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REPUBLICII MOLDOVA



EMBASSY OF SWEDEN

Chisinau



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
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# Summary Vulnerability Study

## „Taxonomy and possible decentralization policy implications for vulnerable groups in Moldova“





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The analysis and recommendations of this Study do not necessarily reflect the views of the UN Women, UNDP or the Government of Sweden. This is an independent publication prepared for JILDP and reflects the views of the author.

This report is an edited summary of the full report. The report below does not include the footnotes, references, addendum and table of contents which are available in the full report at [www.un.md](http://www.un.md)

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Introduction

## Introduction

### *Scope and Objectives*

This paper aims at providing an account of the vulnerable groups and outlines how the process of decentralization can have potential consequences on them. The research develops a classification of the vulnerable groups based on the vulnerability criteria. It systematizes existing evidence from the national and international sources on the factual existence of the groups, discusses the concerns led to their vulnerability identification and reviews possible underlying causes behind these groups' status of vulnerability. It tries to make an expert assessment on the potential positive and negative implications for the decentralization on these groups.

### *Background*

From 2000–2010 Moldovan GDP grew on average by 4.0% annually (6% during 2000-2004, 5.8% during 2005-2008, 5.99% in 2009, and 6.94% in 2010). With a per capita GDP of 1,860 USD, Moldova has the lowest incomes in Europe. The poverty rate calculated in 2010, was 21.9 %, 4.4% lower as compared to 2009, the rate of extreme poverty diminished to 1.4% from 2% in 2009. These improvements accrued due to the economic growth, increased remittances, and increased number of households that receive social assistance. Still poverty reduction remains to be unequal, about 80% of the poor in Moldova live in rural areas.

Moldova is moving towards European integration. EU and Moldova negotiate comprehensive bilateral agreement that upon successful completion will open perspectives for Moldova institutional integration. The decentralization of the power and bringing the decision-making process closer to citizens is one of the cornerstone principles of the European democracy. Social coherence and better integration of the various groups of the society represents one of the pillars of the European inclusive democratic societies.

European integration is the process for all citizens of Moldova, not for the groups that enjoy dominant or privileged position in society. Important processes such as the decentralization are deemed to be evaluated against its possible impact on the vulnerable groups.

### *Methodology and constraints*

The key approach of the paper in identifying the vulnerable groups is the de facto, their real existence and their real situations, and problems of the segments and groups of popu-

lation that are consequently classified as vulnerable groups. The groups are further analyzed from the perspective of the causes of the vulnerability, the existing current policies and the negative effects produced by these policies. We also produce an account of the good practices and policies relevant to the existing situations, and provide some detailed recommendations that could be taken aboard in the process of the decentralization.

Research is produced based on a thorough review of the existing reliable secondary sources. The definition of the vulnerability and the recognition of the vulnerable groups are approached from practical and pragmatic terms. The existing evidence, information and data on the groups could not be negated. Substantial amount of evidence produced by national and international sources make the foundation of these findings.

The paper has not undertaken first hand collection of data and information, qualitative or quantitative.

Earlier drafts of the paper have been reviewed and have been subject of the several public consultations. The first draft of the paper has been circulated to smaller group of experts and knowledgeable people and their comments and recommendations have been taken aboard for next versions. The paper's approach, methodology, preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations were discussed during a workshop organized with a wide range of representatives from civil society. The comments from this workshop have provided input into the pre-final draft of the research. The pre-final draft of the research has been presented to a core group of experts, consultants from within the Government of Moldova, UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF, Embassy of Sweden in Moldova and other development organizations as well as to the representatives of the civil society. Additional individual reviews have been received. All these comments have been incorporated and reflected upon in the current version of the paper.

### *Conclusions and recommendations*

Moldova, like other European countries, has segments and groups in its society that find themselves in a particularly vulnerable situation. Embracement of the European values of social cohesion, solidarity, responsibility for everyone, imposes the first frank recognition of the reality of the fate and lives of less favored members of our society. This frank and open recognition of the real and de facto existence of the vulnerable groups is primarily and a necessary act of self-awareness and the country's approach to its European fu-

ture. Most of the situations of vulnerable groups are a legacy of the past, results of the policies that kept Moldova away from its historical place as part of the wider modern Europe's values.

Second comes the intelligence and informed acceptance of the required change regarding these vulnerable groups that Governmental policies should undertake consistently and systematically to make social cohesion, integration and opportunities real for everyone. The type and severity of vulnerability differs from one group to another. Unfortunately, some groups face more severe and deep state of multiple exclusions, discrimination and marginalization, and society's efforts required reversing the situation need to be bold and systematic.

Generic recommendations for the vulnerable groups in the process of decentralization should imply principles of:

- 1) participation and representation of these groups,
- 2) transparency and accountability before and for the relevant decisions,
- 3) subsidiary and devolution in the interest of the vulnerable groups.

On *participation and representation*, the part generic recommendations are:

- a) election process in local councils should include quota (reserved places) for participation of vulnerable groups conditioned with a certain percentage (starting from 5-7%) of vulnerable group population;
- b) non-elected public servants' positions should be subject of affirmative action programme of better representation of vulnerable groups representatives (or at least appointed responsible persons handling interests of the vulnerable groups as paid or non-remunerated positions);

- c) introduction of quota places for the participation and representation of the vulnerable groups in the local councils, by reserved places (when proportion of vulnerable groups reach certain percent, say 5-10%, and election process does not yield vulnerable group representation) or proportionate places;

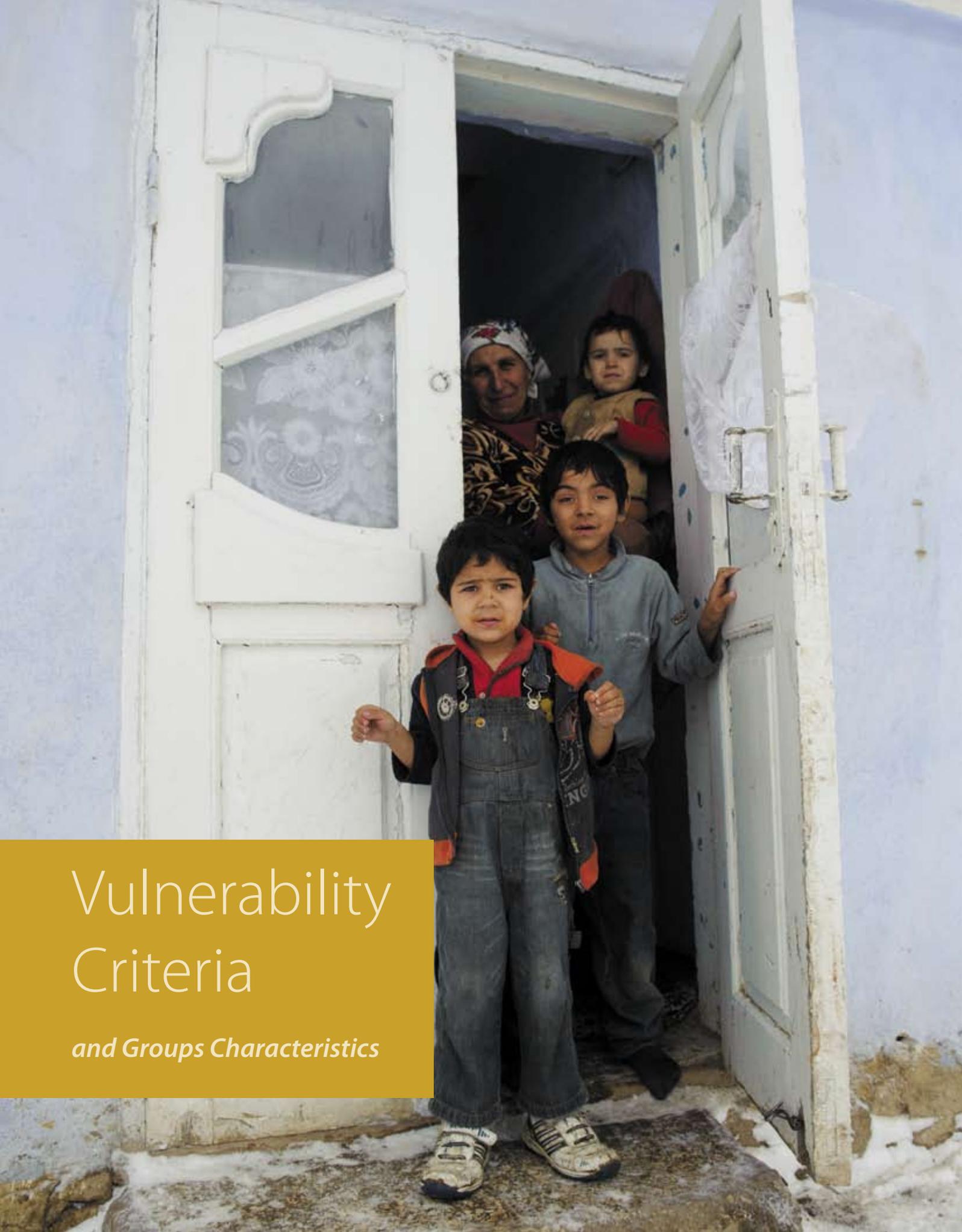
On *transparency/accountability* part generic recommendations are:

