and the conditions to be fulfilled) was approved on January 12, 2023;
- The Cooperation Agreement was signed on March 22, 2023, by the P.I. NORLD, RDA North and Soroca LPA;

2) concerning the preparation of the *Topographical survey, geological (geotechnical) study and expertise of the wastewater pumping stations' buildings*

- Initially it was agreed that the geotechnical works will be financed from the local budget, according to an agreement with the public authorities of Soroca town. During the meeting with representatives of Soroca Town Hall on May 26, 2023 it was found that it would be more efficient if these works will be contracted under the Project, because the municipality of Soroca did not manage to allocate the necessary financial resources.
- The Terms of Reference *for topographical survey, geological (geotechnical) study and expertise of the wastewater pumping stations' buildings* were developed and “No objections note” was received by STEP, from the WB experts, on June 14, 2023.
- The Request for Expressions of Interest was published in Moldova Suverana no. 23 on June 16, 2023 as well as on the NORLD website. Deadline for submission was June 27, 2023. At this date 2 offers were received.
- The Evaluation of Expressions of Interest was completed on July 5, 2023. The notification of the evaluation results was sent on July 10, 2023 to the consultants who submitted Expressions of Interest in the tender. The Request for Proposals was sent to the consultant who was ranked the 1st according to the decision of the Evaluation Committee on July 05, 2023. The deadline for the presentation of the technical and financial proposal was July 17, 2023. Extension of the Proposal submission deadline was made until July 19, 2023 (according to the request received from the consultant). The technical and financial proposal was received on July 19, 2023. The Proposal and the draft Evaluation Report were sent to the Evaluation Committee on July 21, 2023 and repeatedly sent on August 1, 2023. The Evaluation Committee meeting, including the signing of the Proposal Evaluation Report, was held on August 11, 2023. (decision to reject the proposal as non-responsive to RFP requirements). Preparation and sending of the Request for Proposals to the consultant, who was ranked the 2nd according to the decision of the Evaluation Committee, on July 05, 2023. The deadline for submission the Technical and Financial Proposal - August 30, 2023. On August 30, 2023 the Technical and Financial Proposal was received. During the examination of the Proposal, a request for clarification was sent to the Consultant on September 04, 2023. The received clarifications were considered acceptable, and the entire set of documents was forwarded to the Evaluation



Committee for review. Invitation to negotiations sent to the Consultant on September 06, 2023. A pre-negotiation meeting was organized by the members of the Evaluation Committee to clarify all aspects before the Negotiations. The negotiation of the contract was held on September 08, 2023 at NORLD premises. By September 11, 2023, the Consultant submitted the revised Financial Proposal, as agreed during negotiations. Also, since the Consultant was awarded 2 contracts that are interconnected, the Consultant was requested to submit a revised work schedule, which was submitted on September 14, 2023. On the same date the draft Contract including the Minutes of Contract negotiations were submitted to the Consultant for review.

- The contract was signed on September 15, 2023.
- On October 05, 2023, in line with contract requirements, the Consultant submitted the *Note regarding the start of the services*.
- On October 10, 2023 the PIU engineers and the Consultant made a field visit to Soroca to inspect the WW infrastructure objects. Also were held 2 meetings, at Operator premises with the director and at Town Hall premises with the town chief architect

3) concerning the preparation of the *Employer's Requirements within the Design and Build bidding package*.

- Agreement on the acceptance of the World Bank's *Design and Build* procurement procedure, with all relevant stakeholders, was made during the meeting that was held on March 14, 2023 with the participation of MIRD and NORLD;
- Preliminary drafting the Civil, Mechanical and Electrical parts of the Technical Specifications;
- The Terms of Reference for *Employer's Requirements within the Design and Build bidding package*, developed. The "No Objection" was received by STEP on June 22, 2023. The Request for Expression of Interest was published on June 23, 2023 in *Moldova Suverana* no. 24 and on the NORLD website. The deadline for submission of offers is July 07, 2023. By the deadline, 2 Expressions of Interest were received.
- The evaluation of expressions of interest was completed on July 21, 2023. The notification regarding the evaluation results was sent on July 26, 2023 to the consultants who submitted Expressions of Interest within the tender. The Request for Proposals was sent to the consultant, who was ranked the 1st according to the Evaluation Report, on July 26, 2023. The deadline for submitting the Technical and Financial Proposal - August 11, 2023. The technical and financial proposal was received on August 11, 2023. During on the examination of the Proposal by the Evaluation Committee, a request for clarification was sent to the Consultant on 21 August 2023. The received clarifications were considered acceptable, and the entire set of documents was forwarded to the Evaluation Committee for review. A pre-negotiation meeting was organized by the members of the Evaluation Committee to clarify all aspects before inviting the Consultant to negotiations. Invitation to negotiations sent to the



Consultant on September 06, 2023. The negotiation of the contract was held on September 08, 2023 at NORLD premises. By September 11, the Consultant submitted the revised Financial Proposal, as agreed during negotiations. Also, the Consultant was requested to submit a revised work schedule, which was submitted on September 14, 2023. On the same date the draft Contract including the Minutes of Contract negotiations were submitted to the Consultant for review, as well as to the members of the Evaluating Committee.

- Following the signing of the Minutes of Contract negotiations, the service contract was signed on September 15, 2023.
- On October 10, 2023 the PIU engineers and the Consultant made a field visit to Soroca to inspect the WW infrastructure objects. Also were held 2 meetings, at Operator premises with the director and at Town Hall premises with the architect.
- *Inception Report* was submitted for review and comments on October 12, 2023. The PIU's comments on the *Inception Report* were provided to the Consultant on October 24, 2023, and on October 25, 2023 the PIU received the Consultant's response to the comments. On November 02, 2023 the Inception Report was approved.
- On October 13, 2023 a meeting with the consultant was organized at PIU premises to discuss the current situation, problems identified following the site visit.
- WWTP design criteria, general layout and piping and instrumentation diagram were submitted for review and comments on October 25, 2023.
- On November 9, 2023, the design criteria were discussed and approved by MIRD, Soroca Town Hall and JSC Regia Apa-Canal Soroca at the headquarters of North RDA.
- The preliminary approvals for the route of the main sewer pipeline have been received from: Border Police (official letter no. 35/31/3-5425 on November 08, 2023), State Road Administration (official letter no. 09-04/7209 on November 09, 2023), National Archaeological Agency (on November 13, 2023) and on November 29, 2023 the Endorsement Form no. 04/2-09/3255 of the National Council of the Historical Monuments of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Moldova, was received. By this the route of the main sewer pipeline was approved.
- On November 24, 2023, the performance indicators, requested by the Consultant to verify the data in the feasibility study, were received from JSC Regia Apa-Canal Soroca.
- On November 30, 2023 PIU engineers made a field visit to analyze the data on wastewater produced by "Soroca Cheese Factory" JSC. The analysis concerned: volume, quality and wastewater discharge schedule. Also, during the visit, the geographical location of the existing preserved deep wells was identified, which are planned to be used for water supply of the SE.
- On December 18, 2023 a request no. 02-23/2773 was sent to Ministry of Environment to clarify the way and the right of use of the deep wells in the designated area for the wastewater treatment plant.



4) concerning the land transfer from Moldsilva (Forestry Department) to Soroca Municipality

- On July 19, 2023 the procedure to promote the GD was initiated based on the decisions approved during the meeting of the General Secretaries of the Ministry of the Environment. The summary table was developed. The realization period was 10 days. On July 31, 2023 it was submitted for repeated approval. The draft of the GD was approved with endorsements and the Information Note, and was sent to the State Chancellery. On the reporting date, the GD was approved and published.
- The establishment of the Commission for take-over was approved by order.
- The draft contract between Moldsilva and LPA Soroca for the transfer of land is in the process of coordination, then the procedure for changing the destination of the land will follow.

5) concerning Local Water and Sanitation Committee (LWSC)

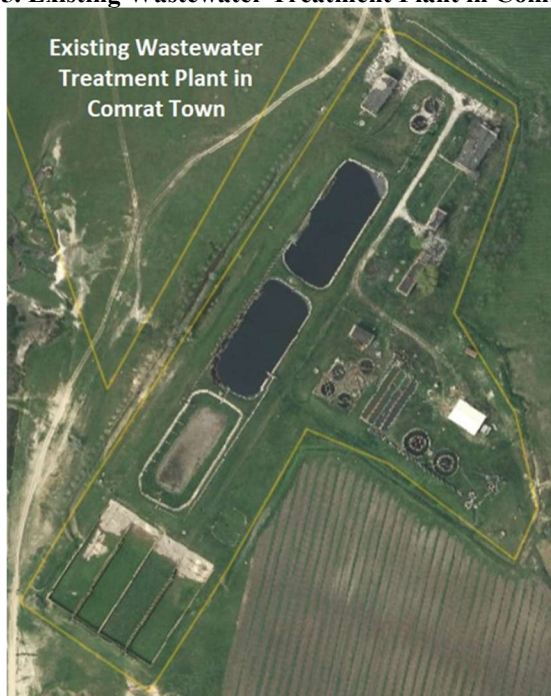
- The Local Water and Sanitation Committee (LWSC) created on May 24, 2023.
- The information of the members made on May 31, 2023.
- Due to the difficulties in meeting the members and functioning of LWSC Soroca, UIP submitted a request by which it is requested the Town Hall of Soroca to ensure the functioning of LWSC according to its regulations. As a result of this approach, LPA Soroca informed PIU that the composition of LWSC will be changed at the next meeting (August-September 2023), by changing decision no. 25/7 on May 24, 2023. On the meeting in Soroca with MIRD and LPA representatives, on September 08, 2023 the issues of LWSC were discussed. On September 20, 2023, the Local Council changed the composition of LWSC.



b.4. Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Comrat municipality.

The Comrat subproject represents construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Comrat town, where untreated wastewater directly pollutes the Ialpug River, Comrat lake, and downstream Congaz lake, affecting the Danube River downstream.

Figure 5. Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant in Comrat town



Source: geodata.gov.md

Existing wastewater collectors are in dire need of rehabilitation, and expansion of sewerage network is required. The old wastewater treatment plant is damaged and not in function. Frequent flooding exacerbates the environmental health impact.

Table 12. Wastewater infrastructure components - current situation in Comrat

Item	mu	Quantity
Wastewater treatment plant (5,700 m ³ /day)	unit	1
Volume of wastewater that enters the Wastewater treatment plant	m ³ /day	1,400
Existing wastewater networks	km	33.2
Wastewater networks under construction	km	8.5
Wastewater networks included in existing detailed design	km	15.1
Wastewater networks that needed detailed design	km	94.4
Connections	unit	3,749
Households that need to be connected	unit	5,494

Source: Municipal Company Su-Canal

The collected wastewater is pumped to the Central Wastewater Pumping Station and after that is pumped to the wastewater treatment plant which is not functioning and is a source of pollution for the Ialpug river, where it is discharged.



Table 13. Number of active water and wastewater connections in Comrat

	Population, persons	Population Water coverage ratio	Population Wastewater coverage ratio
Comrat	26 200	93%	35%

Source Gagauzia WWS Regional Sector Program 2018

In order to put in practice all the planned activities for the implementation of the subproject, since the beginning of the project, the following actions were carried out:

1) concerning the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the P.I. NORLD, RDA Gagauzia and Comrat LPA

- The Comrat Municipal Council Decision no. 1/1 (on the participation of the Comrat municipality in the MWSSP and the conditions to be fulfilled) was approved on January 09, 2023;
- The Cooperation Agreement was signed on March 16, 2023, by the P.I. NORLD, RDA Gagauzia and Comrat LPA.

2) concerning the preparation of the ToR for the preparation of the Feasibility Study and ESIA

- ToR were developed and were presented to the RDA Gagauzia and Comrat LPA at the meeting held on March 16, 2023;
- ToR, received the No objection by STEP on March 14, 2023.

3) concerning procurement procedures for contracting the consultancy company for the preparation of the Feasibility Study and ESIA

- The international tender for the Feasibility Study and ESIA was launched on March 21, 2023 in the *Public Procurement Bulletin* No. 23, NORLD website and UNDB Online. The deadline for submission was April 07, 2023. 15 expressions of interest were received.
- The composition of the Evaluation Committee was approved on 04 May 2023 by NORLD Order No. 15.
- Expressions of Interest received, ToR and other documents were submitted to the Evaluation Committee on May 17, 2023. Evaluation of received Expressions of Interest and signing of the Evaluation Report was made on June 28, 2023. Notification of evaluation results was sent on June 28, 2023 to consultants that submitted expressions of interest.
- Elaboration and sending the Request Proposals to 6 companies included in the short list, were made on July 21, 2023. The deadline for the submitting the Proposals - September 05, 2023.
- Request for clarifications, to the Request for Proposals, was received on July 27, 2023. At the same time, the request to extend the deadline for submitting proposals was received. The answers to the clarification requests were sent to the shortlisted consultants on August 03, 2023. The meeting of the Evaluation Committee regarding the examination of the consultant's request to extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals was held on August 11, 2023.



The Evaluation Committee considered the consultant's request unfounded, respectively on the same day the short-listed consultants were notified in writing on the evaluators' decision to refuse the request to extend the deadline for submission of Proposals. The request for clarifications to the Request for Proposals was received on August 22, 2023. Answers to the request for clarifications were sent to shortlisted consultants on August 25, 2023

- Public Opening of Technical Proposals took place on September 05, 2023. By the submission deadline there were 5 Proposals received. Minutes of Public Technical Proposal Opening were sent to Consultants that submitted Proposals, WB and Evaluation Committee members on September 05, 2023.
- First meeting of the Evaluation Committee took place on September 08, 2023, at which the evaluators received the *individual evaluation sheets* and they were explained the evaluation criteria, sub-criteria and how to fill in the individual worksheets.
- On September 27, 2023 requests for clarification to Technical Proposals were sent to 2 consultants. Answers received on September 29, 2023.
- During the evaluation process, following the individual evaluation, the members of the Evaluation Committee met in a joint meeting on October 17, 2023 and analyzed the submitted Technical Proposals based on ToR and the RFP responsiveness.
- PIU collected the individual evaluation sheets and based on those agreed within the meeting has drafted the Technical Evaluation Report and transmitted to the evaluator for final examination and signing.
- Following the signature of the Evaluation Report, notifications of the results of the evaluation of the technical proposals were sent to the consultants on November 08, 2023 and they were invited to the public opening of the financial offers.
- The public opening of the financial offers took place on November 22, 2023. The minutes of the opening of the financial proposals were sent to the Consultants (whose financial bids were opened), WB experts and Evaluation Committee members.
- The draft Combined Evaluation Report (technical and financial) was sent to the Evaluation Committee members on November 29, 2023. It should be noted that the financial evaluation involves the arithmetic calculation of the financial score and the final score according to the formulae included in the Call for Proposals.
- A meeting of the Evaluation Committee was held on December 04, 2023. Following the signature of the Combined Evaluation Report, the Invitation to Negotiate was sent to the Consultant with the highest technical and financial score.
- On December 14, 2023 the negotiation meeting with the Consultant was held online and continued with communication by email.
- On December 22, 2023 the contract negotiations were concluded with the signing of the *Minutes of Negotiation and the initiation of the contract*. On the same day, the Notice of Intent to Award Contract was sent out, according to which the 10 working day standstill period is required. After the completion of the standstill period (January 10, 2024) and



satisfactory processing of all requests for clarifications/complaints, the consultancy contract will be signed.

4) concerning Local Water and Sanitation Committee

- The Local Water and Sanitation Committee (LWSC) created on May 26, 2023, by LC Decision no.8/1 on 26.05.2023.
- The information activity was held on June 08, 2023.
- After the appointment of the LWSC the first meeting was conducted and were elected the President and the Secretary of the LWSC, a person responsible for gender issues and a person responsible for the GRM at local level



c) Pilot for on-site household sanitation

Selected rural or peri-urban villages, will benefit from the improvement of on-site household sanitation following a demand-led approach through the provision of technical assistance, the implementation of information campaigns, and the carrying out of civil works. The pilot will be co-financed through the ADA grant. This pilot will demonstrate the use of climate-resilient low-cost technologies for rural sanitation.

c.5. Improvements in on-site sanitation services for rural villages. The LPA(s) with rural villages or peri-urban areas below 2,000 persons will be selected based on criteria identified in the POM. These households will sign an “On-site Sanitation Household Agreement” with the PIU and LPA to consent to the conditions of the support scheme, for which appropriate processes and plans will be developed by the PIU. Participating households will be responsible for contributing to the small works contracts, covering the on-site treatment and disposal facility, in a differentiated way depending on socioeconomic status, with the LPA facilitating the collection of household contributions and depositing this in the Project’s Operating Account.