- a) governmental policies elaboration process and regional authorities decisions should encompass the component of the vulnerable groups impact analysis (or more generically Human Rights Impact Analysis);
- b) central authorities decisions affecting local communities are subject to impact on vulnerability;
- c) decisions of local authorities are subject to publication and availability for review by the interested parties and vulnerable groups, including designing and redesigning of territorial borders related to use and exploitation of assets and resources;

On *subsidiary* part the generic recommendation are:

- a) decentralization of certain percent of the educational curricular (and linguistic) content, local curricular (up to 30%), for the decision of rayon and local authorities with matching funds from central authorities for innovation;
- b) decentralization of the determination of the eligibility of the social cash programmes, while the criteria set by central government);
- c) the accessibility of local authorities to central government grants and subsidies for the creation of the local community centers to serve the needs of the vulnerable groups);
- d) local authorities of first level accessibility to establishment of centers for family doctors and medical points with matching funds from central government.





# Vulnerability Criteria

*and Groups Characteristics*

## Vulnerability Criteria and Groups Characteristics

### Vulnerability and Human Rights

This research reviews a number of secondary sources and studies that prove that the neglect of vulnerable groups resulted in the violation of these groups and their individual members' human rights. A view that states that violation of human rights requires authorities' formal observation to be recognized as a situation of the violation of human rights and then measures to be undertaken is not only conservative but is also not in compliance with human rights standards and principles. Weak or undeveloped institutional structures, inadequate skills and an absence of adequate representation rarely capture and respond to the cases and even fail to capture series of types of cases of the violation of human rights. This only means that the authorities formal recognition of human rights violations (capturing only part) should not be taken as the only true basis for the understanding of the many other situations and cases of the violations of human rights.

Various international specialized bodies and specialized organizations provide findings on the types of violations that have not been captured by the government, based on rigorous research, wealth of experience and expertise. These findings help us understand better a reality and a de facto situation of society. In the case of absence of the comprehensive and reliable government generated data on the situation of various groups, the efforts of the specialized bodies and organization is an invaluable contribution for the country to develop and apply relevant policies.

Violations of human rights in behalf of the groups and individuals who are characterized as vulnerable based on one or several vulnerability criteria are observed to strongly correlate. Therefore, understanding the real situation of the vulnerability of various groups allows for a better understanding of the possible and actual human rights violations, many of which are not captured and formally recognized. The thinking and analysis of the human rights-based approach in the development interventions refers to the vulnerable groups based on some criteria and *de facto* situations of the groups and segments of the society.

Vulnerability is frequently linked to the fault lines. Fault lines are those characteristics that formally divide society into criteria such as language, social status, income, age, etc. Fault lines might trigger vulnerability status for some groups depending on the real situation state of these groups. Generally, the characteristics of fault lines transform into vulnerability criteria and, subsequently, groups become characterized as vulnerable groups when we authoritatively find violations of these groups' rights, and also in comparison with other groups. It is

not always that fault lines transform into vulnerable criteria, yet depending on the exact social situation and the underlying causes we can state that human rights of some vulnerable groups are violated and it is given the groups' belonging to these particular criteria.

The observation of the act of violation of human rights is an action that requires efforts to qualify and establish as well as to bring individual evidence, the latter capacities might be missing, therefore the approach of the vulnerability is better suited to society intervening. At the same time, the analytical *instrumentaria* of human rights (normative setting particularly) is a strong and powerful approach for the countries that align themselves with the principles of human rights values. Human rights are codified well in international standards and become mandatory for the countries. Human rights offer comprehensive guidance in social development and also represent the targets for the social developments. As one authoritative source stated:

*The Committee wishes to point out that the principle of equality sometimes requires the state's parties to take affirmative action in order to diminish or eliminate conditions which cause or help to perpetuate discrimination prohibited by the Covenant. For example, in a state where the general conditions of a certain part of the population prevent or impair their enjoyment of human rights, the state should take specific action to correct those conditions. Such action may involve granting for a time to the part of the population concerned certain preferential treatment in specific matters as compared with the rest of the population. However, as long as such action is needed to correct discrimination in fact, it is a case of legitimate differentiation under the Covenant.*

Therefore, governmental policies and foreign assistance should aim at the improvement of the situations of the vulnerable groups to prevent and addresses created conditions for the de facto and real violations of human rights.