Figure 6. Installation scheme of a septic tank



Source: Draft of Market Study regarding on-site sanitation systems (septic tanks)

For the implementation of *On-site sanitation pilot project*, since the beginning of the project, the following actions were carried out:

1). concerning preparation of the Market Study

- The ToR for conducting a Market Study was developed and the “no objections” note from the WB expert was received by STEP on February 20, 2023;
- The contract for preparation of the Market Study was signed on April 03, 2023.
- On April 14, 2023 according to the contract, was the deadline for submission of deliverable 1 (Methodological Note). The deliverable has not been submitted. To this issue were written

emails dated: April 18, 2023, May 10, 2023 and May 11, 2023. On May 16, 2023, the consultant submitted:

1. a part of the Market Study Report (containing: structure, introduction, objectives, methodology, findings related to technical, legal and regulatory issues);
 2. an estimate of the costs of the installation works;
 3. commercial offers for septic tanks from 10 companies (manufacturers and distributors) from Moldova, Romania and China;
 4. 3 options for on-site septic tank construction.
- Another email requesting submission of deliverables was sent in June 07, 2023. On June 19, 2023 was sent an official letter no.02-23/875, from the National Office for Regional and Local Development to the expert, requiring submission of deliverables by June 27, 2023. On June 27, was received an email from the expert in which the expert promises to submit the deliverables until June 30, 2023. On June 30, 2023 no deliverables were received.
 - On July 17, 2023, an Act establishing the lack of fulfillment of the contractual provisions was drawn up, including a draft Contract Resolution Agreement. On July 24, 2023, the Consultant was notified on the decision to terminate the contract, including the Termination Agreement to be signed. On August 2, 2023, the Resolution Agreement was sent to the consultant for signing, by registered letter. On August 21, 2023, the notice informing that the letter is unclaimed was received.

2). concerning preparation of the Application Guide

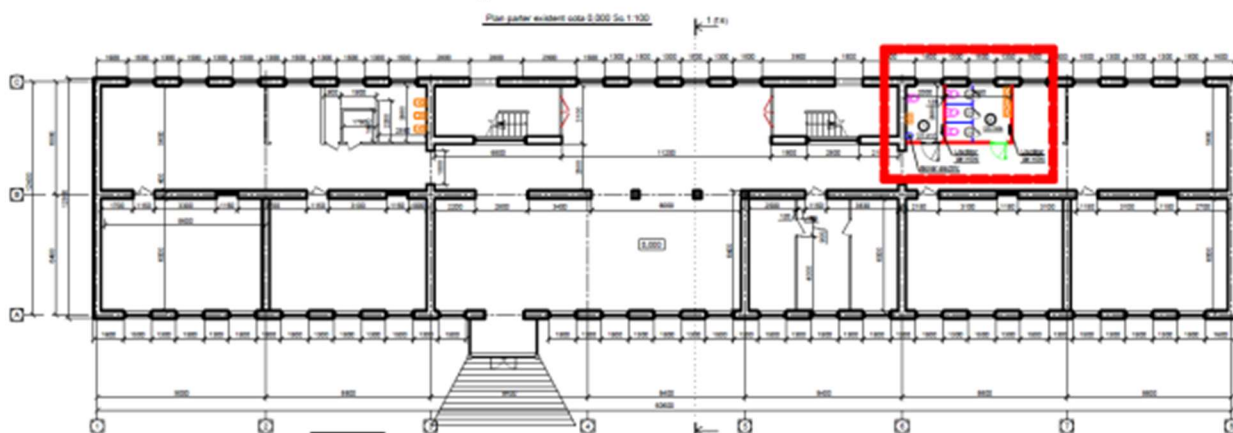
- The *Application Guide for the selection of the beneficiary community/communities of the pilot project on the construction of small-scale sanitation infrastructure in rural and peri-urban households* was prepared. The main chapters are: purpose and objectives of the selection; eligibility criteria; stages of the selection procedure; conditions for submitting the set of documents in the selection procedure and forms for the application process.



1.1.2 Subcomponent 1.2 Improving WASH facilities in selected Health Care facilities and Selected Educational Institutions

According to the Financing Agreement and the Project Appraisal Document, the Wash, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) component will be oriented for improvement of handwashing and hygiene facilities in social institutions, taking in consideration, where appropriate, low carbon emission technologies, and also the design of WASH facilities has to respond to girls'/women's needs (privacy, menstrual hygiene management (MHM) facilities) and be accessible for people with disabilities. In this regard, the implementation of this component depends on the list of institutions which was provided by the Ministry of Health (MH) and Ministry of Education and Research (MER). The planned indicator for the present component is to improve WASH facilities in 100 schools and 25 Health Care Facilities (HCF). MER presented the list with 33 schools and MH presented the list with 31 HCF. These above-mentioned lists were approved by the Ministries and presented for the screening phase.

Figure 7. Plan of a school floor



Source: Report no.1 on November 29, 2023 regarding the implementation of the Design of Sanitary Groups for improving WASH facilities in Schools

For the implementation of the WASH component, since the beginning of the project, the PIU has carried out the following actions:

1). concerning preparation stage

- 3 meetings were held with MER and 2 with MH in order to discuss the objective of the WASH component and the proposed options;
- The list of institutions, approved for evaluation by MH, was received on January 30, 2023 and the list of institutions, approved for evaluation by MER, was received on May 02, 2023
- The WASH Engineer was selected and the contract was signed on June 05, 2023. He is responsible for: (i) the screening of the concerning institutions, (ii) development of the ToR for the designing company (iii) development of the ToR for the construction works execution company (iv) monitoring of all the activities for the implementation of the designed works.;



- Evaluation of institutions by the WASH engineer. During the June 2023 the engineer carried out the screening phase for 64 institutions. 64 field visits were made and 64 completed Evaluation Forms were prepared. Based on this completed Evaluation Forms, a database was created for schools and medical institutions. The reports on the results of the screening phase were developed and presented to the MER and MH for approval decisions regarding the list of institution which will benefit from the project interventions.
- On July 13, 2023, a meeting was held with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, UNICEF, NORLID, during which the list of educational institutions, that will be included in the activities of component 1.2, was discussed. The institutions, where works will be carried out, to improve the water supply, sanitation and hygiene facilities, have been approved. The Order no. 915 on 25.07.2023, of the MER for approving the *List for the continuation of planned works in selected educational institutions for the repair/renovation/construction of WASH facilities within the project MWSSP*, was received.
- On August 11, 2023, a meeting was held with representatives of the Ministry of Health, in which the list of institutions for approval for WASH interventions was discussed (after the evaluation process). On August 22, 2023, the Order of the Ministry of Health was received. On August 23, 2023, a Request was sent to the Ministry of Health regarding the revision of the list approved by the Order (inclusion of the ATU region). On September 13, 2023, the updated Order no. 701 on 18.08.2023 from the Ministry of Health, was received

2). concerning signing of the Cooperation Agreements for WASH activities

- The draft (template) Cooperation Agreement for the WASH component was drafted and approved by MIDR and WB experts on September 08, 2023;
- The joint meetings, between the beneficiary institutions, LPA of level I and II in order to sign the Cooperation Agreement and receive the LPA's Decisions from all the rayons involved, were held in September 2023. The meetings were held in Riscani on September 05, 2023, in Soroaca on September 07, 2023, in Cahul on September 08, 2023, in Briceni on September 15, 2023, in Ocnita on September 15, 2023, in Basarabasca on September 19, 2023 and in TAU Găgăuzia on September 20, 2023;
- In October 2023 all 7 Cooperation Agreements for WASH activities were signed, as follows: Riscani - October 02, 2023, Soroaca - October 03, 2023, Cahul - October 04, 2023, Briceni - October 05, 2023, Ocnita - October 05, 2023, Basarabasca - October 12, 2023 and TAU Gagauzia - October 17, 2023.

3). concerning procurement procedure for the WASH intervention for design and BoQ development services in educational institutions

- The ToR was drafted and submitted on July 31, 2023 to the World Bank experts for coordination. On August 10, 2023, the e-mail of pre-approval, of the ToR from the WB



experts was received. ToR was sent for approval through STEP platform on August 23, 2023. *No Objection* note was received on the same day.

- The Request for Expression of Interest announcement was published on the *Moldova Suverana* website on August 25, 2023, as well as on the NORLD website. The submission deadline was September 15, 2023. By the deadline, 2 Expressions of Interest were received. Evaluation of Expressions of Interest meeting was held on 13.10.2023. The 1st ranked company was notified regarding the presentation of the technical offer, until 30.10.2023
- The Contract was signed on November 16, 2023

4). concerning design and BoQ development services in educational institutions

- The design company made site visits to carry out measurements and identify the best solutions for the layout of the sanitary facilities and connection to the water and sewerage networks. 4 Reports (on rayon level) on these actions were submitted to the PIU as follows: Report no.1 Soroca – December 04, 2023; Report no.2 Riscani – December 14, 2023; Report no. 3 TAU Găgăuzia – December 18, 2023 and Report no.4 Cahul – December 19, 2023. The reports were sent to the directors of the schools for approval and all institutions have signed the Act of Approval of the Report (17 acts of approval).
- The elaboration of the design is in progress for 6 institutions that have *urban planning certificates*. At the end of December 2023, urban planning certification was obtained for institutions in the localities of Zaicani; Varatic; Bulboci; Racovat; Andrusul de Sus and Doina.
- In order to obtain the *urban planning certificate*, 3 institutions out of the 15 need a technical expertise of the building, which can be carried out by the State Service for Verification and Expertise of the Projects. The process has been initiated, the expertise is in process.
- Updating of cost estimates is in progress for 2 institutions, that have the design documents (Vulcanesti and Darcauti).

5). concerning procurement procedure for the WASH intervention for design and BoQ development services in medical institutions

- The ToR was prepared, submitted and approved by MIRD on August 21, 2023, then submitted to World Bank experts for coordination and approval.
- On September 08, 2023, was received the preapproval email from the WB experts. The ToR were updated based on the list from the updated Order no. 701 on August 18, 2023.
- On September 21, 2023, the ToR were sent to the WB experts by STEP for examination and approval. Comments were received on the same day. Following the dispatch of answers to comments, the WB experts issued the *No objection* to the ToR on September 21, 2023.
- On October 16, 2023 was received an official letter no. 09/3684 on October 12, 2023 from Ministry of Health of RM regarding the *No objections* on the ToR
- The Request for Expression of Interest announcement was published on November 08, 2023 and 2 Expressions of Interest were received. The Expression of Interest evaluation meeting



took place on December 04, 2023. The Evaluation Report was finalized on December 05, 2023; The 1st ranked company was notified to submit the technical and financial offer by December 21, 2023. Following examination of the offers by the Evaluation Committee, the Consultant was invited to contract negotiations on January 04, 2024.

6). concerning WASH Committees

- For the educational institutions the WASH Committees are represented by the Board of Directors of the institutions.
- All 17 beneficiary educational institutions presented the composition of their WASH Committee.
- Out of a total of 14 beneficiary health institutions, 11 presented the composition of the WASH Committee.
- Information meetings of the WASH Committees were held in schools in the period December 05-06, 2023.



1.2. Component 2. Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels of WSS service delivery.

This component focusses on institutional capacities of national and subnational entities and WSS operators for management, planning, regulation and reform implementation, and performance improvement of service providers for green, resilience, and inclusive service delivery. At the national level, development of plans, policies, and regulatory documents will support climate adaptation through climate-resilient planning, and at the local level, performance improvements will deliver climate benefits through reduction of NRW and improvement of energy efficiency.

1.2.1 Subcomponent 2.1 Building national institutional capacity for WSSS

This subcomponent aims to strengthen critical functions of facilitating and implementing WSS sector reform, investment planning and monitoring, and sector modernization and build capacities to this end of the assigned lead unit/entity within MIRD's structure.

a) sector planning and financing for programmatic delivery

The elaboration and implementation of a National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (NWSSDP), including a national investment program and financing strategy and the capacity development of Directorate of Regional Development Policy under MIRD as lead entity. The NWSSDP outlines a staged process for regionalization, consolidation of funding mechanism and a prioritized investment program.

For the development of the *NWSSDP, Investment program and Financing Strategy*, since the beginning of the project, the PIU has carried out the following actions:

- ✓ Analysis of the GD no. 715/2022 for the approval of the Regulation on the framework content, methodological principles for the development and updating and approval of the National Territorial Development Plan;
- ✓ Analysis of the Instruction on the elaboration of the specialized section “Water supply and sanitation” of the Plan of National Territorial Development, approved by the Minister Order no. 128.2020;
- ✓ Analysis of the documents developed by the project team during the preparation within the ECAPDEV project.

By order of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development No. 28 on February 28 ,2023, the *Unit for the coordination* of the process of elaboration of the *National Territorial Development Plan - specialized section Water supply and sanitation* was designated.

(i) Action: Development of the Roadmap, necessary for the elaboration of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan

The Roadmap necessary for the elaboration of the *National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan* (WSSNDP), was developed. In the document were described all necessary actions



for the elaboration and approval of the WSSNDP. The Roadmap contain the name of the action; responsible institutions; description of the action and legal basis of the action.

(ii) Action: Preparing the ToR for contracting a consultancy company to draw up the WSSNDP

- The first draft of the terms of reference (ToR) has been prepared and submitted for review to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development on May 19, 2023. The main chapters of the Terms of Reference for the elaboration of the *National Territorial Development Plan for the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector in Moldova, the Long-Term Investment Program and the Financing Strategy* are: purpose and objectives; scope of the services; the service delivery stages and main tasks; deliverables, implementation plan and implementation arrangements.
- On June 12, 2023 the MIRD has sent the letter, no 09-3047 to all interested parties to announce that, by the Government's Decision, was constituted the *National Council for Territorial Planning*. In this context the Ministry organizes the first meeting of the Council on June 27, 2023. During this meeting the ToR was presented and discussed.
- On June 28, 2023 the MIRD has sent the letter, no 09-3325 to all interested parties for submission of proposals and objections on ToR until June 30, 2023.
- The Summary Table was developed according to the notice of the Central Public Authorities and changes were made to the ToR, which was sent for examination to MIRD on 02.08.2023.
- On August 08, 2023, the meeting with MIRD representatives regarding the ToR took place. The requirements for the consultant have been developed. On August 17, 2023, the last version of the updated ToR was sent to MIRD for approval of the final version. On August 22 and 23, 2023, MIRD comments on the ToR were received. On August 29, 2023, the last version of the updated ToR and the minutes for the approval of the final version were sent to the MIRD. The English version of the ToR has been submitted to MIRD for approval.
- On October 06, 2023, the Minutes of coordination of the final draft of the ToR for NWSSDP for the Romanian and English versions were signed. The final draft was sent to the World Bank for approval on October 09, 2023. Comments from the World Bank have been received. The ToR were modified according to the comments
- ToRs were sent to World Bank experts for pre-approval on October 09, 2023. Comments have been received from World Bank experts. The ToRs were modified according to the comments. On November 02, 2023, the ToRs were presented to the WB representatives in a meeting at the WB Office in Chisinau and feedback on them was received and subsequently included in the ToRs.
- On November 23, 2023, a request was sent to the National Cadastre Agency for recommendations on the requirements for geographic information systems for the ToR.
- The final ToRs were sent to the WB via STEP for review and approval on November 29, 2023 and on December 08, 2023 the "no objections" note was received via STEP.



- The publication of the REOI for the consulting services (NWSSDP) made on December 08, 2023. The deadline for submission was December 29, 2023. Fifteen expressions of interest were received by the deadline.

(iii) Action: Hire strategic planning consultant to provide support to the MIRD in the implementation of Sub-component 2.1

The consultant will provide support to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development in the implementation of Sub-component 2.1, in particular will support the development of the *National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan* and also will assist in planned sector reforms.

- ToR received the *No objection* by STEP on February 20, 2023
- The procurement procedures for hire the consultant were launched for 4 times (on February 10, 2023, March 17, 2023, April 21, 2023 and June 09, 2023).
- The contract was negotiated and signed on July 17, 2023

(iv) Capacity Development of the Lead WSS Unit.

- ToR for capacity building of the Lead Unit/ responsible for WSS was prepared and approved by STEP on August 23, 2023.
- Request for Expression of Interest was published several times (on August 25, 2023, September 15, 2023 and October 04, 2023). It was received 2 EOIs. Two interviews were held with each candidate on November 22, 2023.
- The contract was signed on December 18, 2023.

(v) Hire the institutional development consultant for the MIRD

- The ToR were pre-agreed with WB experts on November 28, 2023. The activity was included in the Procurement Plan through STEP on November 29, 2023.
- The ToR received the "no objections" note from WB experts via STEP on December 14, 2023.
- Publication of the announcement on NORLD and *Moldova Suverana* webpage was made on December 18, 2023.

b) support for selected operators

Technical assistance to selected LPAs and WSS operators to support the aggregation process into licensed regional operators (on legal, technical, financial) following the NWSSDP, will be initiated after the elaboration and approbation of the NWSSDP;

c) support in legislative and design reform

Legislative and design reform. The preparation of amendments and/or new legislation (for example, Law 303 and requirements for licensing), policies and normative documents (on regulatory method



and tariffs), and design and construction norms for sanitation (updating outdated norms) and related capacity building, as per the NWSSDP.

In order to ensure the initiation of the proposed reforms in the field of WSS according to the Project Appraisal Document, the PIU realized the following actions:

(i) Ammendment of the Law 303/2013 on water supply and sewerage public service:

- On April 01, 2023 was contracted the consultant for work together with MIRD representatives and the Parliamentary Working Group in order to develop the draft Law 303, to support in promoting and public consultation of the draft Law;
- The concept of the amendments of the Law 303 was developed and approved by MIRD and Parliament Working Group. The proposed concept aspects to amend Law 303 were drafted and submitted to MIRD on May 04, 2023;
- The first draft of the amended Law was prepared and submitted to MIRD on May 22, 2023. On May 31, 2023, the second draft of the amended Law was available.
- On June 30, 2023 the MIDR internal meeting was held to agree on the amendments to the Law.
- On July 13, 2023 the announcement regarding the initiation of the drafting of the law, was published on *particip.gov.md*.
- On September 19, 2023 the Announcement regarding the public consultation/ approval/ expertise of the draft Government Decision regarding the approval of the draft law to amend Law no. 303/2013 was published on *particip.gov.md*.
- Public Consultations were held on December 06, 2023; The Summary Table of Public Consultations was presented to the PIU on December 12, 2023
- The Synthesis Table related to the approval/expertise process as well as the draft GD amending Law 303 was presented to the PIU on December 12, 2023.
- On December 27, 2023, the process of second round of Law approval was initiated.

(ii) Development of new normative in construction. Preparation of the *Report on the assessment of the need to update/ adjust the normative in construction.*

- 3 meetings were held with the MIRD and Technical Committee.
- On March 14, 2023 was held a meeting with MIRD and NORLD regarding the elaboration of the Moldavan Construction Normative "External sewerage networks and installations". It was decided that it will be more appropriate to draw up a single Moldavan Construction Normative (MCN), without delimitation according to the number of populations. The only condition is that this will be discussed within the responsible Technical Committee. Also, during the meeting, the need to develop the MCN for external water supply networks was discussed, depending on the available budget.
- The ToR for the preparation of the *Report on the assessment of the need to update/ adjust the normative in construction*, was prepared and approved, by STEP on July 18, 2023.



- The Request for Expression of Interest were published on July 21, 2023. The deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest – August 04, 2023. 2 Expressions of Interest were received. The Evaluation Report was developed and signed by the Evaluation Committee. Based on the Evaluation Report, the candidate was invited to the clarification/ negotiation meeting, which took place on August 18, 2023.
- The contract was signed on September 05, 2023
- On September 15, 2023, an e-mail was sent to the involved MIRD representatives regarding the Action Plan on this activity.
- On October 19, 2023 was received Draft *Report on the assessment of the need to update/adjust the Moldovan Construction Normative*. This Report was sent to the representatives of the MIRD for examination and recommendations.
- On December 6, 2023 the Technical Committee for Technical Standardization in Construction met and the decision on the Report was taken
- On December 11, 2023 the final deliverables were received from the Consultant: 1. *Report on the assessment of the need to update/adjust the Moldovan Construction Normative G.03.02:2015 and G.03.01:2017* and presentation of the Report in ppt.
- On December 13, 2023 the final deliverables of the Consultant were approved

(iii) Preparation of the Implementation Plan of Directive 91/271/CEE

- The ToR were prepared and approved on July 18, 2023.
- The Request for Expressions of Interest including ToR were published on July 21, 2023. The deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest – August 04, 2023. 1 expression of interest was received. The Evaluation Committee signed the Evaluation Report on August 14, 2023
- The contract was signed on August 23, 2023.
- The *Inception Report* was received on September 20, 2023. On September 28, 2023, the *Inception Report* was sent to the MIRD and Ministry of the Environment representatives. On October 16, 2023 was held a meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of Environment. The *Inception Report* was approved on October 16, 2023.
- The first draft of the *Implementation Plan for Directive 91/271/EEC* was received on November 12, 2023.
- On November 20, 2023 a meeting was held to discuss the draft Plan. The draft was sent to MIRD and Ministry of Environment for comments and proposals. Comments from Ministry of Environment were sent to the consultant.
- On December 12, 2023 the Consultant sent the revised version of the Implementation Plan.
- On December 18, 2023 the draft of the *Implementation Plan for Directive 91/271/EEC* and GD were sent to the MIRD for comments and proposals.

(iv) Preparation of the Government Decision regarding approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems



- The ToR, for the elaboration of the *Government Decision regarding approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems*, was developed and the “No objections note” from the WB experts was received by STEP on February 20, 2023;
- The Request for Expressions of Interest were published several times (on February 10, 2023; on April 07, 2023; May 05, 2023 and on June 30, 2023). The last deadline was July 10, 2023. No. of expressions of interest received - 1. Evaluation report signed on 18 July 2023. Request for financial proposal sent to the consultant on July 21, 2023. Financial proposal submitted on August 07, 2023.
- The contract was signed on 17 August 2023.
- In order to involve the stakeholders in *Develop of the Government Decision*, on May 23, 2023 a meeting was held with Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Ministry of Health, National Public Health Agency, Ministry of Environment on sanitation solutions for small localities (especially septic tanks), where sewerage systems are not feasible. The participants at the meeting discussed their opinions on the advantages and disadvantages regarding septic tanks. The advantages included: low cost and a feasible solution for small localities. Among the disadvantages and risks related to septic tanks were specified: - Geological study needed; - If the soil is impermeable and the amount of wastewater is high there is a risk of landslides; - Wastewater is not treated for pathogenic microorganisms; - There is a risk of insufficient maintenance of the septic tank by householders and - For legal exploitation of septic tanks, a nearby river is needed for water discharge. In conclusion, it was decided to wait for the finalization of the Market Study on septic tanks and then, after the presentation of the results of the Market Study, to hold another meeting on this topic.
- On September 04, 2023, the *Inception Report* was received. UIP representatives provided comments on it. On September 12, 2023, the *Inception Report* was redacted by the Consultant based on the received comments.
- On September 18, 2023, a document: *The main theses of the normative act regarding the approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems* was received.
- On December 18, 2023 the Consultant submitted: the draft GD and the *Informative Note* to the draft GD. Draft of GD was submitted to MIRD for comments on December 18, 2023. The coordination activities, with the Environment Agency and Apele Moldovei, are planned for the next period.

d) monitoring and benchmarking of operators

The development and roll-out of a national Management Information System (MIS) for WSS operators; definition of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the MIS and start benchmarking;



(i) Concerning the signing of the Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement

- Since the beginning of the project, 2 meetings (on May 15, 2023 and June 05, 2023) were organized with National Agency for Energy Regulation (NAER), were was discussed the plan in order to develop the Management Information System, and to introduce the definition of the KPIs for benchmarking. Thus, during the discussions, was established NAER already has approved a *Decision no. 356/2019 regarding the approval of the Framework Regulation regarding the performance indicators of the public water supply and sewerage service.*
- On June 26, 2023 NORLD by letter No 02-23/885 notified NAER that the necessary adjustments had been made in the draft Cooperation Agreement. The draft of the Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement was agreed on June 28, 2023;
- Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement was signed on October 06, 2023.

(ii) Development and implementation of the Management Informational System

- The ToR, for contracting a consultant to prepare the draft GD on the MIS concept, was prepared, coordinated with the MIRD and on October 19, 2023 was sent to ANRE for coordination.
- ToR were pre-agreed with WB experts on November 28, 2023 and the activity was included in the Procurement Plan through STEP on November 29, 2023.
- ToR received the *no objections* note from WB experts, by STEP on December 14, 2023
- The hiring advertisement published on December 18, 2023

e) human capital development

Human capital development. The implementation of a professional development program, in collaboration with AMAC and TUM and WSS operators, to increase qualifications and advance careers of existing staff and attract people, specifically women, for employment in the sector.

- For the implementation of this activity, 2 working meetings were held with the representatives of the Technical University of Moldova (TUM) and AMAC, in which the objectives of the project were discussed.
- Since the beginning of the project, with the support of AMAC, the lists of people with higher education, employee of the water supply and sewerage operators were identified, that are to benefit from qualification studies (18 months) and requalification studies (12 months).
- At the proposal of the parties, taking into account that neither the Financing Agreement nor the Project Appraisal Document establish the mechanisms for the collaboration of the parties involved (P.I. NORLD, TUM and AMAC), a Cooperation Agreement was drawn up, in which the responsibilities of each party are described. On April 08, 2023 the „No objection” note on the Cooperation Agreement was received from the WB experts.
- The Cooperation Agreement was signed on Apryl 20, 2023, by the P.I. NORLD, TUM and AMAC



- On August 04, 2023, the meeting took place with the participation of the representatives of the TUM, MER regarding the unblocking of the situation related to the qualification courses within the WW Continuing Education Institute
- The request to include the new activity in Procurement Plan was sent to the Bank team on October 18, 2023. The approval was received on October 23, 2023.
- The list of 50 persons, with higher education among WW operators, including 24 persons for qualification studies and 26 persons for requalification studies, was approved.
- On November 01, 2023, the launch event was held. During November and December 2023 the courses were held according to the established Program.
- The contract with TUM was signed on November 04, 2023.



1.2.2 Subcomponent 2.2: Improving performance of WSS service providers

Improving performance of WSS service providers will finance works, goods, consulting services, non-consulting services, training to support the implementation of a prioritized rolling multi-year Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) of selected WSS operators involved under Subcomponent 1.1. These include five WSS operators: JSC "Apa-Canal Cahul", JSC "Regia Apa-Canal Soroca", Municipal Enterprise "Su-Canal" Comrat, Municipal Enterprise Apa-Canal Vulcanesti, and a proposed establishment of a new JSC, founded by the LPAs of Costesti town and other LPAs. WSS operators will carry out annual assessments on PIP implementation and KPIs, including publication of results and feedback rounds with customers.

Investments and technical assistance activities identified in the PIPs are based on utility diagnostics and include but are not limited to the following: improving technical and commercial operations, improving financial management, human resource management and organization & strategy aspects, including improving asset management systems and inventories, energy efficiency, NRW reduction programs, water metering practices and equipment to improve climate resilience, water safety and business continuity, and enhancing responsiveness to customers.

ToR for the consulting services refers to elaboration of the **Performance Improvement Plan** and **Baseline Assessment** of the operators participating in the project:

1. the multi-year **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** exclusively for the **Municipal Enterprise from Comrat and Municipal Enterprise from Vulcanesti**.
2. Baseline assessment for the five WSS operators: JSC "Apa-Canal Cahul", JSC "Regia Apa-Canal Soroca", Municipal Enterprise "Su-Canal" Comrat, Municipal Enterprise Apa-Canal Vulcanesti and a proposed establishment of a new JSC, founded by the LPAs of Costesti town and other LPAs
 - The ToR, for the elaboration of the Performance Improvement Plan and the Baseline Assessment of the performance of the operators participating in the project, was prepared and approved by STEP on August 23, 2023.
 - The Request for Expressions of Interest was published twice (August 25, 2023 and September 15, 2023). By the submission deadline 2 EOIs were received. The evaluation process of received EOIs has been completed. The re-launch of the REoI was made on November 08, 2023. The deadline was 21 November 2023. The evaluation process is in progress.



2. KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE REPORTING PERIOD

2.1. Component 1. Increasing access to safely management water supply and sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns

2.1.1. Subcomponent 1.1 Supporting the expansion of the access and quality of WSS

a) Water supply investments

a.1. Expansion and improvement water supply services in Cahul and Vulcanesti rayons.

During the reporting period, the following action were carried out:

1) concerning the adjustment of the detailed engineering design and bills of quantities

- The contract was signed on July 14, 2023.
- The Kick-off meeting was organized on July 25, 2023. During the meeting, representatives of: LPAs from Cahul rayon, the Rayon Council, MIRD, NORLD and the Consultant were present.
- The *Inception Report* was received on August 04, 2023. On August 15, 2023, the meeting took place with the representatives of the design company, LPAs, South RDA and the Rayon Council regarding the process of updating urban planning certificates and approvals to be connected as well as other aspects regarding the updating of technical documentation. PIU comments on the *Inception Report* were sent on August 18, 2023. The answers to the comments were received on August 22, 2023. As a result of receiving the Consultant's comments, it was decided to organize a clarification meeting, with participation of NORLD representatives. On August 24, 2023, the meeting with the representatives of the design company regarding the Centralizing Table of divergences to the *Inception Report* took place. The minutes of the meeting were drafted and sent to the Consultant on August 29, 2023. On September 05, 2023, the Consultant submitted the *Inception Report*, revised according to what was agreed during the meeting. PIU submitted their comments to the revised *Inception Report* on September 10, 2023. On September 13, 2023, the PIU received the email with *no comments*, on the *Inception Report*, from the WB experts. On September 14, 2023, the NORLD notification regarding the approval of the *Inception Report* was sent to the Consultant.
- On October 17, 2023 the Consultant submitted for review and comments the *Resettlement Screening Report*. On November 14, 2023 comments on the report were sent to the Consultant. On December 26, 2023 the *Resettlement Screening Report* received the “no objection note” from the WB TTL. On December 28, 2023, the NORLD notification (letter no. 02-23/2991 dated December 28, 2023) regarding the approval of the *Resettlement Screening Report* was sent to the Consultant.



- On November 6, 2023 the official letter no.337, of the National Agency for Archaeology, with the positive approval of the route of the main water pipeline, was received. This was the response to the NORLD's letter no. 02-23/2038 on November 01, 2023.
- The Consultant requested additional works (connection to the main water pipeline of 2 designed reservoirs in the Vulcanesti town). On November 07, 2023 was received the MIRD's letter no. 19-5663 regarding the acceptance of the proposal to include additional works in ToR, specified in the NORLD's letter no. 02-23/2043 on November 03, 2023.
- Version 1 of the detailed engineering design (*Main water pipeline Cahul-Lebedenco-Pelinei- Gavanoasa-Vulcanesti (villages) – Alexandru Ioan Cuza and water supply distribution networks of the villages Lebedenco, Hutulu, Ursoaia, Pelinei, Satuc, Gavanoasa, Vladimirovca, Nicolaevca and connection of the Vulcănești railway Station and "Valcanes" Free Economic Zone*) was received on November 14, 2023. The version 1 of the reviewed and updated detailed engineering design was approved by the concerned LPAs as follows: (Rayon Council by the letter no 648 dated December 28, 2023; LPA Alexanderfeld by the letter no. 136 dated December 27, 2023; LPA Alexandru Ioan Cuza by the letter dated December, 2023; LPA Gavanoasa by the letter dated December 28, 2023 and LPA Pelinei by the letter no. 458 dated December 28, 2023 and JSC Apa-Canal Cahul by the letter dated December 29, 2023.

2) concerning the preparation of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment & Environmental and Social Management Plan

- The contract was signed on July 14, 2023
- The kick-off meeting was organized on July 25, 2023. During the meeting, representatives of: LPA from Cahul rayon, the Rayon Council, MIRD, NORLD and the Consultant were present.
- On August 10, 2023, 2 meetings were held on Public Consultations regarding the implementation of the Social and Environmental Impact Assessment (in Vulcanesti town and in the Cahul rayon)
- The *Inception Report* was received on August 14, 2023. On August 24, the *Inception Report*, with the consultant's answers to the PIU's comments, was received. On September 05, 2023 the *Inception Report* was sent to WB experts for comments and suggestions. On September 25, 2023, the environmental and social experts from the WB informed the PIU that there are no suggestions and comments regarding the *Inception Report*. On September 26, 2023, the NORLD Notification regarding the approval of the *Inception Report* was sent to the Consultant.
- The first draft of the *ESIA / ESMP Report* was received from the Consultant on November 03, 2023. On 15 November 15, 2023 the draft *ESIA/ ESMP Report* was sent to the WB experts



for comments and suggestions; On December 06, 2023 the comments from WB experts were received and on December 08, 2023 the draft ESIA / ESMP was sent to the Consultant for the comments approach. On December 28, 2023 the Consultant submitted the ESIA/ESMP with integrated comments.

3) concerning the preparation of Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan

- Preparation of the Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP) was initiated in November.
- A meeting with LPAs (regarding people affected by the project: temporary use of private land during the construction of the pipeline) was held on December 15, 2023 to explain the steps to be taken for elaboration of the ARAP (Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan).
- On December 19, 2023, official letters were sent to the LPAs requesting information on the owners of the affected land. Also at that time, a reminder was sent to the relevant town halls with a list of the public land subject to change of use from "agricultural land" to "land for construction of the WS infrastructure assets".

During the next period are planned the following actions:

- Final version reception and adjusted DED and BoQ verification at the State Service for Verification and Expertisation of Designs and Constructions;
- Developing the ToR for the technical supervision company;
- Developing the Request for Bids for the construction company, according to the adjusted DED and BoQ
- Publication of the SPN for the construction works;
- Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator;



a.2. Expansion and improvement water supply services in the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon.

During the reporting period, the following action were carried out:

1) concerning the signing of the Cooperation Agreement

- As a result of the actions taken, the remaining LPA's Council Decisions (regarding participation in the MWSSP and the conditions to be fulfilled, according to the PIU/NORLD letter no. 02-23/765 from 08.06.2023) were approved by the Local Councils as follows:
 - LPA Duruitoarea Noua (Decision no. 04/01 on July 05,2023);
 - LPA Costesti (Decision no. 05/04 on July 14, 2023);
- The decisions of the LPAs from Riscani were submitted to the PIU on July 24, 2023.
- The Cooperation Agreement was signed on October 03, 2023.