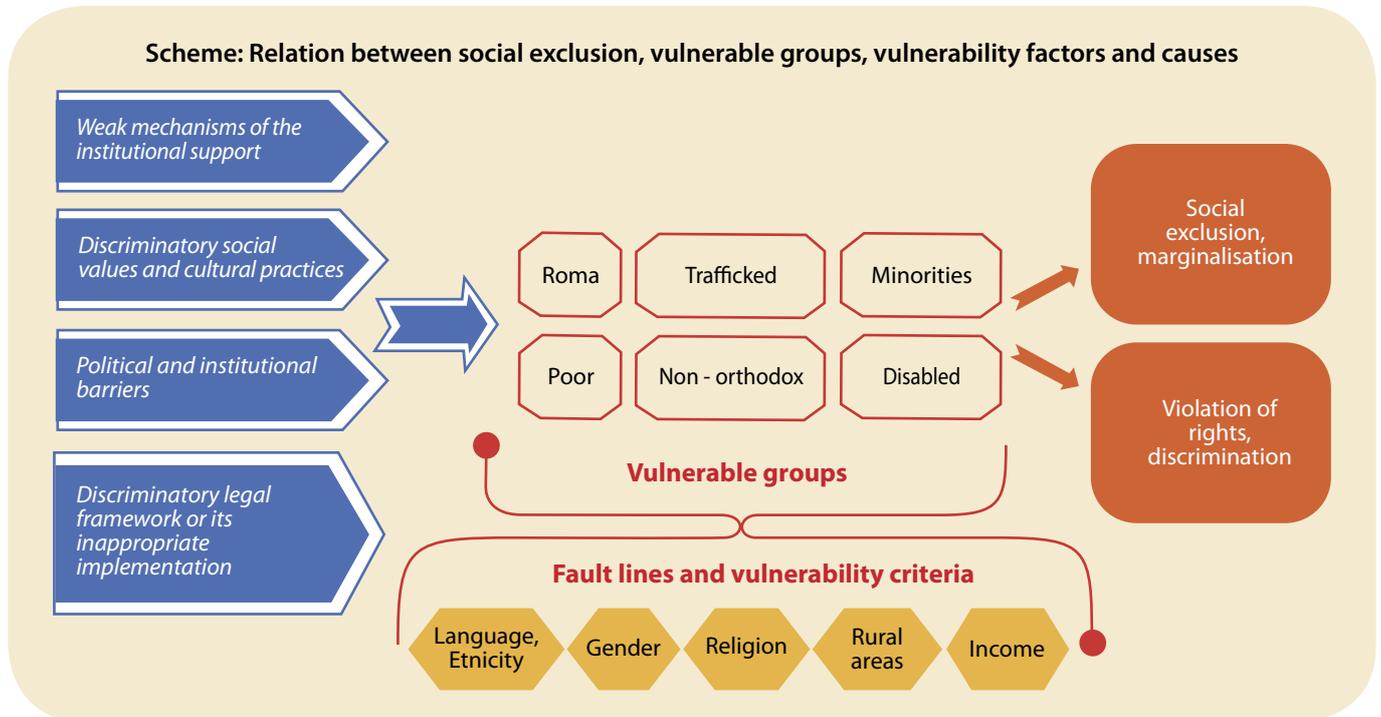
### Vulnerability criteria

Various approaches exist to identify and characterize vulnerable groups, excluded groups, and discriminated groups. This paper argues that there should be pragmatic approach when recognizing the situations of the real groups facing exclusion, discrimination, and marginalization.

Vulnerability is not a commonly accepted concept. The concept has interlinks with the notion of social exclusion, poverty, discrimination and marginalization. The social exclusion is the result of interplay of some determining factors. The

social exclusion represents the effect of series of the inter-related problems that are, in sequence, determined by some root causes or interplay of social, economic, anthropological, etc. factors. The interplay of the determining factors are as-

sociated and manifested along some specific lines and characteristics that make up the vulnerability characteristics. We present the link between social exclusion, vulnerability and causes as follows:



The Eurostat Task Force for Statistics on Poverty and *Social Exclusion* has separated social exclusion from poverty and views it “as a dynamic process that shows itself on descending levels: certain disadvantages lead to exclusion that, on its turn, leads to an even worse situation [...] and ends up with a range of multiple and long-term disadvantages. Individuals, households can be excluded from the access to resources, such as employment opportunities, healthcare, education and political and social life”.

The European Commission states that *social exclusion* is a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of the society and prevented from participating fully in social life by virtue of their

- 1) poverty,
- 2) lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or
- 3) as a result of discrimination.

Respectively, this distances them from job, income and education opportunities, as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feeling powerless

and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives.

The excluded are individuals and/or groups of individuals deprived of full participation in economic, social, cultural and political life of the society they live in. Individuals can be excluded for various reasons:

- 1) *given their personal characteristics* (older persons, ill persons, persons with disabilities, poor, immigrants, women and children); or
- 2) *given their social/cultural characteristics* (such as religion, race, ethnicity, class, language, etc.).

Therefore, the majority of vulnerable groups are usually excluded on at least one dimension of the aforementioned, and the exclusion is much higher if certain components of social exclusion interact, influencing each other and creating thus a chain of multiple deprivations.

Social exclusion is a multidimensional process that involves and combines a number of factors. Researches in this area tried to summarize the multiple forms of exclusion:

## Vulnerability Criteria and Groups Characteristics

- Exclusion from *economic life* as a result of and resulting in the inequity in holding goods and incomes, as well as the decrease in employment opportunities.
- Exclusion from *social services* as a result of unequal access to a range of services – education, healthcare and housing, social protection, etc. – generating visible effects on human outcomes (education, healthcare, nutrition).
- Exclusion from the *political participation* as a result of and resulting in inequalities of distribution within the group of political opportunities and power at all levels (including political, bureaucratic and military power) and unequal access to justice, liberty and institutions.
- *Cultural exclusion* as a result of and resulting in differences in acknowledgment (de facto) of the ranking of cultural norms, traditions and customs of various groups.

In order to determine what represent vulnerable groups in Moldova, some advanced the approach of the understanding of the vulnerability criteria or so called fault lines. The *vulnerability criteria* or *fault lines* are the characteristics along which the vulnerability of groups is determined. These are related to:

- *Class, well-being and access to resources;*
- *Gender relations*, formal and informal rules for women and men, boys and girls on equal opportunities in decision-making, control over resources and participation, including their impact on social status of these people;
- *Ethnic background* (how social norms and practices of dominant ethnic groups define the degree and forms of discriminatory practices that the disadvantaged groups are subject to);
- *Language* (how the communities speaking the dominant language have more opportunities for inclusion and how this results in inequality between the people speaking the languages of the minority and the majority of population);
- *Religion* (how dominant religious groups define the attitudes and behaviors towards other religions that could include discriminatory practices);
- *Place of residence* or geographical access (how the place of residence influences access to resources and

social exclusion. For example, the access to resources of the population from the capitals of different countries in comparison with the rural areas, etc.), and others.

Discussing the causes of the problems, one can summarize them into categories:

- *Weak mechanisms of the institutional support.* They can be inadequate, have a poor functioning, have a low quality and incapacity to respond and thus unable to create opportunities for those who are at risk to fall into social exclusion. Private institutions, civil society organizations, as well as certain private financial institutions and service providers can contribute to social exclusion due to the fact that they do not develop Programmes targeted at excluded groups or services that would meet their needs.
- *Discriminatory legal framework or its inappropriate implementation.* Imperfect legislation can boost the exclusion of social groups. Sometimes, legislation can be appropriate, it can provide measures of protection for disadvantaged groups, but the reduced capacities for its enforcement make it useless.
- *Discriminatory practices resulting from the act of favoring certain people.* Preconceptions and discrimination resulted from social and political privileges can also lead to social exclusion. For example, giving preference to certain groups and the discrimination based on ethnicity and gender can produce social exclusion of certain categories of people from the labor market, etc. In extreme cases, direct hostility and violence against certain groups can generate social exclusion.
- *Policy and institutional barriers.* The public institutions can contribute to social exclusion through the lack of understanding of the dynamics of vulnerability, poverty and exclusion or through a formal monitoring. The decision-making process can be inefficient for the protection of the excluded groups mostly due to the lack of involvement and shortage of resources.
- *Discriminatory social values and cultural practices.* Social exclusion can persist also at cultural and traditional levels. In this respect, cultural exclusion is the differentiated access of social groups to the benefits of material and social welfare, when causes are not structural. Respectively, individuals, families and community, as well as State institutions can generate, through their actions, exclusion processes within the vulnerable groups.