2) concerning the updating of the detailed engineering design and bills of quantities

- For the purpose of the review of actual situation on October 09, 2023, the PIU engineers and environmental specialist made a field visit to Costesti. As a result, the detailed description of the water supply systems in the LPA Costesti was made.
- For the purpose of the review of the *ToR for updating of the design*, on October 16, 2023, the PIU engineers made a field visit to Costesti, Pascauti, Damascani and Duruitoarea Noua. As a result of the field visit, the NORLD's official letter no 02-23/2034 on November 01, 2023 with the proposals for adjustment of the ToR was prepared and sent to the MIRD for approval; The ToR were approved by MIRD representatives by the official letter no. 19-5731 on November 09, 2023 and pre-approved by WB experts on November 17, 2023.
- On December 13, 2023 a meeting was held with representatives of the LPAs of Riscani Rayon on the presentation of the ToR for the updating of the design and ESIA.
- Until the December 31, 2023, the ToR were approved by the concerned LPAs.

3) concerning the preparation of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment & Environmental and Social Management Plan

- The ToR for developing the ESIA was elaborated and submitted to the WB experts for review and pre-approving on July 27, 2023. The ToR was pre-approved by the WB experts on August 01, 2023
- ToR were sent through STEP for review on November 17, 2023. The "no objection" note was received by STEP on December 07, 2023;

During the next period are planned the following actions:

- Direct contracting the Designing Company for the adjustment of the DED and BoQ;
- Carrying out procurement and contracting procedures of the company that will prepare the ESIA & ESMP for the sub-project;



- Review of the adjusted DED and BoQ and verification at the State Service for Verification and Expertisation of Designs and Constructions;
- Support for the creation and licensing of the new regional operator in the field of WSS in Riscani District;
- Developing the Request for Bids for the construction company, according to the adjusted DED and BoQ;
- Developing the ToR for the technical supervision company;
- Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator;



b) Wastewater investments

b.3. Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Soroca.

During the reporting period, the following action were carried out:

1) concerning the preparation of the *Topographical survey, geological (geotechnical) study and expertise of the wastewater pumping stations' buildings*

- The Evaluation of Expressions of Interest was completed on July 5, 2023. The notification of the evaluation results was sent on July 10, 2023 to the consultants who submitted Expressions of Interest in the tender. The Request for Proposals was sent to the consultant who was ranked the 1st according to the decision of the Evaluation Committee on July 05, 2023. The deadline for the presentation of the technical and financial proposal was July 17, 2023. Extension of the Proposal submission deadline was made until July 19, 2023 (according to the request received from the consultant). The technical and financial proposal was received on July 19, 2023. The Proposal and the draft Evaluation Report were sent to the Evaluation Committee on July 21, 2023 and repeatedly sent on August 1, 2023. The Evaluation Committee meeting, including the signing of the Proposal Evaluation Report, was held on August 11, 2023. (decision to reject the proposal as non-responsive to RFP requirements). Preparation and sending of the Request for Proposals to the consultant, who was ranked the 2nd according to the decision of the Evaluation Committee, on July 05, 2023. The deadline for submission the Technical and Financial Proposal - August 30, 2023. On August 30, 2023 the Technical and Financial Proposal was received. During the examination of the Proposal, a request for clarification was sent to the Consultant on September 04, 2023. The received clarifications were considered acceptable, and the entire set of documents was forwarded to the Evaluation Committee for review. Invitation to negotiations sent to the Consultant on September 06, 2023. A pre-negotiation meeting was organized by the members of the Evaluation Committee to clarify all aspects before the Negotiations. The negotiation of the contract was held on September 08, 2023 at NORLD premises. By September 11, 2023, the Consultant submitted the revised Financial Proposal, as agreed during negotiations. Also, since the Consultant was awarded 2 contracts that are interconnected, the Consultant was requested to submit a revised work schedule, which was submitted on September 14, 2023. On the same date the draft Contract including the Minutes of Contract negotiations were submitted to the Consultant for review.
- The contract was signed on September 15, 2023.
- On October 05, 2023, in line with contract requirements, the Consultant submitted the *Note regarding the start of the services*.
- On October 10, 2023 the PIU engineers and the Consultant made a field visit to Soroca to inspect the WW infrastructure objects. Also were held 2 meetings, at Operator premises with the director and at Town Hall premises with the town chief architect.



2) concerning the preparation of the *Employer's Requirements* within the Design and Build bidding package.

- The deadline for submission of offers was July 07, 2023. By the deadline, 2 Expressions of Interest were received.
- The evaluation of expressions of interest was completed on July 21, 2023. The notification regarding the evaluation results was sent on July 26, 2023 to the consultants who submitted Expressions of Interest within the tender. The Request for Proposals was sent to the consultant, who was ranked the 1st according to the Evaluation Report, on July 26, 2023. The deadline for submitting the Technical and Financial Proposal - August 11, 2023. The technical and financial proposal was received on August 11, 2023. During on the examination of the Proposal by the Evaluation Committee, a request for clarification was sent to the Consultant on 21 August 2023. The received clarifications were considered acceptable, and the entire set of documents was forwarded to the Evaluation Committee for review. A pre-negotiation meeting was organized by the members of the Evaluation Committee to clarify all aspects before inviting the Consultant to negotiations. Invitation to negotiations sent to the Consultant on September 06, 2023. The negotiation of the contract was held on September 08, 2023 at NORLD premises. By September 11, the Consultant submitted the revised Financial Proposal, as agreed during negotiations. Also, the Consultant was requested to submit a revised work schedule, which was submitted on September 14, 2023. On the same date the draft Contract including the Minutes of Contract negotiations were submitted to the Consultant for review, as well as to the members of the Evaluating Committee.
- Following the signing of the Minutes of Contract negotiations, the service contract was signed on September 15, 2023.
- On October 09, 2023 the PIU engineers and the Consultant made a field visit to Balti at the headquarters of North RDA to present and approve the design criteria, the general layout and technological scheme of the WWTP. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Soroca Town Hall, JSC Regia Apa-Canal Soroca, North RDA and MIRD.
- On October 10, 2023 the PIU engineers and the Consultant made a field visit to Soroca to inspect the WW infrastructure objects. Also were held 2 meetings, at Operator premises with the director and at Town Hall premises with the architect.
- *Inception Report* was submitted for review and comments on October 12, 2023. The PIU's comments on the *Inception Report* were provided to the Consultant on October 24, 2023, and on October 25, 2023 the PIU received the Consultant's response to the comments. On November 02, 2023 the Inception Report was approved.
- On October 13, 2023 a meeting with the consultant was organized at PIU premises to discuss the current situation, problems identified following the site visit.
- WWTP design criteria, general layout and piping and instrumentation diagram were submitted for review and comments on October 25, 2023.



- On November 9, 2023, the design criteria were discussed and approved by MIRD, Soroca Town Hall and JSC Apa-Canal Soroca at the headquarters of North RDA.
- The preliminary approvals for the route of the main sewer pipeline have been received from: Border Police (official letter no. 35/31/3-5425 on November 08, 2023), State Road Administration (official letter no. 09-04/7209 on November 09, 2023), National Archaeological Agency (on November 13, 2023) and on November 29, 2023 the Endorsement Form no. 04/2-09/3255 of the National Council of the Historical Monuments of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Moldova, was received. By this the route of the main sewer pipeline was approved.
- On November 24, 2023, the performance indicators, requested by the Consultant to verify the data in the feasibility study, were received from JSC Apa-Canal Soroca.
- On November 30, 2023 PIU engineers made a field visit to analyze the data on wastewater produced by "Soroca Cheese Factory" JSC. The analysis concerned: volume, quality and wastewater discharge schedule. Also, during the visit, the geographical location of the existing preserved deep wells was identified, which are planned to be used for water supply of the SE.
- On December 18, 2023 a request no. 02-23/2773 was sent to Ministry of Environment to clarify the way and the right of use of the deep wells in the designated area for the wastewater treatment plant.

3) concerning the land transfer from Moldsilva (Forestry Department) to Soroca Municipality

- On July 19, 2023 the procedure to promote the GD was initiated based on the decisions approved during the meeting of the General Secretaries of the Ministry of the Environment. The summary table was developed. The realization period was 10 days. On July 31, 2023 it was submitted for repeated approval. The draft of the GD was approved with endorsements and the Information Note, and was sent to the State Chancellery. On the reporting date, the GD was approved and published.
- The establishment of the Commission for take-over was approved by order.
- The draft contract between Moldsilva and LPA Soroca for the transfer of land is in the process of coordination, then the procedure for changing the destination of the land will follow.

4) concerning Local Water and Sanitation Committee (LWSC)

- Due to the difficulties in meeting the members and functioning of LWSC Soroca, UIP submitted a request by which it requested the Town Hall of Soroca to ensure the functioning of LWSC according to its regulations. As a result of this approach, LPA Soroca informed PIU that the composition of LWSC will be changed at the next meeting (August-September 2023), by changing decision no. 25/7 on May 24, 2023. On the meeting in Soroca with MIRD



and LPA representatives, on September 08, 2023 the issues of LWSC were discussed. On September 20, 2023, the Local Council changed the composition of LWSC.

During the next period are planned the following actions:

- Reception of the expertise of the existing buildings of the Wastewater Pumping Stations;
- Reception of the topographical and geological surveys for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Wastewater Pumping Stations and Sewer Pressure Main;
- Development of the technical specifications, preliminary concept design and cost estimates (Request for Bids) based on the approved procurement procedures (Design, Supply and Install type of contract);
- Publication of the Specific Procurement Notice and carrying out procurement and contracting procedures of the design and construction company;
- Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator.



b.4. Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Comrat municipality.

In order to put in practice all planned activities for the implementation of the subproject, during the reporting period, the following actions were carried out:

1) concerning procurement procedures for contracting the consultancy company for the preparation of the Feasibility Study and ESIA

- Elaboration and sending the Request Proposals to 6 companies included in the short list, were made on July 21, 2023. The deadline for the submitting the Proposals - September 05, 2023.
- Request for clarifications, to the Request for Proposals, was received on July 27, 2023. At the same time, the request to extend the deadline for submitting proposals was received. The answers to the clarification requests were sent to the shortlisted consultants on August 03, 2023. The meeting of the Evaluation Committee regarding the examination of the consultant's request to extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals was held on August 11, 2023. The Evaluation Committee considered the consultant's request unfounded, respectively on the same day the short-listed consultants were notified in writing on the evaluators' decision to refuse the request to extend the deadline for submission of Proposals. The request for clarifications to the Request for Proposals was received on August 22, 2023. Answers to the request for clarifications were sent to shortlisted consultants on August 25, 2023
- Public Opening of Technical Proposals took place on September 05, 2023. By the submission deadline there were 5 Proposals received. Minutes of Public Technical Proposal Opening were sent to Consultants that submitted Proposals, WB and Evaluation Committee members on September 05, 2023.
- First meeting of the Evaluation Committee took place on September 08, 2023, at which the evaluators received the *individual evaluation sheets* and they were explained the evaluation criteria, sub-criteria and how to fill in the individual worksheets.
- On September 27, 2023 requests for clarification to Technical Proposals were sent to 2 consultants. Answers received on September 29, 2023.
- During the evaluation process, following the individual evaluation, the members of the Evaluation Committee met in a joint meeting on October 17, 2023 and analyzed the submitted Technical Proposals based on ToR and the RFP responsiveness.
- PIU collected the individual evaluation sheets and based on those agreed within the meeting has drafted the Technical Evaluation Report and transmitted to the evaluator for final examination and signing.
- Following the signature of the Evaluation Report, notifications of the results of the evaluation of the technical proposals were sent to the consultants on November 08, 2023 and they were invited to the public opening of the financial offers.
- The public opening of the financial offers took place on November 22, 2023. The minutes of the opening of the financial proposals were sent to the Consultants (whose financial bids were opened), WB experts and Evaluation Committee members.



- The draft Combined Evaluation Report (technical and financial) was sent to the Evaluation Committee members on November 29, 2023. It should be noted that the financial evaluation involves the arithmetic calculation of the financial score and the final score according to the formulae included in the Call for Proposals.
- A meeting of the Evaluation Committee was held on December 04, 2023. Following the signature of the Combined Evaluation Report, the Invitation to Negotiate was sent to the Consultant with the highest technical and financial score.
- On December 14, 2023 the negotiation meeting with the Consultant was held online and continued with communication by email.
- On December 22, 2023 the contract negotiations were concluded with the signing of the *Minutes of Negotiation and the initiation of the contract*. On the same day, the Notice of Intent to Award Contract was sent out, according to which the 10-working day standstill period is required. After the completion of the standstill period (January 10, 2024) and satisfactory processing of all requests for clarifications/complaints, the consultancy contract will be signed.

During the next period are planned the following actions:

- Signing the contract with the consulting company for the preparation of the Feasibility Study and ESIA;
- Preparation of the Feasibility Study and ESIA;
- Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator.



c) Pilot for on-site household sanitation

c.5. Improvements in on-site sanitation services for rural villages.

For the implementation of *On-site sanitation pilot project*, during the reported period the following actions were performed:

1). concerning preparation of the Market Study

- On July 17, 2023, an Act establishing the lack of fulfillment of the contractual provisions was drawn up, including a draft Contract Resolution Agreement. On July 24, 2023, the Consultant was notified on the decision to terminate the contract, including the Termination Agreement to be signed. On August 2, 2023, the Resolution Agreement was sent to the consultant for signing, by registered letter. On August 21, 2023, the notice informing that the letter is unclaimed was received.

Taking into account the opinion of stakeholders and the legislative context (regarding septic tanks) of the Republic of Moldova, it is necessary to take the decision regarding the continuation of the implementation of sub-component Improvements in on-site sanitation services for rural villages.



2.1.2. Subcomponent 1.2 Improving WASH facilities in selected Health Care facilities and Selected Educational Institutions

For the implementation of the WASH component, during the reporting period, the PIU has carried out the following actions:

1). concerning preparation stage

- On July 13, 2023, a meeting was held with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, UNICEF, NORLD, during which the list of educational institutions that will be included in the activities of component 1.2 was discussed. The institutions, where works will be carried out, to improve the water supply, sanitation and hygiene facilities, have been approved. The Order no. 915 on 25.07.2023, of the MER for approving the *List for the continuation of planned works in selected educational institutions for the repair/renovation/construction of WASH facilities within the project MWSSP*, was received.
- On August 11, 2023, a meeting was held with representatives of the Ministry of Health, in which the list of institutions for approval for WASH interventions was discussed (after the evaluation process). On August 22, 2023, the Order of the Ministry of Health was received. On August 23, 2023, a Request was sent to the Ministry of Health regarding the revision of the list approved by the Order (inclusion of the ATU region). On September 13, 2023, the updated Order no. 701 on 18.08.2023 from the Ministry of Health, was received

2). concerning signing of the Cooperation Agreements for WASH activities

- The draft (template) Cooperation Agreement for the WASH component was drafted and approved by MIDR and WB experts on September 08, 2023;
- The joint meetings, between the beneficiary institutions, LPA of level I and II in order to sign the Cooperation Agreement and receive the LPA's Decisions from all the rayons involved, were held in September 2023. The meeting was held in Riscani on September 05, 2023, in Soroaca on September 07, 2023, in Cahul on September 08, 2023, in Briceni on September 15, 2023, in Ocnita on September 15, 2023, in Basarabasca on September 19, 2023 and in TAU Găgăuzia on September 20, 2023;
- In October 2023 all 7 Cooperation Agreements for WASH activities were signed, as follows: Riscani - October 02, 2023, Soroaca - October 03, 2023, Cahul - October 04, 2023, Briceni - October 05, 2023, Ocnita - October 05, 2023, Basarabasca - October 12, 2023 and TAU Gagauzia - October 17, 2023.



3). concerning procurement procedure for the WASH intervention for design and BoQ development services in educational institutions

- The ToR was drafted and submitted on July 31, 2023 to the World Bank experts for coordination. On August 10, 2023, the e-mail of pre-approval, of the ToR from the WB experts was received. ToR was sent for approval through STEP platform on August 23, 2023. No Objection was received on the same day.
- The Request for Expression of Interest announcement was published on the *Moldova Suverana* website on August 25, 2023, as well as on the NORLD website. The submission deadline was September 15, 2023. By the deadline, 2 Expressions of Interest were received. Evaluation of Expressions of Interest meeting was held on 13.10.2023. The 1st ranked company was notified regarding the presentation of the technical offer, until 30.10.2023
- The Contract was signed on November 16, 2023

4). concerning design and BoQ development services in educational institutions

- The design company made site visits to carry out measurements and identify the best solutions for the layout of the sanitary facilities and connection to the water and sewerage networks. 4 Reports (on rayon level) on these actions were submitted to the PIU as follows: Report no.1 Soroca – December 04, 2023; Report no.2 Riscani – December 14, 2023; Report no. 3 TAU Găgăuzia – December 18, 2023 and Report no.4 Cahul – December 19, 2023. The reports were sent to the directors of the schools for approval and all institutions have signed the Act of Approval of the Report (17 acts of approval)
- The elaboration of the design is in progress for 6 institutions that have *urban planning certificates*. At the end of December 2023, urban planning certification was obtained for institutions in the localities of Zaicani; Varatic; Bulboci; Racovat; Andrușul de Sus and Doina.
- In order to obtain the *urban planning certificate*, 3 institutions out of the 15 need a technical expertise of the building, which can be carried out by the State Service for Verification and Expertise of the Projects. The process has been initiated; the expertise is in process
- Updating of cost estimates is in progress for 2 institutions, that have the design documents (Vulcanesti and Darcauti);

5). concerning procurement procedure for the WASH intervention for design and BoQ development services in medical institutions

- The ToR was prepared, submitted and approved by MIRD on August 21, 2023, then submitted to World Bank experts for coordination and approval
- On September 08, 2023, was received the preapproval email from the WB experts. The ToR were updated based on the list from the updated Order no. 701 on August 18, 2023.
- On September 21, 2023, the ToR were sent to the WB experts by STEP for examination and approval. Comments were received on the same day. Following the dispatch of answers to comments, the WB experts issued the *No objection* to the ToR on September 21, 2023.