Some groups qualify under several vulnerability criteria, others meet only one criterion. Some groups' vulnerability is explained by several underlining causes, yet in practice there is one particular cause. The manifestation of the negative consequences and impacts on the groups can take multiple forms, and for some groups they might be firmly and deeply entrenched into groups' societal environment. There could not be a hierarchy among vulnerable groups.

### ***The choice for vulnerability approach***

Of its less than 4.26 million population, the proportion of population under 18 is about 25% and the proportion of population above 60 is 15%; 55% of population is rural.

In Moldova, the vulnerability of groups has been identified along the lines of:

- 1) income,
- 2) age,
- 3) disability,
- 4) language/ethnicity,
- 5) religion,
- 6) rural regions,
- 7) gender,
- 8) occupation.

Empirical data and research show the availability of hard and soft data and multiple sources of information, including non-governmental sources of information.

Classification of the vulnerable groups by evidence generated on the basis of the fault lines include:

- Poverty:
  - a) older persons,
  - b) large households,
  - c) children;
- Age (subject of exclusion from participation, stigma, unemployment):
  - a) older persons,
  - b) young persons,
  - c) children;
- Disability (subject of exclusion, stigma, inadequate participation in decision-making):
  - a) persons with mental disability,
  - b) children with disability,
- Language/ethnicity (inadequate access to education, stigma, ):
  - a) Roma,

- b) Bulgarians,
- c) Ukrainians,
- d) Gagauz,
- e) Moldovans in Transnistria.

- Religion (registration difficulties, religious services, stigma):
  - a) Muslims,
  - b) Non-orthodox Christian,
  - c) Jews.
- Rural regions (inadequate access to infrastructure, high unemployment):
  - a) children of educational age,
  - b) active part of population.
- Gender (stigma, employment, level of pay):
  - a) women,
  - b) LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender),
  - c) trafficking, domestic violence.
- Occupation (inadequate access to markets):
  - a) agricultural entrepreneurs.

### ***Vulnerable Groups Justification and Characteristics***

#### **Income criteria/poverty**

#### ***Poverty remains an important factor for the vulnerability***

More than 100,000 people are in a state of extreme poverty. Poverty is concentrated in small communities. The poverty rate has diminished over the last few years given the economic growth in the country. Households with a low income under the poverty level make up 26% of the society; most of them concentrated in rural towns and in rural areas, and 5% of households are under extreme poverty. In 2006, 30.2% of the population was living in absolute poverty and 4.5% in extreme poverty. Despite these gains, starting from 2008, absolute poverty increased for the first time in the previous three years, reaching 26.4%, compared to 25.8% in 2007, mainly due to its extension into rural zones and a drop in remittances. The most relevant option to identify the poor persons is through the new Programme of social aid, which is partly implemented by the local authorities that identify those eligible and in need. Therefore in each locality, persons that have less than 740 MDL per member of household per month are screened by local authorities.

### ***Children affected by poverty***

Children make up an important segment of the earlier mentioned population. Children are more deeply affected by poverty, particularly in rural areas. The share of underweight children aged 0-5 years fell from 14.3% in 2006 to 11% in 2008.

### ***Large households with children***

The poverty rate increases with the number of children, and this is an enduring pattern over the data period, since families with four or more children have experienced an increase in their average poverty rate. Belonging to the households with children and pensioners influences negatively the well-being. Among the households with children, the most difficult situation is of the households with more than 2 children. Each household member received only 859.70 MDL monthly in 2009, which is the lowest rate as compared to other groups.

### ***Age***

(subject of exclusion from participation, stigma, and unemployment)

### ***Orphan children, socially abandoned children***

2006 give an estimate of around 177,000 children left behind by parents working abroad. About 37.1% are 10 to 15 years old, 50.8% are female and 49.2% are male. One third (31%) of children under age 15 years do not live with both parents. Seven percent of Moldovan children do not live with either of their parents. Overall, the average age of children left behind is 11 years old. The majority of these children (79.5%) live in rural areas. One fifth of them are under 5, and one quarter or more are 15 years old and above. Among children under the age 9, there are proportionally more left behind in rural households than in urban households. 44% of households with a member living abroad are caring for at least one child left behind. This proportion is higher in rural than in urban areas: 47% and 40%, respectively. 37% of emigrants from urban areas and 45% from rural areas left at least one child behind, and 40% left two or more children behind.

### ***Young people***

Young people in Moldova suffer a clear disadvantage on the labor market. There is a negative correlation between age and the risk of being unemployed, and those in the 15-24 age group face more than twice the risk of being unemployed than the next age segment (25-34 years). In the first quarter of 2009, most of the young unemployed had only

secondary education or less, which places them at a disadvantage in the country whereby there are pay-offs to education in terms of labor market outcomes. Youth unemployment is higher in rural areas (17% in the first quarter of 2009, 15% in urban areas), while migration has been mainly from rural areas and substantially involved young people. In the first quarter of 2009, youth unemployment (i.e. involving those in the 15-24 age groups) rose to 16% (compared to previous trends where youth unemployment fell from 17% in 2006 to 14% in 2007). The unemployment rate amongst young males (nearly 18%) is higher than for women (14%), although the employment rate for young males is also higher (17% for men, 15% women). Youth unemployment rate is higher in rural areas (17% in the first quarter of 2009, urban areas 15%).

Young people with good education and training background cannot find employment since the lack of the work experience or limited available vacancies. After leaving the educational system and before finding their first significant job, more than half of young people (57%) did not have a job and were looking actively for one. Only 22% of young people found a job immediately after leaving the educational system. Over one quarter left the first job because of low salaries, while 17.7% left abroad. Migration from Moldova is also mainly from rural areas and substantially involves young people. Thus, while the average age of emigrants in 2006 was nearly 35 years, over 37% were below 30.

Youth in towns and municipalities achieve better results in finding permanent employment compared to those in villages (75% compared to 54%). Most young people found their first significant job through relatives/friends (41%) and by contacting the employer/employer's staff responsible for recruitment directly (32%). Young and educated people leave the country in search for a job, even unqualified one. In 2008 over 11% of young 15-24 year old people from households covered by a survey left the country for a job or in search for a job.

### ***Older abandoned persons***

Poverty incidents in households of the older people were over 37.2% in 2008, which is by over 10% points higher than the average for the country. Allowances amounts to less than 70% of the subsistence minimum. Retired people are extremely vulnerable due to limited resources that would allow them to ensure normal living standards. The expenses necessary for the healthcare of older people further contribute to their vulnerability.

### **Disability**

(subject of exclusion, stigma, inadequate participation)

#### ***Persons with disabilities***

Persons with disabilities officially represent about 5% of the population, yet it is considered to be under-reported the real figures standing at more than 10%; the situation of persons with disabilities in rural areas presents most concern. In 2009 the number of people with disabilities exceeded 176.7 thousand, increasing by 2.1% compared to 2008. Over 90 percent of people with disabilities are adults, about 60% living in rural areas. The share of women with disabilities is 49%, while men account for 51%. The disability concept that emphasizes the medical and health component rather than the social integration one; for some severe forms even bans access to the labor market, for the rest creates a framework of dependency. The insufficient access of people with disabilities to the labor market makes them vulnerable to the risks of marginalization, poverty and exclusion. In 2009 poverty of households with persons with disabilities was 28.6%. Persons with disabilities face an increased risk of persistent poverty, accounting for 22.4% compared to 17.5% of the other households.

#### ***Persons with mental disability***

Moldova has 3 psychiatric institutions, 35 psychiatric offices for adults and 10 for children, 1 dispensary in Chisinau and 2 community mental health centers, 2 residential hospital institutions for children and adolescents, 2 community-based psychiatric inpatient units and 3 day treatment mental health facilities. Little less than 80,000 persons, of whom 21% are children, are being treated in these institutions. About 80% are treated in residential care. Generally conditions for the treatment in residential care are considered grossly inadequate for both adults and children.

#### ***Children with disabilities***

The majority of children with disabilities are enrolled in specialized schools. In 2009, 35 existed specialized schools had 3,550 children. Their number decreased by 6.4%, compared to previous year, and by 21.7% compared to 2005. Most pupils of these schools claimed to have: a) deficiencies in intellectual development – 80.5%, b) poor hearing – 6.6%, c) with poliomyelitis and cerebral palsy consequences – 6.6%; d) deaf children – 2.6%; e) weak sight – 2.8%; and f) behavior disturbances – 1.9% of all children with deficiencies. Resistance to change of some school managers and teachers of unadapted infrastructure is reported. Thus,

according to the data of the Education Institutions Mapping System, spaces for creation of rehabilitation rooms are available only in 280 education institutions (18.6% of all schools); only 775 educational institutions (51.5%), within which there are no medical offices, can provide rooms for their establishment; elevators for pupils with motor disabilities could be installed only in 22 educational institutions (1.5%).

### **Language and ethnicity**

(exclusion, education, employment, stigma, participation, access to...)

#### ***Roma communities access to water, basic infrastructure***

According to the census data of 2004, the share of Roma makes up only 0.4% of the total population of the country. However, regional experience shows that national censuses tend to underestimate the real number of Roma. The distribution of social benefits share is around equal for both Roma households – 13%, as well as for non-Roma ones – 12%, although there are more emphasized trends of Roma households to receive social assistance benefits more than social insurance benefits. Social assistance benefits make up 6% in Roma households income (being mostly shaped of children benefits), as compared to 4.7% of non-Roma households. Meanwhile the share of social assistance benefits is much lower among Roma, fact being explained by low rates of Roma activity and salaries and from which social insurance contributions are charged. Every second Roma lives in extreme poverty, and six out of ten Roma lives in absolute poverty.

The unemployment rate of Roma is 50%, higher than for the majority population. 61% of Roma live on less 2 US dollars a day (international poverty line), and almost a fifth of Roma household incomes depends on remittances from families working abroad. Roma is officially reported under 1%, yet the real claimed to be several times higher. According to the 2004 census, there are around 12,200 Roma in Moldova, although according to some estimates, there could be more than 20,000 Roma in the country. It was observed a limited access to medical insurance system of households (which includes migrants and Roma) – 40.9%. Only 23% of Roma households have medical insurance policy, this being twice less compared to the rest of the population. Negative stereotypes assigned to Roma by the majority population, reduced access to employment, education, health care and other spheres are the main vulnerability factors of this group.

### **Roma children access to education**

The level of enrollment of Roma children in primary schools is below 70%, and in secondary schools below 50%. Every fifth Roma cannot write and even read; three out of ten Roma people have at most primary education and other three (of ten) have only secondary education (including incomplete or vocational education). University education is rare for this ethnic group, making up only 4% of the total Roma population, compared to 38% of non-Roma. Cases of school dropout are frequent among Roma. The contributing reasons are: (i) high costs of education; (ii) early marriage; (iii) migration abroad of entire families in search for work opportunities; and (iv) discrimination in schools.

In Roma communities there are state-supported primary schools in the Romanian language hosting from 20 to 50 children of various year studying together in one or two rooms. In most cases the allocation of local budgets for schools is incomparably less than to schools and schooling for non-Roma communities. Children in many cases have no books and other schools requisites. Libraries contain just some hundred outdated books, the majority in Cyrillic script (prior to 1989), and only some 10-20% in Latin script. Teachers come in the community school from other non-Roma communities or nearby villages as rarely there would be a local person able to be a teacher or qualify for that. Children stay most of their childhood in the community not knowing where they live, what is the country they live in, etc. Only few adolescents can read. Kindergartens or other facilities are nonexistent in those communities, while in non-Roma communities, there would be state supported facilities.

### **Bulgarian/Ukrainian/Gagauz children right to education in mother tongue, assimilation and linguistic non-integration.**

In 2009, 25% of the population represents linguistic and ethnic minorities, of which 8% Ukrainians, 6% Russians, 4% Gagauz, 2% Bulgarians, 0.4% Romani. 11% stay their native language is Russian, 6% Ukrainian, 4% Gagauz, 1.6% Bulgarian. Education system in Moldova stands on the monolingual education principle. School language education for minorities is carried out in Russian language. Only 374 children study in Ukrainian as language of instruction, which is 0,06% of all Ukrainian children. 171 children study partially in Bulgarian, which is 0.02% of total. Ukrainian language as a separate subject is studied in 37 schools (5984 children), and Bulgarian – in 30 schools (7925 children). National law provides public preschool, school and other education in minority language where there is a “sufficient demand” of

a substantial number of minorities. The situation of Ukrainians and Bulgarians are a clear example for that.

### **Moldovans/Bulgarian/Ukrainian/Gagauz children right to education in mother tongue, assimilation in Transnistrian region.**

Moldovan children from Transnistrian region have limited access to education in their mother tongue (Romanian), in the Cyrillic or Latin script. In most Transnistrian schools 82% of the curriculum is provided in Russian. There are only about 20% of schools in the region where children can study in their mother tongue (Romanian or Ukrainian). In Tiraspol, from 29 schools, there is only one school where the teaching is in Romanian with Latin script, and one in Romanian with Cyrillic script. Given the proportion of the population there should be about 5-6 institutions. Ukrainian children can study only in two schools teaching in Ukrainian, which is only 1% of the primary education system of Transnistria. In 2009, in Transnistria there were 6 lyceums and 15 colleges which enrolled 8606 children; the teaching language was in 93.6% Russian. Only 3.7% of children from lyceums and 4.2% of students from colleges studied in Romanian language with Cyrillic script. The textbooks are mainly in Russian, only a small part of them were translated into Romanian language with Cyrillic script.

### **Religion**

(registration denial, services prevented, public harassment)

Adherents of other religious groups, constituting less than 10 percent of the population, include Roman Catholics, Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh-day Adventists, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Baha'is, Jews, members of the Unification Church, Molokans (a Russian group), Messianic Jews, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and evangelical Christian groups.

### **Muslims groups' right to worship, registration, harassment by police, stigma in society**

Non-orthodox religious communities, including Muslim community, make up less than 7%, and active church believers are around 25%. Muslim community stands at 20-30,000; according to Muslim representatives there are around 30,000 Muslims in Moldova, while they account only for 1,667 in the 2004 census. Muslim groups report decade long unsuccessful registration. Denial of registration was reverted by the Court of Appeal; however the Supreme Court of Justice upheld non-registration by the Government. Muslims are refused allocation of separate sections in cemeteries and are required to buy two plots in cemeteries so the body can be

oriented towards the Kaaba, as opposed to the east-west orientation used in Orthodox burials. Individual Muslims, as private individuals, could buy plots.