- On October 16, 2023 was received an official letter no. 09/3684 on October 12, 2023 from Ministry of Health of RM regarding the *No objections* on the ToR
- The Request for Expression of Interest announcement was published on November 08, 2023 and 2 Expressions of Interest were received. The Expression of Interest evaluation meeting took place on December 04, 2023. The Evaluation Report was finalized on December 05, 2023; The 1st ranked company was notified to submit the technical and financial offer by December 21, 2023. Following examination of the offers by the Evaluation Committee, the Consultant was invited to contract negotiations on January 04, 2024.

6). concerning WASH Committees

- For the educational institutions the WASH Committees are represented by the Board of Directors of the institutions.
- All 17 beneficiary educational institutions presented the composition of their WASH Committee.
- Out of a total of 14 beneficiary health institutions, 11 presented the composition of the WASH Committee.
- Information meetings of the WASH Committees were held in schools in the period December 05-06, 2023.

During the next period are planned the following actions:

- Signing the contract for design and BoQ development services in medical institutions
- Receiving the design and BoQ for educational institutions
- Signing Financial Agreements with educational institutions
- Elaboration of Documents for procurement of construction works in educational institutions;



2.2. Component 2. Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels of WSS service delivery

2.2.1. Subcomponent 2.1 Building national institutional capacity for WSSS

For the implementation of the subcomponent 2.1., during the reporting period, the PIU has carried out the following actions:

a) sector planning and financing for programmatic delivery

(i) Action: Preparing the ToR for contracting a consultancy company to draw up the WSSNDP

- The Summary Table was developed according to the notice of the Central Public Authorities and changes were made to the ToR, which was sent for examination to MIRD on August 02, 2023.
- On August 08, 2023, the meeting with MIRD representatives regarding the ToR took place. The requirements for the consultant have been developed. On August 17, 2023, the last version of the updated ToR was sent to MIRD for approval of the final version. On August 22 and 23, 2023, MIRD comments on the ToR were received. On August 29, 2023, the last version of the updated ToR and the minutes for the approval of the final version were sent to the MIRD. The English version of the ToR has been submitted to MIRD for approval.
- On October 06, 2023, the Minutes of coordination of the final draft of the ToR for NWSSDP for the Romanian and English versions were signed. The final draft was sent to the World Bank for approval on October 09, 2023. Comments from the World Bank have been received. The ToR were modified according to the comments
- ToRs were sent to World Bank experts for pre-approval on October 09, 2023. Comments have been received from World Bank experts. The ToRs have been modified according to the comments. On November 02, 2023, the ToRs were presented to the WB representatives in a meeting at the WB Office in Chisinau and feedback on them was received and subsequently included in the ToRs.
- On November 23, 2023, a request was sent to the National Cadastre Agency for recommendations on the requirements for geographic information systems for the ToR.
- The final ToRs were sent to the WB via STEP for review and approval on November 29, 2023 and on December 08, 2023 the "no objections" note was received via STEP.
- The publication of the REOI for the consulting services (NWSSDP) made on December 08, 2023. The deadline for submission was December 29, 2023. Fifteen expressions of interest were received by the deadline.



(ii) Action: Hire strategic planning consultant to provide support to the MIRD in the implementation of Sub-component 2.1

The consultant will provide support to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development in the implementation of Sub-component 2.1, in particular will support the development of the *National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan* and also will assist in planned sector reforms.

- The contract was negotiated and signed on July 17, 2023

(iii) Capacity Development of the Lead WSS Unit.

- ToR for capacity building of the Lead Unit/ responsible for WSS was prepared and approved by STEP on August 23, 2023.
- Request for Expression of Interest was published several times (on August 25, 2023, September 15, 2023 and October 04,2023). It was received 2 EOIs. Two interviews were held with each candidate on November 22, 2023.
- The contract was signed on December 18, 2023.

(v) Hire the institutional development consultant for the MIRD

- The ToR were pre-agreed with WB experts on November 28, 2023. The activity was included in the Procurement Plan through STEP on November 29, 2023.
- The ToR received the "no objections" note from WB experts via STEP on December 14, 2023.
- Publication of the announcement on NORLD and *Moldova Suverana* webpage was made on December 18, 2023.

c) support in legislative and design reform

In order to ensure the initiation of the proposed reforms in the field of WSS according to the Project Appraisal Document, the PIU, in the reporting period, realized the following actions:

(i) Ammendment of the Law 303/2013 on water supply and sewerage public service:

- On July 13, 2023 the announcement regarding the initiation of the drafting of the law, was published on *particip.gov.md*.
- On September 19, 2023 the Announcement regarding the public consultation/ approval/ expertise of the draft Government Decision regarding the approval of the draft law to amend Law no. 303/2013 was published on *particip.gov.md*.
- Public Consultations were held on December 06, 2023; The Summary Table of Public Consultations was presented to the PIU on December 12, 2023
- The Synthesis Table related to the approval/expertise process as well as the draft GD amending Law 303 was presented to the PIU on December 12, 2023.
- On December 27, 2023, the process of second round of Law approval was initiated.



(ii) Development of new normative in construction. Preparation of the *Report on the assessment of the need to update/ adjust the normative in construction.*

- The ToR for the preparation of the *Report on the assessment of the need to update/ adjust the normative in construction*, was prepared and approved, by STEP on July 18, 2023.
- The Request for Expression of Interest were published on July 21, 2023. The deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest – August 04, 2023. The Expressions of Interest received - 2. The Evaluation Report was developed and signed by the Evaluation Committee. Based on the Evaluation Report, the candidate was invited to the clarification/ negotiation meeting, which took place on August 18, 2023.
- The contract was signed on September 05, 2023
- On September 15, 2023, an e-mail was sent to the involved MIRD representatives regarding the Action Plan on this activity.
- On October 19, 2023 was received Draft *Report on the assessment of the need to update/adjust the Moldovan Construction Normative*. This Report was sent to the representatives of the MIRD for examination and recommendations.
- On December 6, 2023 the Technical Committee for Technical Standardization in Construction met and the decision on the Report was taken
- On December 11, 2023 the final deliverables were received from the Consultant: 1. *Report on the assessment of the need to update/adjust the Moldovan Construction Normative G.03.02:2015 and G.03.01:2017* and presentation of the Report in ppt.
- On December 13, 2023 the final deliverables of the Consultant were approved

(iii) Development of the Implementation Plan of Directive 91/271/CEE

- The ToR was prepared and approved on July 18, 2023.
- The Request for Expressions of Interest including ToR were published on July 21, 2023. The deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest – August 04, 2023. 1 expression of interest was received. The Evaluation Committee signed the Evaluation Report on August 14, 2023
- The contract was signed on August 23, 2023.
- The *Inception Report* was received on September 20, 2023. On September 28, 2023, the *Inception Report* was sent to the MIRD and Ministry of the Environment representatives. On October 16, 2023 was held a meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of Environment. The *Inception Report* was approved on October 16, 2023.
- The first draft of the *Implementation Plan* for Directive 91/271/EEC was received on November 12, 2023.
- On November 20, 2023 a meeting was held to discuss the draft Plan. The draft was sent to MIRD and M. of Env. for comments and proposals. Comments from M. Env. were sent to the consultant.
- On December 12, 2023 the Consultant sent the revised version of the Implementation Plan.



- On December 18, 2023 the draft of the *Implementation Plan for Directive 91/271/EEC* and GD were sent to the MIRD for comments and proposals.

(iv) Preparation of the Government Decision regarding approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems

- The Request for Expressions of Interest were published several times (on February 10, 2023; on April 07, 2023; May 05, 2023 and on June 30, 2023). The last deadline was July 10, 2023. No. of expressions of interest received - 1. Evaluation report signed on 18 July 2023. Request for financial proposal sent to the consultant on July 21, 2023. Financial proposal submitted on August 07, 2023.
- The contract was signed on 17 August 2023.
- In order to *Develop of the Government Decision- stakeholder involvement*, on May 23, 2023 a meeting was held with Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Ministry of Health, National Public Health Agency, Ministry of Environment on sanitation solutions for small localities (especially septic tanks), where sewerage systems are not feasible. The participants at the meeting discussed their opinions on the advantages and disadvantages regarding septic tanks. The advantages included: low cost and a feasible solution for small localities. Among the disadvantages and risks related to septic tanks were specified: - Geological study needed; - If the soil is impermeable and the amount of wastewater is high there is a risk of landslides; - Wastewater is not treated for pathogenic microorganisms; - There is a risk of insufficient maintenance of the septic tank by householders and - For legal exploitation of septic tanks, a nearby river is needed for water discharge. In conclusion, it was decided to wait for the finalization of the Market Study on septic tanks and then, after the presentation of the results of the Market Study, to hold another meeting on this topic.
- On September 04, 2023, the *Inception Report* was received. UIP representatives provided comments on it. On September 12, 2023, the *Inception Report* was redacted by the Consultant based on the received comments.
- On September 18, 2023, a document: *The main theses of the normative act regarding the approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems* was received.
- On December 18, 2023 the Consultant submitted: the draft GD and the *Informative Note* to the draft GD. Draft of GD was submitted to MIRD for comments on December 18, 2023. The coordination activities, with the Environment Agency and Apele Moldovei, are planned for the next period.



d) monitoring and benchmarking of operators

The development and roll-out of a national Management Information System (MIS) for WSS operators; definition of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the MIS and start benchmarking;

(i) Concerning the signing of the Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement

- Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement was signed on October 06, 2023.

(ii) Development and implementation of the Management Information System

- The ToR, for contracting a consultant to prepare the draft GD on the MIS concept, was prepared, coordinated with the MIRD and on October 19, 2023 was sent to NAER for coordination.
- ToR were pre-agreed with WB experts on November 28, 2023 and the activity was included in the Procurement Plan through STEP on November 29, 2023.
- ToR received the *no objections* note from WB experts, by STEP on December 14, 2023
- The hiring advertisement published on December 18, 2023

e) human capital development

Human capital development. The implementation of a professional development program, in collaboration with AMAC and TUM and WSS operators, to increase qualifications and advance careers of existing staff and attract people, specifically women, for employment in the sector.

- On August 04, 2023, the meeting took place with the participation of the representatives of the TUM, MER regarding the unblocking of the situation related to the qualification courses within the WW Continuing Education Institute
- The request to include the new activity in Procurement Plan was sent to the Bank team on October 18, 2023. The approval was received on October 23, 2023.
- The list of 50 persons, with higher education among WW operators, including 24 persons for qualification studies and 26 persons for requalification studies, was approved.
- On November 01, 2023, the launch event was held. During November 2023 the courses were held according to the established Program.
- The contract was signed with the TUM representatives on November 04, 2023.

In the next period under subcomponent 2.1, are planned the following actions:

(i) For development of the NWSSDP:

- ✓ Finalizing the procurement procedures and signing the contract
- ✓ Preparation of the NWSSDP

(ii) For ammendment of the Law 303/2013 on water supply and sewerage public service:

- ✓ Governmental consultation;
- ✓ Approval of the Government Decision;
- ✓ Sending the draft Law for the approval in the Parliament.

(iii) Development and implementation of the Management Informational Systems:



- ✓ Signing the contract on preparing the draft GD on the MIS concept
- ✓ Preparation of the draft GD on the MIS concept, in accordance with the provisions of Law no. 467/2003 regarding computerization and state information resources and which has to be coordinated with the E-Governance Agency and approved by Government Decision.
- ✓ Later, after the approval of the Concept of the Information System, the ToR for the development of the Information System will be elaborated, with the subsequent development of the MIS, Promotion for approval of the GD Government Decision for approval of the Concept of the MIS;

(iv) Development/revision of standards/norms for sanitation:

- ✓ receipt of the MIRD decision on the basis of the decisions taken on December 06, 2023 at the meeting of the Technical Committee for Technical Standardisation in Construction.

(v) Human capital development:

- ✓ Finalizing the courses according to the established Program for 50 students
- ✓ Support in ensuring the accreditation by the Ministry of Education and Research of qualification and requalification studies for people with college technical studies;



2.2.2 Subcomponent 2.2: Improving performance of WSS service providers

During the reporting period PIU has carried out the following actions:

- The ToR, for the elaboration of the Performance Improvement Plan and the Baseline Assessment of the performance of the operators participating in the project, was prepared and approved by STEP on August 23, 2023.
- The Request for Expressions of Interest was published twice (August 25, 2023 and September 15, 2023). By the submission deadline 2 EOIs were received. The evaluation process of received EOIs has been completed. The re-launch of the REoI was made on November 08, 2023. The deadline was 21 November 2023.

In the next period, the following actions are planned to be implemented:

- Contracting a consultant for the services
- Elaboration of the *Performance Improvement Plan* of the operators participating in the project and the *Baseline Assessment* of the operators



3. COMPONENT 3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

3.1. World Bank Implementation Support Mission conducted in Moldova

The World Bank Implementation Support Mission conducted in Moldova during October 30 to November 10, 2023.

The mission's overall objectives were to review the progress in project implementation activities, including the water supply schemes covering sub-projects Riscani and Cahul, the wastewater management sub-projects for Soroaca and Comrat, the on-site sanitation pilot for rural settlements, and the plan for improving WASH facilities in public and social institutions. The mission also reviewed the progress in activities for strengthening of institutional capacity at the national and local levels, the proposed activities for the National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (NWSSDP), legislative and design reforms, support for regulatory strengthening, human capital development, and project management and co-ordination. A study trip to Portugal was carried out in advance of the mission from October 23 -27, 2023 for sharing experiences from the Portugal Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) sector specifically related to institutional and governance programs. The mission undertook site-visits to the Cantemir and Cahul Rayons and held discussions with the Water Operators on the water supply and wastewater treatment systems.

The Mission meetings were planned, coordinated, and carried out with representatives of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development and the National Office for Regional and Local Development, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) for the MWSSP. The key findings presented in the Aide Memoire were discussed with MIRD at the wrap-up meeting with State Secretary, MIRD, and GoM officials on November 8, 2023. The final version of the Aide Memoire has been endorsed by World Bank management.

3.2. Activities concerning the Project Coordination Group

As provided in the PAD, at the national level, a Project Coordination Group (PCG) will be established within three months after project effectiveness; the PCG will coordinate the implementation and endorse annual implementation plans.

The first meeting of the Project Coordination Group (PCG) was held on April 11, 2023. The Minutes no.1 on April 11, 2023 of the meeting of the PCG was approved. The annexes of the Minutes are: approved Semestrial Progress Report no.1 and approved Action Plan for PIU.

The second meeting of the Project Coordination Group (PCG) was held on December 01, 2023. The Minutes no.2 on December 01, 2023 of the meeting of the PCG was approved. The annexes of the Minutes are: approved Semestrial Progress Report no.2 and approved Action Plan of the PIU for 2024.



3.3. The Project Implementation Unit's activities

3.3.1. Staffing of the Project Implementation Unit

According to the Project Appraisal Document and the Project Operations Manual, the PIU is planned to be staffed with the following positions: (i) project manager, (ii) procurement specialist, (iii) procurement assistant, (iv) FM specialist, (v) environmental specialist, (vi) social specialist, (vii) chief WSS engineer, (viii) communications specialist, (ix) citizen engagement/gender specialist, (x) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialist, (xi) administrative assistant and (xii) WSS engineer (xiii) WASH facility engineer/coordinator.

At the reporting date the following positions have been hired for meeting the effectiveness condition:

- project manager,
- procurement specialist,
- procurement specialist II,
- FM specialist,
- environmental & citizen engagement specialist,
- social & gender specialist,
- chief WSS engineer,
- WSS engineer,
- communications specialist,
- M&E specialist,
- WASH engineer,
- administrative assistant
- driver and logistics specialist



3.3.2. Financial Management

Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is a sub-unit under NORLD and performs all budget planning, financing, and reporting arrangements on behalf of the MIRD. All planning procedures, the annual budget and medium-term budget framework (MTBF) are organized based on MoF requirements. All budget projections are prepared based on Project Procurement Plan and the Project Implementation Plan. The draft budget is prepared for each type of the project activity within the ceilings approved in MTBF.

The payments for project activities are administrated through the State Treasure System. Such a management ensures ex-ante controls for all contract's payments which are performed via treasure account (excluding direct payments).

Accounting policies and procedures of the Project are reflected in the Project Operational Manual as a separate chapter "Financial Management" approved by the WB.

Disbursement status. During the reporting period (July 2023 – December 2023) we have disbursed only EUR 85.5 thousand, which is only 3% from the 2024 FY projected disbursement plan in amount on EUR 2,700.0 thousand. In total the PIU has disbursed EUR 712.0 thousand or 758.4 USD equivalent.

Table 14. Disbursement records as of December 31, 2023

WB/Trans No.	Application Payment Amount, EUR	Paid Amount, EUR	USD Equivalents	Date Received
TOTAL	712,047.21	712,047.21	758,382.12	
5	85,490.58	85,490.58	90,585.82	21-Sep-2023
4	55,201.35	55,201.35	60,326.80	13-Jun-2023
3	350,000.00	350,000.00	383,075.00	12-Jun-2023
2	71,355.28	71,355.28	78,369.50	14-Apr-2023
1	150,000.00	150,000.00	146,025.00	07-Oct-2022

Source: PIU FM data

The registered disbursements have been performed only from IDA 70270.

The disbursements for the next FY 2024 are projected in amount of EUR 3,100 thousand or 2,977.0 USD thousand (see the data from the table below).

Table 15. Disbursement projection for FY 2024, July, 2023 – June 2024

Quarter	Period	Ccy	Planned disbursement
1st Q	June 2023 - Sept 2023	Thousand USD	155.1
2nd Q	Oct 2023 - Dec 2023	Thousand USD	206.0
3rd Q	Jan 2024 - March 2024	Thousand USD	442.4
4th Q	Apr 2024 - June 2024	Thousand USD	2,173.5
	Total, fiscal year 2024	Thousand USD	2,977.0

Source: PIU FM data



All payments obligations were paid in time, without delays. The expenses done are distributed over the project components as presented in the table below.

Table 16: Expenses per components, as of December 31, 2023

	Spent in current reporting period (July – Dec 2023)	Cumulative expenses, EUR	Planned, cumulative expenses, EUR	% in planned cumulative costs
A	1	2	3	4=2/3.3
1. Increasing access to safely managed WSS services in selected rural areas and towns	25,413.91	27,722.58	40,993,572.0	0.1%
2. Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels for WSS service delivery	25,413.91	27,884.53	3,459,006.0	0.8%
3. Project management and coordination	233,928.99	443.171.59	2,091,329.0	21.3%
4. Contingent emergency response component	-	-	-	-
Total	286,731.48	498,778.70	46,543,907.0	1.1%

Source: PIU FM data

At the end of the reporting period, we have no unpaid obligations.

Annual Audit. Since the first disbursement occurred in the last quarter of the year, the UIP/NORLID has asked the WB approved an exception for the FY2022 audit on February 6th, 2023. The first audit period for the project will be October 14, 2022 - December 31, 2023. The procedure for selecting the audit company is launched. We are in the process of selection of the audit company.

Approved project budget in the annual budget. The project budget for FY2024 has been approved in amount of MDL 110.7 million or equivalent of EUR 5.7 million¹³. Approved amount includes the Government contribution in amount of MDL 12.3 million of equivalent of EUR 0.6 million.

¹³ The EUR equivalent of the planned budget for 2024 is calculated at the exchange rate 19.5 MDL/EUR



3.3.3. Procurement activities

Procurement under the Project is carried out in accordance with the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing (IPF) Borrowers – “Procurement in IPF of Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services” issued in July 2016, revised in November 2020 (“Procurement Regulations”) and the “Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants” dated October 2006 and revised in January 2011 and July 2016.

All the procurement activities within the MWSSP are managed by STEP.

STEP (Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement) is an online system that helps the World Bank and Borrowers plan, record, and track key stages of the procurement process under Investment Project Financing (IPF) projects. It is designed to help Borrowers achieve value for money in procurement by transforming data into knowledge, speeding up the procurement process, and improving accountability and transparency. It streamlines and automates some stages of the procurement process and enables monitoring and reporting.

The procurement process has been described within each subcomponent in the chapter 1.

In order to summarize the results of the procurement process, the following tables are presented:

1. Date regarding the signed contracts within MWSS Project
2. Date regarding the negotiated contracts - under the process of signing within MWSS Project
3. Date regarding the activities under procurement procedure within MWSS Project

Table 17. Date regarding the signed contracts within MWSS Project

No	Contract	Date of contract signing	Contract amount	Contract completion	Procurement method	Deliverables submitted until December 31, 2023
1.1. Subcomponent 1 Increasing access to safely managed WSS services in selected rural areas and towns						
Subcomponent 1.1 Expanding access and quality of WSS services						
Expansion and improvement water supply services in Cahul and Vulcanesti rayons						
1	MD-PIU-NORLD-346170-CS-CQS / Review and up-date of Detailed Design technical documents for Cahul Sub-project	14-Jul-23	\$ 157600	14-Mar-24	Direct selection	1. Inception Report 2. Resettlement Screening Report 3. Version I of the Design for Construction Package & Preliminary BoQ
2	MD-PIU-NORLD-346176-CS-CQS Development the ESIA and ESMP for Cahul-Vulcanesti water supply sub-project	14-Jul-23	\$ 62690	29-Mar-24*	Consultant's qualifications-based selection (CQS) One consultant submitted EOI.	1. Inception Report 2. First draft of ESIA 3. Second draft of ESIA
*Am.#1 of December 15, 2023, was signed extending the contract completion date until March 29, 2024 considering that necessary technical data for site-specific ES impacts assessment for the construction works within Cahul Sub-project shall be developed based on the design data to be provided by the Consultant that prepares the Technical Design. Furthermore, sufficient time for draft ESIA and ESMPs disclosure, including public consultation in the affected localities is needed.						
Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Soroca						



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No	Contract	Date of contract signing	Contract amount	Contract completion	Procurement method	Deliverables submitted until December 31, 2023
3	MD-PIU-NORLD-368215-CS-CQS / Elaboration of the Employer's Requirements chapters for the subproject	15-Sep-23	€ 45570	15-Mar-24	Consultant's qualifications-based selection (CQS) Two consultants submitted EOIs	1. Inception Report 2. <i>Draft Employer's Requirements - expected to be provided until the January 31, 2024</i>
4	MD-PIU-NORLD-346201-CS-CQS / Technical expertise of the existing buildings, the geotechnical study and the topographic survey for the subproject	15-Sep-23	€ 12500	22-Jan-24	Consultant's qualifications-based selection (CQS) Two consultants submitted EOIs:	<i>All reports (deliverables) are in progress. Expected until February 01, 2024</i>
On-site sanitation pilot and sewerage connection programs (septic tanks)						
5	MD-PIU-NORLD-339411-CS-INDV Technical Consultant for the development of a technical market study regarding on-site sanitation systems (septic tanks)	3-Apr-23	\$ 7249	Contract terminated on 24-Jul-23*	Selection of Individual Consultants	No deliverables, that correspond with the contract requirements, were submitted
The reason for Contract termination is the failure of the Consultant to perform the services as specified in the Annex A "Terms of Reference and Scope of Service" within the established timeline.						
1.2. Sub - component 1.2 Improving resilient WASH facilities in public social institutions						
6	MD-PIU-NORLD-376584-CS-CQS Design of Sanitary Groups for improving WASH facilities in Schools	16 Nov-23	€ 36550	16-Feb-24	Consultant's qualifications-based selection (CQS) Two consultants submitted EOIs	1. Inception Report for each region - 4 Reports (December 04-19, 2023)
Component 2. Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels for WSS service delivery						
1.2. Sub - component 2.1 Building national institutional capacity						
Support in legislative and design reforms						
7	MD-PIU-NORLD-339414-CS-INDV Legal Consultant for the elaboration of the required amendments for Law no. 303/2013 regarding the public water supply and sewerage service	1-Apr-23	€ 10489	30-Apr-24*	Selection of Individual Consultants	1. Inception Report 2. The first and the second draft of the amended Law 303 3. The Summary Table of Public Consultations 4. Synthesis Table related to the approval/ expertise process as well as the draft GD amending Law 303
* The Amendment no. 1 of October 01, 2023 was signed extending the contract completion date until April 30, 2024 since additional time is required for the Consultant to provide support during public consultations and in the process of approving and promoting the draft Law and the need for the Consultant to participate together with the representatives of the MIRD and the NAER, in the study visit regarding the familiarization with the normative framework of Romania in this field.						



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No	Contract	Date of contract signing	Contract amount	Contract completion	Procurement method	Deliverables submitted until December 31, 2023
8	MD-PIU-NORLD-339413-CS-INDV Legal Consultant for the elaboration of the draft Government Decision regarding approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems	17-Aug-23	\$ 6443	15-April-24*	Selection of Individual Consultants	1) the draft GD and 2) the Informative Note to the draft GD.
* The Amendment no. 1 of October 16, 2023 has been signed extending the completion date until April 15, 2024 considering that the extended period of time is required for the Consultant to provide support during the public consultations and in drafting summary tables of the proposals received from stakeholders in the process of public consultation and approval of the normative act.						
9	MD-PIU-NORLD-369411-CS-INDV National consultant to develop the Implementation Plan of Directive 91/271/CEE	23-Aug-23	96 653 L	29-Febr-24	Selection of Individual Consultants	1). The Inception Report 2). The first draft of the Implementation Plan for Directive 91/271/EEC 3). the revised version of the Implementation Plan.
10	MD-PIU-NORLD-36172-CS-INDV International consultant for assessment of the need to update/adjust the MCN G.03.02:2015, and NCM G.03.01:2017 to conform with the EU standards, including assessment of the need for separate development of the new MCN "Sewerage networks and outdoor installations" for localities with up to 10000 inhabitants and for localities with more than 10000 inhabitants and elaboration of proposals for updating	5-Sep-23	€ 13 624	29-Dec-23	Selection of Individual Consultants	Contract completed • Draft and the final version of the Report on the assessment of the need to update/adjust the MCN G.03.02:2015 and MCN G.03.01:2017, according to the legislation and experience of the EU countries, including the need for separate development of the new MCN
11	MD-PIU-NORLD-339411-CS-INDV Strategic Planning consultant to provide support to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development in the Implementation of the subcomp.2.1.	17-Jul-23	286 613L	17-Jul-24	Selection of Individual Consultants	
12	Capacity Development Program for lead division of the MIRD	18-Dec-23	\$ 9 000	29-Feb-24	Selection of Individual Consultants	Inception Report



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No	Contract	Date of contract signing	Contract amount	Contract completion	Procurement method	Deliverables submitted until December 31, 2023
13	Professional development programs for WSS operators and experts with bachelor studies	04-Nov-23	1224980 L	31-Aug-25	Direct selection	
	<i>Note:</i>	contract completed		ongoing contract		contract terminated

Source: data provided by PIU

Until December 31, 2023, 13 contracts have been signed, of which 1 is completed, 1 is terminated and the remaining 11 are in progress.

Table 18. Date regarding the negotiated contracts - under the process of signing within MWSS Project

No	Contract	Status	Contract amount	Participants under the procurement procedure	Remarks
1	MD-PIU-NORLD-346194-CS-QCBS / Feasibility study and ESIA for Comrat Subproject	under signing	€ 299 450	Were shortlisted 6 Consultants	Notification of Intention to Award were submitted to consultants that submitted proposals on December 22, 2023. Standstill period ends on January 10, 2024.
2	MD-PIU-NORLD-376594-CS-CQS / Design of Sanitary Groups for improving WASH facilities in selected Health Care Facilities	under negotiations		Two consultants submitted EOIs:	
3	MD-PIU-NORLD-380722-CS-CQS / Baseline survey on the level of people's satisfaction concerning Water Supply and Sanitation service delivery.	under signing	€ 28 773	Five consultants submitted EOIs:	Negotiation have been finalized on December 28, 2023. The Contract shall be signed in the nearest future.

Source: data provided by PIU

On December 31, 2023, 2 contracts were under signing and 1 contract was under negotiations (table 18). In addition to these, 3 Procurement packages are in process. (table 19)

Table 19. Date regarding the activities under procurement procedure within MWSS Project

No	Procurement package	Status	Procurement method
1	Preparation of the MIS concept	Republished	Selection of Individual Consultants
2	Contracting of the individual institutional development consultant for the MIRD	In process of evaluation	Selection of Individual Consultants
3	MD-PIU-NORLD-346209-CS-QCBS Elaboration of the National Development Plan for the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector in Moldova, the Long Term Investment Programme and the Financing Strategy	EOIs evaluation	QCBS

Source: data provided by PIU



3.3.4. Environmental activities

In accordance with the Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and the project Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) the topics mentioned below have been addressed and corresponding activities conducted during the reporting period:

- ***Conduct National EIA in line with Law no 86 / 2014 on Environmental Impact Assessment***

As it was unveiled in previous semiannual report the PIU have requested the Environmental Agency to issue a decision on necessity to conduct the Environmental Impact Assessment in line with the National Law 86 / 2014 for Soroca and Riscani sub-projects. The Agency reacted in due time informing officially the PIU that the only impediment to issue such a decision is uncertain situation with

- (i) the existing land use in Riscani (the spots allocated for construction of the Platforms are land for agricultural use – this implies interdiction to build water supply infrastructure on them. The land use should be changed into "construction") and
- (ii) land ownership in Soroca (the spot of land allocated to the WWTP should be transferred from Forest Fund to public property of Soroca Mayoralty). Once these issues are closed the decision will be issued and PIU officially informed.

By 31 of December 2023 the situation was as follows:

The Government Decision regarding the change of ownership in Soroca has been issued. The only pending issue to finalize the procedure is the state tax for changing the owner of the land to be done by Soroca Mayoralty. This is expected to be done shortly as reported by Soroca Mayoralty.

Concerning the change of land use in Riscani, right after the local election on November the 4th 2023 and the inauguration of newly elected mayors, they have been informed about the necessity to initiate the procedure of changing the land use as soon as possible. Delay in signing the agreement led to the delay in launching the land use change procedure.

Nowadays the Collaboration Agreement is signed and the process of land use change is under way.

- ***Cahul Sub-Project***

Monitor and evaluate the progress made on development of the ESIA report for Cahul-Vulcanesti sub-project as well as the development of the Abbreviated RAP (ARAP) for Cahul-Vulcanesti sub-project have been the two main tasks for the Social and Environmental specialists of the PIU during the reporting period.

By December 31, 2023 the following has been achieved:

- Consulting company have sent the second draft of the ESIA (comments addressed) to- and approved by PIU;
- List of Project Affected Persons prepared by the Mayoralties of concerned villages and sent to PIU;
- Since mid December the ARAP is under preparation by Environmental and Social specialists of the PIU.



- ***Comrat Sub-Project***

In terms of ES, during the reporting period the only task in relation with the Comrat sub-project was to participate in assessment of the submitted offers as well as participation in evaluation meetings to identify the winner of the tender for preparation of the Comrat WWTP Feasibility Study and ESIA report.

- ***Riscani Sub-project***

As it was already mentioned above the Collaboration Agreement was signed late. Despite this fact all activities to secure the progress within this component were conducted: (i) TORs for ESIA development prepared and No Objection from the WB received, (ii) coordination meetings with the engineers (making sure that the PAPs are meticulously identified), (iii) mayors met during the field visits and informed / instructed about the importance to proceed with the change of land use procedure.

Activities planned for the next 6 months:

- Continue supporting to the consultant in the finalization of the ESIA and ESMP for the Cahul sub-project.
- Monitor the development by the Consultant of the environmental input for the Technical Specification for Cahul-Subproject.
- Participate at the Second Public Participation meeting within the ESIA for the Cahul Sub-Project.
- Develop the ARAP for the Cahul Sub-Project.
- Monitor the implementation of the environmental component of the Comrat Feasibility Study and ESIA Contract.
- Conduct all the activities related to recurrent tasks.



3.3.5. Social, citizen engagement and gender activities

In accordance with the Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and the project Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) the below activities were conducted during the reported period:

(i) Citizen engagement aspects

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was updated in accordance with local agreements with the Local Public Authority (LPA), the regulations of the Citizen Water and Sanitation Committees, and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The updated SEP has been published on the website: https://ondrl.gov.md/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/SEP_MWSSP_updated-August-2023.pdf [August-2023.pdf \(gov.md\)](https://ondrl.gov.md/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/SEP_MWSSP_updated-August-2023.pdf).

Citizen Water and Sanitation Committees (CWSC)

All localities included in the MWSSP sub-projects, except for the Riscani sub-project, have operational Community Water and Sanitation Committees (CWSC). CWSC members receive support from the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) for citizen engagement aspects.

WASH Committees

In cooperation with educational institutions, it was decided that members of the WASH committee will be represented by The Board of Directors of the Educational Institution, as per Article 49 of the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova. The Board of Directors consists of nine members: the institution's director, deputy director, Local Public Authority (LPA) representative, three parents, two teachers, and one student. All institutions have submitted the composition of their Board of Directors WASH committee.

WASH Committees members benefited from online trainings from PIU. After the first meetings and the election of the responsible members, the PIU team (social and gender expert and environment and citizen engagement expert) conducted an information session to discuss the role and responsibilities of the WASH Committees members, citizen engagement and about GRM and the role of WASH Committees in this process. Two information sessions (December 05 and 06, 2023) were organized for WASH Committees members, one conducted in Romanian and another in Russian.

WASH committees have been established for health facilities benefiting from the project. Each committee comprise three members: a representative from the medical institution, a representative from the Local Public Authority (LPA), and a representative from the community (either an NGO or an active citizen). The establishment of these committees faced challenges due to ongoing local elections, yet we have successfully formed 11 WASH Committees out of the targeted 14 medical institutions.