***Non-orthodox Christian (building of place for worship, free dissemination of belief) and other groups (public manifestations)***

Jehovah's Witnesses reported numerous cases of religious restriction of their activity, including eight cases of prosecution for objection to military service in Transnistria.

During the days of Hanukkah, group of demonstrators led by Orthodox priests vandalized and disassembled a menorah that had been authorized and placed in the main park in Chisinau. The group erected a cross in the menorah's place and carried the pieces of the menorah down the street to another section of the park where laid them upside down at the feet of a statue of Stephen the Great. Prosecutors, concluding no violent crime had been committed but fined the priest with the maximum amount permitted under the law.

Seventh-day Adventists public event for a "Bible Concert" scheduled on the main national square in Chisinau has been protested with threats from Orthodox priests leading people. Avoiding confrontation, the concert organizers moved the event to a suburban Seventh-day Adventist Church, where it took place without incident.

Two scheduled performances organized at the National Opera and Ballet Theater based on rental agreement by Shen Yun Performing Arts, an organization that artistically presents Chinese culture through music and dance and speaks about the Chinese government's mistreatment of Falun Gong members, were canceled, reportedly succumbing to pressure from the Government.

**Rural regions**

(access infrastructure, employment, education)

***Poor quality of preschool education for children***

In 2008, the enrollment rate of children aged 3–6 years represented 74.4% compared to 44.1% in 2000, which is close to the target for 2015 of 75% set by the Millennium Development Goals. Children from the rural area are enrolled in kindergarten, but in fact during the cold period of the year they stay at home, because their parents prefer to keep children at home when they are not involved in agricultural labor, in order to save money. Therefore, about 1/3 of preschool age children in urban area and more than a half of them in rural area do not attend preschools institutions. A research conducted for rural settlements showed that parents pressured

by the school and the authorities send their children to kindergarten from time to time, yet absenteeism is frequent.

**Gender**

(stigma, employment, level of pay)

***Women stereotyped for their role in society, inadequately represented in political parties and decision-making***

Slightly more than 20% of women are members of the Parliament in 2009, while in 2010 already 30%, yet all are in the lower end of the parties' lists. The Cabinet representation of women has decreased in the last two years, going from 22% to much less. Women make up half of the employment in the country. Women are paid in average 30% less than men, especially in the public sector.

***Women pay level discrepancy against men***

Women and men's unequal incomes, domestic unpaid work are documented. Discrepancies between the salaries of women and men have decreased in recent years, with the average female salary standing at 76.4 percent of the average male salary in 2009. The gap remains because women, in most cases, either work in lower-paid sectors (traditionally considered feminine occupations) – education, health-care or services – or occupy lower-paid positions. In rural areas, women are mostly employed in the service sector, agriculture, or non-managerial administrative positions. It is important to note that although more men are employed in paid agricultural activities than women (52.5% and 47.5%, respectively), more women than men are involved in non-paid agricultural activities (57% and 43% in 2006). The share of women is higher in activities with lower productivity that generate non-essential revenue, often just to satisfy the need of the household with agricultural or animal products. As a result of these and other phenomena, there is a significant difference between the salaries of men and women.

***LGBT stigmatized, harassed by police, limited freedom of assembly***

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons face legal challenges and have been marred by human rights violations against the freedom of association for homosexuals to have Gay Pride demonstrations. During last 3 years, local city authorities banned LGBT pride demonstrations. Virulent homophobic statements are casually made by politicians, and lesbians and gays are routinely discriminated against. Violence towards the lesbian and gay community has been recorded. Police treatment of LGBT group remains a concern

with cases of harassment reported by specialized organizations and media. Some church related groups express publicly hatred and virulent messages against LGBT identity and LGBT rights organizations. Sociological surveys dated 2008 show that part of the society (about 41%) express intolerance towards this group.

### ***Domestic violence against women***

One in four women in Moldova aged between 16 and 35 suffers from domestic violence. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there were 47 cases of family-related murders between 2008 and 2009. Around 20% surveyed women report domestic violence. The main aggressors were the husbands (69%) and to a lesser extent the fathers/stepfathers and mothers/stepmothers. The survey also revealed that women with multiple children were more likely to become victims of violence.

### ***People trafficked for sexual purposes***

In the early 2000s, Moldova became a major source of trafficked persons in South-Eastern Europe, predominantly girls and women, of whom 14% were under 18 and more than a half were in the 19-24 age group. There are no absolute figures on the phenomenon of trafficking since many victims are not identified in either destination countries or Moldova due to changing trafficking patterns, stigma-related fears, low levels of self-esteem and little confidence in law enforcement bodies. From 2000-2008 the total number of assisted persons was 5,183, including 2,443 victims of trafficking and 1,016 children of the victims of trafficking, 50 stranded migrants and 1,674 'at-risk' cases.

The main forms of exploitation were: sexual (85.5%), labor (6.5%), and begging (3.1%). The main destination countries were: Turkey (31%), Russia (22.8%), Moldova (20.2%), the United Arab Emirates (5.7%), and Cyprus (4.4%). Data made available shows that at least 70% of trafficked victims are from families defined as "poor" or "very poor"; 65% cite unemployment as the main reason for fleeing abroad, and 70-95% suffered from domestic violence prior to being trafficked. According to International Organization for Migration data, 80% of the trafficked Moldovan girls and women were subjected to domestic violence after their return as well as before being trafficked. Another problem is internal trafficking in Moldova, in particular from the Transnistrian region. Trafficking is a phenomenon that affects as victims children and also young men. The extent of this is still to be evaluated, notwithstanding the societal stigma persisted on community level related to this group that makes them hard to reintegrate into the society.

### ***Persons with HIV/AIDS***

Around 9,000 persons living with HIV were registered in Moldova. From 1987 to 2008, of the 4,996 HIV/AIDS carriers officially registered in the country, 3,461 cases were from Transnistria. By the end of 2009, the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Moldova amounted to 5625 people, this figure being about 5 times higher compared to 2000. Compared to the aggregate incidence of HIV/AIDS, the incidence of this disease among 15-24 year-old fell in 2008. However, HIV continues to have the most dramatic effect on the young and fertile population. Moreover, a trend has emerged towards 'feminization' of the infection, where, at the beginning of the epidemic the majority of HIV positive persons were men, (84%) in recent years, women have contributed to a growing share of the number infected. From 2003-2007, the proportion of pregnant women tested for HIV rose, and HIV prevalence among this group continued to rise: 0.1% in 2005; 0.21% in 2006; and 0.23% in 2007.

### ***Occupation (living conditions and inadequate access to markets): rural households and agricultural entrepreneurs***

Farmers and employees in agriculture are at a high risk of economic exclusion, as their incomes depend on weather and access to markets. In 2009, the average nominal salary of an employee in the national economy amounted to 2747.6 MDL; the lowest values were recorded in agriculture (1468.2 MDL). About 45% of the population in 2008 was affected by the fact that there was insufficient agricultural production. The most vulnerable in this context are self-employed in agriculture (26.4%). Household Budgets Survey of 2008 shows that the households, where the main source of income was their own agricultural land, were at the highest risk of absolute poverty (36.9%). In 2009, the share of these households increased to 47%. This means that one of the major factors influencing the upward trend of poverty in rural areas in 2008 was the exhaustion of crops stocks by the end of 2007. Another factor which influenced the living standards of the rural population was the decreasing income from agricultural production as a result of lowering prices. Statistics show that in 2008 the prices for fruit decreased by 10% and for vegetables by 25%. As a result of these factors, the highest poverty rates were recorded for employees in agriculture (42.8%) and self-employed in agriculture (36.9%), with poverty incidence increasing in 2009 to 48.1% and 47.0% for these groups respectively.



# Evidence of and recommendations

*on vulnerable groups from international  
bodies*

## Evidence of and recommendations on vulnerable groups from international bodies

### Income criteria

#### ***Poverty, poor households***

Feminization of poverty, particularly among vulnerable groups of women such as rural women, single women heads of households, women belonging to ethnic groups, in particular Roma women, women with disabilities and older women is reported. One of the key recommendations based on other countries experience is that policies should aim at improving the economic situation of women, particularly those belonging to vulnerable groups such as rural women, single women heads of households, women belonging to ethnic groups, in particular Roma women, women with disabilities and older women.

Current policies do not specifically address child poverty and that poverty has been given lower priority under the National Development Strategy. Concern exists that budgetary allocations for children, in particular for children living in rural areas, are insufficient and that often resources allocated do not correspond to the real needs.

### Age

#### ***Unemployment and young people***

Concerns about the high rates of unemployment, particularly among young people, women and the Roma population, the lack of employment opportunities and low salaries have prompted massive emigration of people in the active and working age, a majority of whom work abroad illegally without social insurance and legal protection.

It has been recommended to strengthen the efforts to reduce the number of children living in institutions, including by strengthening family support measures and by developing alternative forms of family care. The state should ensure that children in institutions as well as all other children deprived of their natural family environment grow up in an atmosphere of emotional and material security.

#### ***Children as social orphans***

A large number of children are affected by the migration of one or more parents seeking better employment opportunities abroad, as result this migration has the negative effects of on the children involved.

Particular concern is raised for children left in the custody of caregivers in loco parentis who do not always receive the education and moral support they need, that they are

neglected, forced to take on adult responsibilities, and are more susceptible to exploitation and juvenile delinquency. Parent-training Programmes for parents in vulnerable families have not been introduced and funded by national and local authorities. There are concerns about the large number of children placed in institutions, especially those with slight mental disabilities, children left in the care of relatives or other persons while their parents travel abroad in search of employment, to be at risk of abuse and neglect.

Recommendations provide for the financial support to vulnerable families, conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the areas in which families are particularly vulnerable, implement appropriate remedial strategies, allocate necessary resources and extending social services at the local level through the introduction of parent-training. It is needed to mitigate the effects of migration on the welfare of affected children, including, in particular, through the training of caregivers and through improved social and psychological support to affected children.

#### ***Children from rural areas and schooling***

Concerns are raised of high rates of non-attendance and high dropout rates in primary and secondary education; the main reason for non-attendance is acute family poverty, lack of preschool education.

The recommendation is to ensure a more balanced distribution of resources throughout the country and prioritize budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the rights of all children, including those belonging to economically disadvantaged groups. Establishing new preschool educational institutions to ensure that children are not prevented from attending school because of poverty in the family.

#### ***Trafficking in human beings***

Moldova continues to be a country of origin and transit for human trafficking, particularly women and children.

International organizations' recommendations should concert efforts to prosecute offenders and to protect trafficking victims, broaden the implementation of measures to assist the social reintegration of victims and to provide genuine access to health care and counseling.

Combat the phenomenon of human trafficking, including by ensuring the effective implementation of anti-trafficking legislation and Programmes and raising awareness of the problem, and training of law enforcement personnel and other relevant groups is recommended.

In this part recommendations formulated by specialized international bodies aim at improving job possibilities and assistance to women living in poverty by addressing the root causes, in particular women's economic insecurity. Additionally, enhanced measures should be taken for improving of the social and economic situation of women, in particular in rural areas, so as to eliminate their vulnerability to traffickers, and put in place services for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking.

### Language/ethnicity

#### *Roma in rural communities*

Roma continue to suffer serious discrimination, notably in rural areas. The living conditions of the Roma greatly vary in different regions of Moldova. If some families enjoy good living conditions, in particular in the Soroca and Otaci regions, others reportedly continue to live in extreme poverty and to be isolated from society, notably in villages in rural areas.

Roma remain socially and economically marginalized, with restricted access to social services such as health care, employment, education and housing, concerns exist about discriminatory attitudes towards the Roma in wider society as evidenced, inter alia, by their de facto exclusion from participation in public life. The majority of Roma have to contend with numerous difficulties, resulting in the marginalization of Roma communities in Moldova. Large number of Roma still lives in extremely difficult conditions.

Roma children are still victims of discriminatory treatment and have reduced access to education, health and an adequate standard of living. Though the national medical insurance scheme is designed to assist children from families living in poverty or from families with special needs, these families do not enjoy equal access to health services.

Discrimination against Roma resulting in unequal opportunities for them in various fields, such as access to employment, housing, health care, education and access to land as a result of the past privatization process is still reported. Roma suffer from a general lack of information, including about their rights, and lack of access to justice. Cases of non-registration of Roma children at birth are still reported, for various reasons ranging from lack of means to cover the late registration fees to birth while the family is working abroad. The lack of registration, resulting in lack of identity documents, has serious consequences for those concerned and it can, inter alia, lead to exclusion from health care and social protection.

Many Roma continue to live in isolated settlements in sub-standard housing and extreme poverty conditions, and have a low rate of participation in the education system. Their participation in public affairs also remains limited. Roma, are often confronted with intolerance, at times fueled by the media, and instances of racially-motivated insults and acts.

Roma continue to often be victims of stereotyping and intolerance, even though very few complaints are recorded. The media are said to play a role in the negative climate against Roma among the general population. Some press articles tend to perpetuate racist prejudices and stereotypes against Roma, although there is also some other press reports which try to draw the attention of the public to the problems of the Roma in a positive manner.

Measures to ensure equal basis with all other social groups, including those aimed at their inclusion and integration into broader society, at the effective enforcement of the ban on racial discrimination, and at raising public awareness, take steps to promote a better representation of the Roma at all levels, measures to assist members of Roma communities in obtaining employment, for Roma to be accompanied by measures to prohibit any discriminatory conduct by employers who refuse to take on Roma on the grounds of their ethnic origin. Awareness-raising on their rights should be undertaken and measures should be taken to improve their access to justice. A lack of identity documents among persons belonging to the Roma minority would ensure that effective and swift measures are taken to remedy such problems as a matter of priority. Ensure that resources are allocated for the provision of social housing, especially to the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including the Roma.

*Schooling.* Extreme poverty prevalent in the Roma community is due to a lack of education and skills. The extremely poor living conditions of some Roma families make it difficult for them to send their children to school and to pay for the necessary school material, clothes, food and means of transportation. Some of the difficulties, notably the drop-out and non-enrollment problems are in some cases connected to the fact that many Roma families work abroad and migrate with their children. However, there are also worrying allegations that in some localities (such as Schinoasa), Roma children are officially enrolled at school but do not, in reality attend school, and that not much is done to ensure their effective presence at school. The absence of possibilities to learn Romani at school and the very limited opportunities to have minority languages (other than Russian) as languages of education is regretted. Reported low school attendance and high drop-out rates among Roma children,

## Evidence of and recommendations on vulnerable groups from international bodies

as well as there are reports that only very few Roma students have received State scholarships for higher education and that none has been admitted under the 15-percent quota of the total number of places in higher education. Racist stereotypes and prejudice sometimes exists among teachers or non-Roma parents, and which discourage Roma children from attending mainstream schools. There is a problem of *de facto* school segregation: there are schools located in Roma villages that are mainly – or even exclusively – attended by Roma children.