Public Consultations

The initial Public Consultation was held for Cahul ESIA sub-project. The subjects presented and discussed during the initial consultation sessions with the public in two meetings, one in Gavanoasa and another in Vulcanesti were:



- The inclusion of the Cahul-Vulcanesti MTP sub-project in the regional development program at the national and regional levels;
- The progress of the sub-project and the current stage of development;
- The localities included in the sub-project and the planned water infrastructure;
- The environmental and social standards of the World Bank;
- The purpose and objectives of the environmental and social assessment report;
- The team that is involved in the elaboration of the ESIA and ESPM;
- Key environmental aspects to be addressed in the ESIA;
- The key social aspects addressed in the ESIA;
- The purpose and objectives of the ESMP;
- Implementation schedule and planning of the second round of consultations with the public;
- The Grievance Redress Mechanism;

Baseline Study

The research company that will conduct the baseline survey of the level of satisfaction with water supply and sewerage services in the project intervention area has been selected. The data will be collected at the beginning of the year 2024.

(ii) Grievance Redress Mechanism

The Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRM) are operational at the national, regional, and local levels, with the exception of localities within the Riscani sub-project. No complaints were registered during the reporting period.

A leaflet providing information on the GRM (Annex 5) has been developed and printed. The leaflet is available in both Romanian and Russian languages.

Additionally, a specific GRM leaflet has been created for the WASH sub-component, also available in both Romanian and Russian languages. These leaflets will be distributed to all educational and health institutions benefiting from the WASH sub-component.

(iii) Gender Action Plan

In each beneficiary school of the WASH sub-component, a Gender Focal Point has been nominated from the WASH Committee. This individual will have a specific responsibility for gender-related activities, ensuring the active involvement of women in project activities, and facilitating their participation in public consultations and other project events. The local gender focal point will also serve as a resource, providing information and support to women regarding the GRM.

During the reporting period, the social and gender specialist actively participated in workshops addressing gender issues, particularly the 'Introducing World Bank Good Practice Note on Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment,' conducted within the framework of the Social and Environmental Exchange Network (SEEN). Additionally, on October 12, 2023, a World Bank (WB) team visited the project team to assess the progress of gender aspects in project activities. The WB experts highlighted the need to intensify efforts in encouraging more women to pursue education



and employment in the field of water supply and sanitation. They expressed their intention to propose collaborative activities in this regard.

All Terms of Reference (TORs) elaborated by PIU align with the Gender Action Plan (GAP), emphasizing the promotion of gender equality and nondiscrimination.

Activities planned for the next 6 months:

- Set up WASH committees for all WASH component beneficiaries' institutions and provide training for their members.
- Establish Local/Citizen Water and Sanitation Committees in Riscani and conduct informational meetings for CWSC in the Riscani subproject.
- Provide support to the consultant in the finalization of the ESIA and ESMP for the Cahul subproject.
- Support and monitor the consultant during the developing of ESIA and ESMP process for the Cahul subproject.
- Develop the ARAP for the Cahul Subproject.
- Conduct training for new PIU staff on gender equality and social inclusion.
- Conduct additional information and awareness activities on Local/Citizen Water and Sanitation Committees and GRM.
- Manage potential complaints and maintain the GRM Log.
- Collaborate with the CWSC in Soroca to arrange a meeting with "HIDROINPEX" S.A (a directly affected business entity) to discuss the Wastewater Treatment Plant, understand their position, and anticipate potential social risks.



3.3.6. Communication and visibility of the Project

The Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project aims to enhance access to safe drinking water and sanitation in selected rural and urban areas of Moldova. To achieve its objectives, the project has implemented various communication and visibility activities, including the development and execution of a communication strategy and action plan, press releases, electronic newsletters, video spots, and promotional materials.

During the reporting period, the following actions were undertaken:

Facebook Page: A dedicated Facebook page has been established as a platform for sharing information regarding the project's key activities and progress. The page serves as an interactive channel for stakeholders and beneficiaries to stay informed and engaged. A total of 46 posts have been shared on the Facebook page, ensuring regular communication with the target audience. Link: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089919485925ink>

Communication Strategy and Action Plan: The Communication Strategy and Action Plan, developed to effectively guide the project's communication efforts, were approved by the director of the National Office for Regional and Local Development and is in the implementation phase.

Website: The website (landing page), developed and hosted on the P.I. National Office for Regional and Local Development's website, is regularly updated, serving as a reliable source of information for visitors.

Press Releases: To highlight the project's events and activities, 10 press releases have been posted on the project's website. These press releases effectively disseminate information to the media and the public, increasing awareness and understanding of the project's endeavors.

Electronic Newsletter: The first two electronic newsletters were developed and are available on the project's website. They serve as a crucial communication tool, providing updates on the project's most recent activities and results. Link: <https://ondrl.gov.md/categorie/proiectul-saasm/publicatii/>

Communication Plan for Water Supply and Sewerage Program of Moldova Technical University: A Communication Plan, developed to promote the Water Supply and Sewerage Program of Moldova Technical University and attract potential students, was approved by the director of the National Office for Regional and Local Development. In pursuit of its goals, a video spot promoting the WSS program at TUM was produced and shared through various social media platforms. Additionally, two success stories about the graduates of the program were published on the TUM website and social media platforms. <https://tinyurl.com/2s3jufwt>; <https://tinyurl.com/yt22mjv4>; <https://tinyurl.com/bdz562ee>; Also, a video and print story about the WSS Professional Development Program were produced and disseminated on TUM, MIRD and MWSSP platforms. <https://ondrl.gov.md/banca-mondiala-investeste-in-pregatirea-specialistilor-din-domeniul-exploatarii-sistemelor-de-alimentare-cu-apa-si-canalizare/>

Promotional Materials: Two leaflets were designed and printed to promote the Grievance Redress Mechanism and the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project.



Media Coverage: The activities conducted under the project were discussed on Radio/TV programs such as Obiectiv Comun, TVR Moldova, Spațiu Public (Annex 1), Radio Moldova, and "Messenger," Moldova 1. Links: <https://www.facebook.com/tvmoldova1/videos/242795811564759>;
<https://www.facebook.com/teleradiomoldova/videos/219473347832955/>
<https://www.facebook.com/TVRMoldova/videos/219990434467388>
<https://www.facebook.com/100089919485925/videos/873734267725706>

During the next period (January-June 2024) are planned the following actions:

Electronic Newsletter: The third electronic newsletter should be completed by the end of June 2024.

Implementation of the Communication Plan for Water Supply and Sewerage Program of Moldova

Technical University: The communication plan aimed at promoting the Water Security and Sanitation Program of the Technical University will continue to be implemented together with the TUM communication department.

Press Releases and Facebook Posts: Continued efforts will be made to write and publish press releases and Facebook posts about the project's activities. These communications will help stakeholders stay informed and engaged, ensuring ongoing visibility and support for the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project.

Interactive Map: An interactive map with selected institutions within the WASH subcomponent will be developed.

Communication Strategy and Action Plan: The Communication Strategy and Action Plan will be revised/ updated.



3.3.7. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation activities

Reporting, monitoring and evaluation process refers to: (a) monitoring of the performance of the project toward achievement of the PDO and result indicators on a semiannual basis and (b) implementation progress against all activities and the timely identification of bottlenecks.

M&E of results are taking place against the indicators in the Results Framework and procedures are detailed in the POM.

In the table 20 are presented the results of the Project Development Objective Indicators as of December 31, 2023.

Table 20. Project Development Objective Indicators on December 31, 2023

	Indicator Name	Baseline	Intermediate Targets, Year 1	Frequency	Evaluation Status on December 31, 2023
PDO_I	Increasing access to safely managed water supply services in selected rural areas and towns				
PDOI_I_1	People provided with access to safely managed water supply services in selected rural areas and towns (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi - annually	0.00
PDOI_I_1g	Out of which female (Percentage)	0.00	0.00	Semi - annually	0.00
PDOI_I_2	People provided with access to safely managed sanitation services in selected rural areas and towns (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi - annually	0.00
PDOI_I_2g	Out of which female (Percentage)	0.00	0.00	Semi - annually	0.00
PDO_II	Strengthening institutional capacity at national and local levels for improved WSS service delivery				
PDOI_II_3	National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (NWSSDP) with prioritized investment program and financing strategy developed and under implementation (Text)	No NWSSDP exists	Working group for NWSSDP created	Annually	The <i>Unit for the coordination</i> of the process of elaboration of the <i>NWSSDP</i> was designated. The Roadmap developed. The ToR for elaboration of the <i>NWSSDP</i> developed and approved. The publication, of the REOI for the consulting services (<i>NWSSDP</i>), was made.
PDOI_II_4	Number of participating operators demonstrating core institutional capacities for improved water supply and sanitation service delivery (Number)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00

Source: Project Appraisal Document and the PIU's data

The most significant progress was achieved for the indicator PDOI_II_3 *National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (NWSSDP)*.



Considering the fact that at the current stage the activities related to the preparation of the documentation for the construction works are ongoing, most of the Intermediate Results Indicators have a value of 0.

Table 21. Intermediate Results Indicators by Components on December 31, 2023

	Indicator Name	Baseline	Intermediate Targets, Year 1	Frequency	Evaluation Status on December 31, 2023
IRI_1.1	Subcomponent 1.1: Expanding access and quality of WSS services				
IRI_1.1.1	Number of households with a functional connection to a safely managed water supply service (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.1.1s	Number of households with increased resilience to droughts resulting from a functional connection to a safely managed water supply service (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.1.2	Number of households with a functional sewer connection to a safely managed sanitation service (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.1.2e	Number of households contributing to reduction in GHG emissions resulting from a functional sewer connection to a safely managed sanitation service (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.1.3	Wastewater and septage treated in selected small towns as per national discharge standards (Cubic meters/year)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00
IRI_1.1.4	Number of households gaining access to safely managed sanitation through the on-site household sanitation pilot (Number)	0.00	100.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.1.5s	Number of poor and vulnerable households gaining access to safely managed sanitation services (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.2	Subcomponent 1.2: Improving WASH facilities in public institutions				
IRI_1.2.1	Number of schools with functional safely managed drinking water supply, and basic sanitation and hygiene facilities (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.2.2	Number of health care facilities with functional safely managed drinking water supply, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.2.3	Number of people in schools participating in hygiene education and communication programs (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_1.2.3g	Out of which female	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00



Semiannual Progress Report no 3 for the period July 01- December 31, 2023

	Indicator Name	Baseline	Intermediate Targets, Year 1	Frequency	Evaluation Status on December 31, 2023
IRI_2.1	Subcomponent 2.1.: Building national institutional capacity for WSS				
IRI_2.1.1	Number of legislative and/or normative documents developed in support of sector modernization (Number)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00*
IRI_2.1.2	National Management Information System (MIS) for WSS service providers developed and operational (Text)	No national system exists; KPIs are not yet agreed	KPIs defined and approved by ANRE	Annually	No national system exists; KPIs are not yet agreed**
IRI_2.1.3	Number of participants that have successfully completed accredited professional development program and that advance or gain employment in technical positions in WSS utility sector (Number)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00
IRI_2.1.3g	Number of female participants successfully completing the accredited professional development program and that advance or gain employment in technical positions within the WSS utility sector (Number)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00
IRI_2.1.4	Number of people benefitting from training and workshops related to regulatory framework, policy implementation and the use sector MIS (Number)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_2.1.4g	out of which female (Percentage)	0.00	0.00	Semi-annually	0.00
IRI_2.2	Subcomponent 2.2: Improving performance of WSS service providers				
IRI_2.2.1	Average relative reduction of Non Revenue Water (expressed in m3/km network per year) for participating utilities compared to baseline value (Percentage)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00
IRI_2.2.2	Average relative increase of Total Cost Coverage ratio for participating utilities over the baseline value (Percentage)	0.00	0.00	Annually	0.00
IRI_2.2.3	Share of beneficiaries who report that the project has established effective engagement processes (Percentage)	0.00	75.00	Annually	0.00
IRI_2.2.3g	Share of female beneficiaries who report that the project has established effective engagement processes (Percentage)	0.00	75.00	Annually	0.00

Source: Project Appraisal Document and the PIU's data

*For the Indicator *IRI_2.1.1* Number of legislative and/or normative documents developed in support of sector modernization (Number) under Subcomponent 2.1.: Building national institutional capacity



for WSS, the Public Consultations were held, the Summary Table of Public Consultations and the Synthesis Table related to the approval/expertise process were received and the process of second round of Law 303 approval was initiated.

**For the Indicator *IRI_2.1.2 National Management Information System (MIS) for WSS service providers developed and operational (Text)*. ToR, for contracting a consultant to prepare the draft GD on the MIS concept, was prepared, coordinated with the MIRD, approved by STEP and the hiring advertisement was published.

During the reporting period, the following action were carried out:

- ✓ The Semiannual Progress Report no. 2 of MWSSP for the period February 05- June 30, 2023 was prepared and approved by the WB experts on August 28, 2023. Presentation of the Semiannual Report no.2 of the project and the PIU Activity Plan for 2024, to the Project Coordination Group, during the second meeting was held on December 01, 2023
- ✓ The project-level M&E System and Plan were updated;
- ✓ The *Checklists of the implementation of the MWSSP actions*, based on Activity Plan for 2023 of the PIU and Aide Memoire, for the months: June, July, August, September, October and November 2023, were developed and submitted;
- ✓ The *Short Progress Reports of the MWSSP*, based on Aide Memoire for WB TTL, for the months: June, July, August, September, October and November 2023, were developed and submitted.
- ✓ The *Report on activities financed from ADA funds* for the period January 01- June 30, 2023 was prepared and submitted to the ADA.
- ✓ Preparation of the proposals to update the *Indicators of the Project's Development Objectives and Indicators of Intermediate Results by Components*. The *Informative Note* was developed regarding the proposals to update the indicators, in which proposals were presented for updating the target values of the indicators, as well as the calculation methodology;
- ✓ Monthly reporting, starting with October 2023, the activities carried out within the MWSSP on the **project.gov.md**;
- ✓ Monitoring the activity of the contracting individual consultants

During the next period are planned the following actions:

- elaboration of the Semiannual Progress Report no.3 of the MWSSP for the WB experts and Project Coordination Group.
- elaboration of the monthly *Checklists of the implementation of the actions planned* for December 2023, January, February, March, April, May 2024 for MIRD;
- elaboration of the monthly *Short Progress Reports of the MWSSP*, based on Aide Memoire for WB TTL for December 2023, January, February, March, April, May 2024;
- Monthly reporting, for December 2023, January, February, March, April, May 2024, the activities carried out within the MWSSP on the **project.gov.md**;



- monitoring and coordinating of the PIP elaboration and baseline assessment for relevant indicators that will be conducted in Year 1, for KPIs for the selected WSS Operators;
- elaboration of the semiannual Report for the activities with the Austrian Development Agency's funding for the period July 01- December 31, 2023;



3.4.Challenges and risks for implementation of the project

The key challenges and risks, for the implementation of the MWSSP in the reporting period, that will lead to delays in implementing some actions are:

- Delaying in the process of change of land, for the construction of the sewage treatment plant in Soroca;
- Delays in the process of changing the use of land from *agricultural land* to *land for construction* leads to delays in obtaining environmental agreements;
- Due to the local elections on November 05, 2023, some of the mayors, of the localities concerned by the project, have been changed. Therefore, it was necessary to inform in details, the new mayors, about the project processes. This led to delays in some approval activities.
- Lack of qualified personnel in the field or companies with the necessary experience to participate in tenders;
- Challenging cooperation with the involved LPAs, especially those in the Riscani sub-project;
- Late receipt of necessary documentation from State / local administration bodies (urbanism certificate, relevant land certificates, archeological discharge, etc.), especially for the Riscani sub-project, where the affected region is on the border area with Romania
- Limited experience of the Stakeholders in examining and coordination of the bidding documentation
- Limited experience of Stakeholders in examining and approving the design documentation.
- Low competition led to re-launching the bidding process.



4. COMPONENT 4. CONTINGENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMPONENT

A provisional zero-amount component is included, which will allow for rapid reallocation of credit/loan proceeds from other components during an emergency under streamlined procurement and disbursement procedures. This component allows the Government to request the World Bank to recategorize and reallocate financing from other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs. The Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) will be established and managed in accordance with the provisions of the World Bank Policy and World Bank Directive on Investment Project Financing. The CERC, if activated, will be able to finance eligible activities included in the positive list, stipulated in the Project Operations Manual (POM) (dedicated CERC annex).

During the reporting period there were no actions under this component



5. REPORTING BASED ON THE LIST OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES for 2023

Table 22. Reporting based on the list of planned activities until December 31, 2023

Activity	Action	Start Date	The status of the action		
			Completed	Ongoing	It is not started
			+	●	×
General activities					
Project Institutional Arrangements	Planning the first meeting of the Project Coordination Group	March 15, 2023	+		
	Delegation of the Department of Policies in the Field of Water Supply and Sanitation, as the Lead WSS Unit	March 10, 2023	+		
	Developing ToR for building the capacity of the Lead WSS Unit	September 29, 2023	+		
	Hiring the remaining Staff of the PIU, according to the Hiring schedule presented to the WB experts	Until June, 2023	+		
Project Support Agreements (RDA)	Signing the Implementation Support Agreements with RDA South	March 10, 2023	+		
	Signing the Implementation Support Agreements with RDA North	March 15, 2023	+		
	Signing the Implementation Support Agreements with RDA Gagauzia	March 15, 2023	+		
Financial management	Approval of the GD regarding the VAT exemptions	February 28, 2023	+		
Social aspects	Finalization and making functional the Grievance Redress Mechanism	April 28, 2023	+		
	Development of the Gender Action Plan	March 31, 2023	+		
Subcomponent 1.1					
Expansion and improvements of wastewater services in Soroca	Signing the Cooperation Agreement by the P.I. NORLD, RDA and LPAs	March 30, 2023	+		
	Development of the Terms of Reference including technical specifications, preliminary concept design, and cost estimates based on the approved procurement procedures	February 1, 2023		●	
	Carrying out procurement and contracting procedures of the design and construction company	December 15, 2023			×
	Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator	May 31, 2023			×



Semiannual Progress Report no 3 for the period July 01- December 31, 2023

Activity	Action	Start Date	The status of the action		
			Completed	Ongoing	It is not started
			+	●	×
	Creation of the Citizen Water and Sanitation Committee	April 28, 2023	+		
Expansion and improvement water supply services in the Prut cluster, Riscani rayon	Signing the Cooperation Agreement by the P.I. NORLD, RDA and LPAs	March 30, 2023	+		
	Direct contracting for the Designing Company for the adjustment of the DED and BoQ	March 15, 2023		●	
	Carrying out procurement and contracting procedures of the company that will prepare the ESIA & ESMP for the sub-project	March 15, 2023		●	
	Support for the creation and licencing of the new regional operator in the field of WSS in Riscani District	April 1, 2023		●	
	Developing the ToR and bidding documents for the construction company, according to the adjusted DED and BoQ	November 1, 2023			×
	Developing the ToR for the technical supervision company	September 1, 2023			×
	Initiation of the procurement procedures of the works	December 1, 2023			×
	Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator	May 31, 2023			×
	Creation of the Citizen Water and Sanitation Committee	April 1, 2023			×
Expansion and improvement water supply services in Cahul and Vulcanesti Rayons	Signing the Cooperation Agreement by the P.I. NORLD, RDA and LPAs	March 20, 2023	+		
	Direct contracting for the Designing Company for the adjustment of the DED and BoQ	March 15, 2023	+		
	Carrying out procurement and contracting procedures of the company that will prepare the ESIA & ESMP for the sub-project	March 15, 2023	+		
	Developing the ToR for the construction company, according to the adjusted DED and BoQ	November 1, 2023			×
	Developing the ToR for the technical supervision company	September 1, 2023			×
	Initiation of the procurement procedures of the works	December 1, 2023			×



Semiannual Progress Report no 3 for the period July 01- December 31, 2023

Activity	Action	Start Date	The status of the action		
			Completed	Ongoing	It is not started
			+	●	×
	Support for the drafting and signing of contracts for the delegation of WSS services to the licensed operator	April 15, 2023			×
	Creation of the Citizen Water and Sanitation Committee	April 1, 2023	+		
Expansion and improvement of wastewater services in Comrat municipalities	Signing the Cooperation Agreement by the P.I. NORLD, RDA and LPAs	March 20, 2023	+		
	Starting procurement procedures for contracting the Consulting company for the elaboration of the Feasibility study	April 15, 2023		●	
On site sanitation program	Develop the Market Study	April 30, 2023			×
	Develop and approve the GD	May 31, 2023		●	
	Select the beneficiary locality	May 31, 2023			×
	Hire the designing company	October 31, 2023			×
	Develop the DED and BoQ	March 31, 2024			×
Subcomponent 1.2					
Improving resilient WASH facilities in public and social institutions	Approve lists of institutions provided by MoH and MoER	February 28, 2023	+		
	Hire the WASH Engineer	March 31, 2023	+		
	Prepare ToR on technical aspect for the designing company	September 30, 2023	+		
	Hire the design company for WASH interventions in educational institutions	January 31, 2024	+		
	Hire the design company for WASH interventions in health care institutions	January 31, 2024		●	
	Start works execution	January 31, 2025			
Subcomponent 2.1					
Sector planning and financing for programmatic delivery	Development of the Road Map, necessary for the elaboration of the NWSSDP	March 30, 2023	+		
	Development of the ToR to contract de Consulting Company to develop the NWSSDP	April 30, 2023	+		



Semiannual Progress Report no 3 for the period July 01- December 31, 2023

Activity	Action	Start Date	The status of the action		
			Completed	Ongoing	It is not started
			+	●	×
	Development of the ToR to contract the company for Strategic Environmental Assessment for the NWSSDP	February 29, 2023			×
	Development of the ToR for building the capacity of the Lead WSS Unit	September 30, 2023	+		
Legislative and design reform	Contracting the consultant who will work together with MIRD representatives and the Parliamentary Working Group in order to develop the draft Law 303, to support in promoting and public consultation of the draft Law	March 10, 2023	+		
	Contracting the Consulting company for the elaboration of the Moldavan Construction Normative "External sewerage networks and installations"	April 1, 2023	+		
	Contracting the consultant for the elaboration of the draft Government Decision regarding approval of the criteria for authorization, construction, registration, control, operation and maintenance of appropriate individual wastewater collection and treatment systems	March 10, 2023	+		
	Contracting the strategic planning consultant to provide support to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development in the implementation of the Subcomponent 2.1, especially to support the development of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Plan and also to support in the planned sector reforms	March 10, 2023	+		
	Modification of the GD 950/2013 for the approval of the Regulation regarding the requirements for the collection, purification and discharge of waste water into the sewage system and/or in the emission for urban and rural localities	April 1, 2023		●	
	Monitoring and benchmarking of operators	Signing the Inter-Institutional Cooperation Agreement	April 1, 2023	+	
	Develop the ToR for NAER Regulation with economic KPIs	April 1, 2023			×
	Develop ToR to contract a Consultant to develop the draft GD on MIS concept	August 1, 2023	+		
	Starting procurement procedures for contracting the consultant who will develop	November 1, 2023	+		



Semiannual Progress Report no 3 for the period July 01- December 31, 2023

Activity	Action	Start Date	The status of the action		
			Completed	Ongoing	It is not started
			+	●	×
	the GD and ToR for the consulting company for developing MIS				
	Starting procurement procedures for contracting company for developing MIS	April 1, 2024			
Human capital development	Development and Request for „No objection Note” for the developed Cooperation Agreement, and subsequently ensuring its signature	March 15, 2023	+		
	Approval of the list of 50 persons with higher education from WSS operators, for qualification and requalification studies	April 10, 2023	+		
	Signing the Contract for the provision of services with the Technical University of Moldova	May 30, 2023	+		
	Support in ensuring the accreditation by the Ministry of Education and Research of qualification and requalification studies for people with college technical studies	May 30, 2023			×
	Support for TUM in requesting 20 places financed from the state budget to request the reopening of a specialized Group in the field of water supply and sewage, in accordance with the provisions of the Project Appraisal Document	April 10, 2023			×
Note:			Actions that are outside of the reporting period		

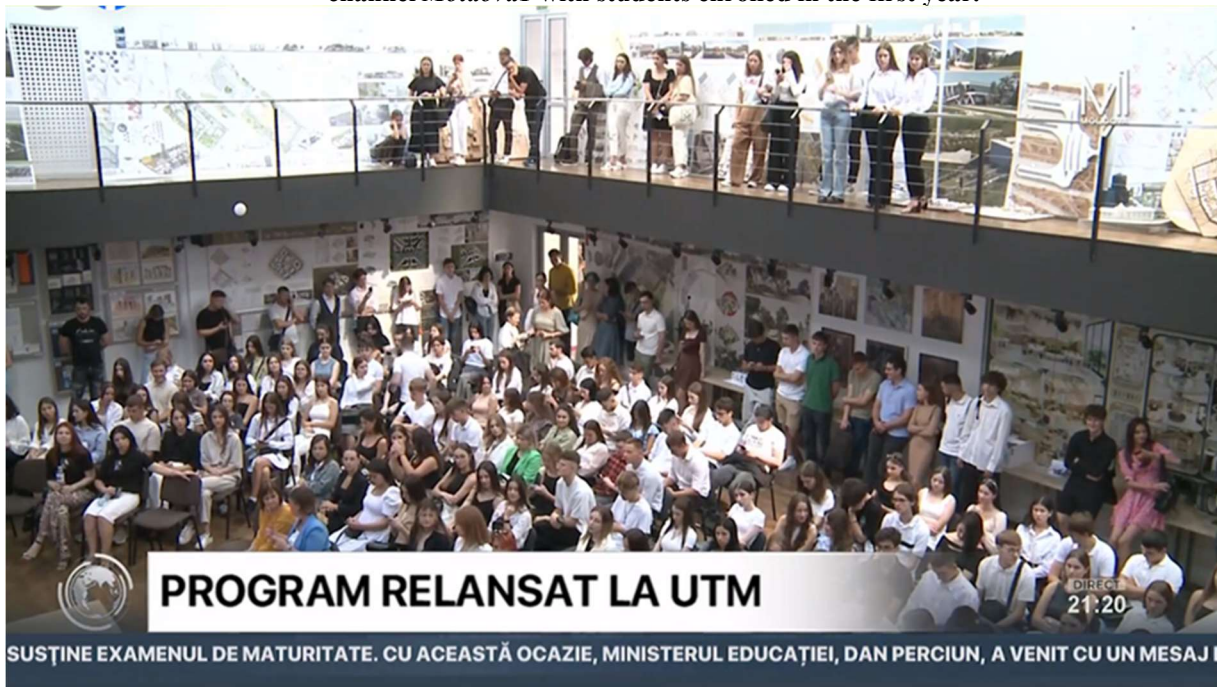


ANNEXES

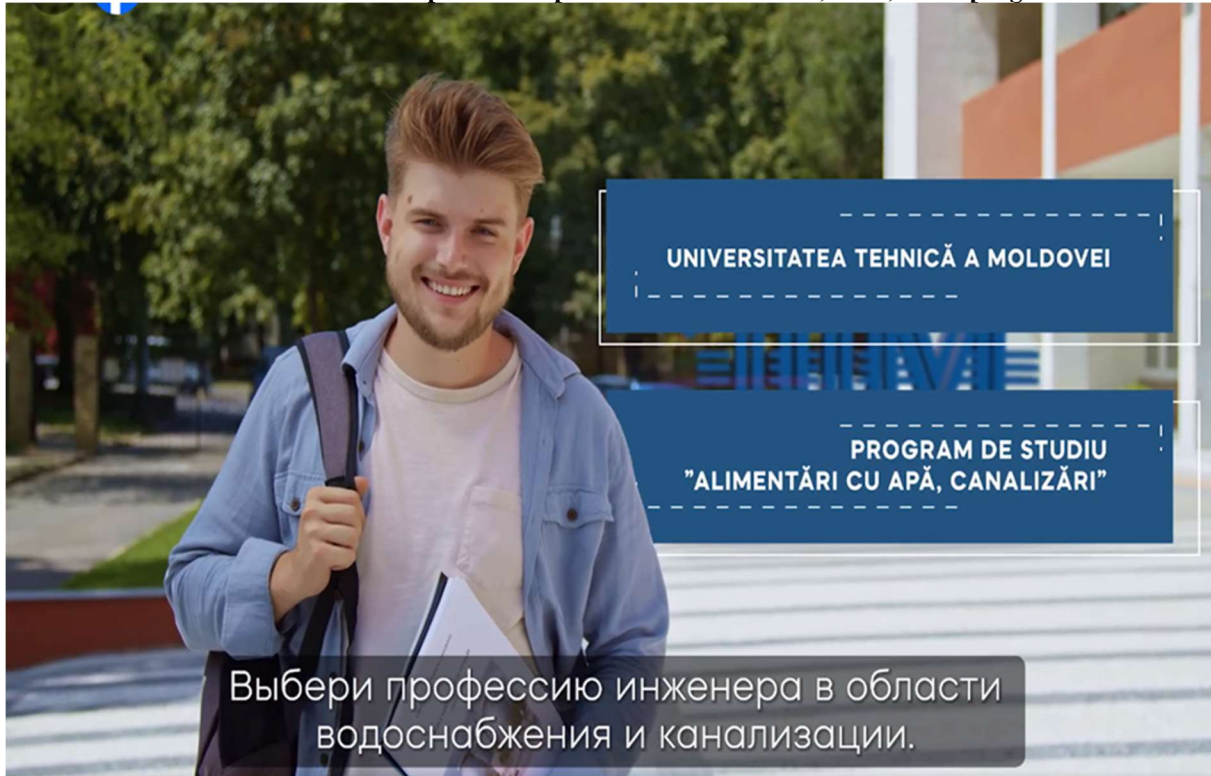
Annex 1. Radio Programme *Spatiu Public*, Radio Moldova. The theme - the progress of MWSSP



Annex 2. Video reportage made related to the re-launch of the WWS program at UAF, TUM, by the public channel *Moldova1* with students enrolled in the first year.



Annex 3. Video spot for the promotion of the WWS, AUF, TUM program



Annex 4. NORLD/ MWSSP website



Annex 5. Leaflet for promotion of the Grievance Redress Mechanism



Fă-ți vocea auzită!



Nu ezita să raportezi problemele apărute!

Folosește mecanismul de soluționare a reclamațiilor și ajută-ne să aducem apă de calitate în comunitatea ta!



Cum poți face acest lucru?

Adresează-te la primăria din localitatea ta, la Comitetul Local pentru Apă și Sanitație (CLAS)!

Contactează:

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Mecanismul de soluționare a reclamațiilor



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Proiectul „Securitatea Aprovizionării cu Apă și Sanitație în Moldova”

Annex 6. Leaflet for promotion of the Moldova Water Security and Sanitation Project



Componentele proiectului

Subcomponenta 2.2:

- Îmbunătățirea performanței operatorilor de servicii de alimentare cu apă și canalizare:
 - ▶ S.A. „Apă-Canal Cahul”
 - ▶ Î.M. „Apă-Canal Vulcănești”
 - ▶ Î.M. „Apă-Canal Costești”
 - ▶ S.A. „Regia Apă-Canal Soroca”
 - ▶ Î.M. „SU-Canal” Comrat



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Securitatea aprovizionării
cu apă și sanitație în Moldova

Apă curată pentru o viață sănătoasă



Obiectivele proiectului

Creșterea accesului la servicii de alimentare cu apă și sanitație, gestionate în condiții de siguranță în zonele rurale și orașele selectate, precum și consolidarea capacității instituționale, la nivel național și local, pentru furnizarea serviciilor de alimentare cu apă și sanitație

• Perioada de implementare a proiectului **5 ani**

Bugetul proiectului

46 531 300 Euro

44 100 000 Euro

• Asociația Internațională de Dezvoltare

• Agenția Austriacă pentru Dezvoltare

1 550 000 Euro

• Contribuția localităților

• Beneficiari direcți

3%

96,5 mil persoane



Componentele proiectului

1 Creșterea accesului la servicii de alimentare cu apă și sanitație, gestionate în condiții de siguranță în zonele rurale și orașele selectate

Subcomponenta 1.1:

- Extinderea și îmbunătățirea serviciilor de alimentare cu apă în raioanele Rîșcani, Cahul și orașul Vulcănești
- Extinderea și îmbunătățirea infrastructurii serviciilor de canalizare în municipiile Soroca și Comrat
- Proiect pilot pentru îmbunătățirea serviciilor de sanitație în gospodăriile casnice

Subcomponenta 1.2:

- Îmbunătățirea facilităților de apă, sanitație și igienă (WASH) din instituțiile publice sociale (școli și centre medicale)



2 Consolidarea capacității instituționale la nivel național și local pentru îmbunătățirea serviciilor de alimentare cu apă și sanitație

Subcomponenta 2.1:

- Consolidarea capacității instituționale la nivel național și local pentru furnizarea serviciilor de alimentare cu apă și canalizare
- ▶ Consolidarea capacității instituționale la nivel național în domeniul alimentării cu apă și canalizare:
- ▶ Elaborarea Planului Național de Amenajare a Teritoriului - secțiunea „alimentare cu apă și sanitație”
- ▶ Asistență tehnică pentru APL-uri și operatorii de alimentare cu apă și canalizare, pentru a sprijini procesul de agregare în operatori regionali autorizați, conform Planului național de dezvoltare
- ▶ Pregătirea modificărilor legislative, politicilor, documentelor normative, normelor de proiectare și construcție pentru sanitație (actualizarea normelor) și consolidarea capacităților aferente, conform PNDSAAS
- ▶ Dezvoltarea și implementarea unui Sistem de management al informațiilor privind alimentarea cu apă și canalizare la nivel național pentru operatori
- ▶ Asistența pentru reglementatorul național (ANRE), pentru operatorii de alimentare cu apă și canalizare și APL-uri în elaborarea tarifelor și revizuirea acestora
- ▶ Implementarea unui program de dezvoltare profesională, în colaborare cu Asociația „Moldova Apă - Canal”, Universitatea Tehnică a Moldovei și operatorii serviciilor de alimentare cu apă și canalizare