Is necessary to improve the enrollment of Roma children at school and their integration in the education system. These should include preparatory classes – which ease the access for Roma children to the first grade of primary education –, and various other forms of support at school and through extra-curricular activities. Is welcomed the fact that these activities seem to bring about positive results locally. Roma issue in the education system persist: lower enrollment in education, where only 70% of Roma children attend primary education, higher drop-out rates, notably of girls, much lower educational attainments and that the illiteracy rates among the Roma remain much higher than in the majority population.

*Policies* should aim at providing financial support to Roma families to cover the cost of school books, transport and other indirect costs of schooling, offer special Romanian language classes for Roma children, cater for the needs of Roma pupils whose parents work as seasonal workers abroad, include Roma language and culture in school curricula, and continue and intensify its efforts to raise awareness among Roma families about the importance of education starting from preschool. It is also recommended to make full use of available scholarship schemes and quota to increase Roma participation in higher education. Persistence of negative societal attitudes and stereotypes against Roma and other persons of minority ethnic origin, increase the efforts to combat prejudices, including among government officials, and to strengthen and promote tolerance and foster intercultural dialogue among the different ethnic groups.

*Representation.* Roma are not represented in Parliament and that, apart from the police force, there are no quotas for the recruitment of Roma in the public service, despite the right of ethnic minorities to an approximately proportionate representation in the executive, the judiciary. The recommendations are to adopt special measures such as statutory electoral and public service targets, as well as specific training Programmes, to ensure an approximately proportionate representation of the Roma and of other under-represented

minorities in Parliament and in the public service, including in the judiciary. Also the recommendations refer to intensifying the efforts to train unemployed Roma for the labor market, including through specifically targeted vocational training, retraining and language training Programmes, and by creating favorable conditions for investment and private entrepreneurship among Roma communities, including infrastructural measures and loans for micro businesses.

### ***Education in minority language and for social integration***

Teaching of minority languages continues to be provided only at the schools having Russian as the main language of education. This results in persons belonging to ethnic minorities often having a poor command of the Romanian language (which is their third language), even though teaching of the Romanian language is compulsory for all schools. Increased the tendency of some persons belonging to ethnic minorities to identify with the Russian-speaking minority and set aside their distinct identity. Ukrainians live in substantial numbers but most of the teaching is provided in Russian. Consequently pupils belonging to the Ukrainian minority do not always have access to teaching of the Ukrainian language. Teaching of the minority languages at the preschool education level is also, reportedly, insufficient. The development of “experimental schools”, in which part of the teaching is provided in the minority languages (Ukrainian and Bulgarian so far) and where multilingualism is promoted should be welcomed. It is regretful that the possibilities to learn the Gagauz language are limited and that Romani is not taught at all.

Ukrainian, Gagauz and Bulgarian languages and cultures are taught as subjects only in a limited number of schools where the language of instruction is Russian. Ukrainian or Bulgarian are the language of instruction only in certain classes in a few experimental schools. There are no schools where the Roma, Azeri or Tatar language and culture are taught, and the quality of Romanian language education for minority children is reportedly poor.

Teaching of the Romanian language to persons belonging to ethnic minorities continues to be insufficient, thus leading to reduced opportunities to effectively participate in public affairs and in socioeconomic life. Schools where instruction is partly given through the medium of another language do not attain sufficient command of Romanian by the end of their schooling, which undermines equality of access to public-sector and private-sector employment. The system of teaching of and in minority languages is hampered by a

general lack of means, notably of textbooks and adequate teacher training.

Linguistic integration of persons belonging to ethnic minorities is a substantial problem as they do not have an adequate command of the Romanian language. Promotion of the learning of Romanian language goes hand-in-hand with measures to protect and develop the languages and cultures of ethnic minorities. It is also noted with interest that the (Bulgarian) State University of Taraclia is now providing teaching to about 300 students, in particular in the fields of history, culture and language of the Bulgarian minority.

Tatars find it difficult to carry out activities to preserve their language. Representatives of the Gagauz minority claim that the efforts made to preserve and promote the Gagauz language and culture are inadequate. The efforts towards the ethnic minorities, including numerically smaller groups, to preserve and develop their culture and language are required.

It is not sufficient to meet the needs of persons belonging to ethnic minorities. This was the case for the Ukrainian minority, as well as for numerically smaller minorities. There was also lack of TV programs in minority languages in the rural areas where persons belonging to ethnic minorities live in substantial numbers. TV continues to broadcast programs in various ethnic minority languages (Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian, Romani and Russian) as well as a program in Russian on all ethnic minorities.

Furthermore, public debates should be initiated, notably through the media, on issues of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and the need to combat intolerance and hatred, involving both persons belonging to the majority population and to minorities.

There are recommendations which refer to intensifying the State's efforts to provide adequate opportunities for minority children to receive instruction in their native language, as well as in Romanian, and/or study their language and culture throughout the entire cycle of education, including by (a) extending the teaching of Ukrainian, Gagauz and Bulgarian to schools where the language of instruction is Romanian language; (b) increasing the number of schools where these languages are the language of instruction; and (c) introducing languages of numerically smaller minorities as school subjects whenever there is sufficient demand. The State should also continue and further intensify its efforts to improve the quality of Romanian language education for minority children. It is encouraged to proceed with its planned ratification of the European Charter for Regional

and Minority Languages, and to consider applying it also to numerically smaller minorities.

It is recommended to develop a system of multilingual education, including education in minority languages. Make every effort to improve substantially the availability and quality of teaching of the Romanian language, reinforce its efforts to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and tolerance among the different ethnic groups living within its jurisdiction with a view to eliminating discrimination. All Moldovan citizens should have the opportunity to learn Romanian so as to be able to integrate into society and have genuine equality of opportunities; at the same time, any assimilation which would deprive ethnic minorities of the possibility or capability of using their own language should be avoided.

Civil servants are to acquire more skills in the minority languages concerned.

Concerns are raised of the violations by the self-proclaimed authorities in Transnistria of children's rights to have access to education in their mother tongue following the closure of schools teaching the Romanian language in the Latin script.

### Religion

#### *Minority religious groups, including Jews*

Moldovan society is often described as being tolerant but some issues covered in this study indicate that there is a problem of general awareness of what constitutes a racist or otherwise intolerant statement or act. Racism is often perceived in Moldova as a notion covering only the most blatant abuses of human rights such as state-sanctioned segregation, apartheid or Nazism. However, racism and racial discrimination are continually evolving, taking form such as the targeting of groups on the grounds not only of race but also of skin color, language, religion, nationality and national or ethnic origin, or a combination of these grounds, and can occur in more subtle, but nonetheless harmful, forms experienced in everyday life. Occurrence of racist verbal abuse encountered by immigrants from African and Asian countries or police harassment against Muslims is reported.

Stereotypes, prejudices and sometimes hate speech against Jews and foreigners continue to be disseminated by the media, even though the supervisory bodies of the media have not registered any complaints for investigation of such cases. There are reported cases of the circulation of material and literature inciting to hatred and in particular to anti-Semitism, and reports concerning the desecration of Jewish cemeteries.

## Evidence of and recommendations on vulnerable groups from international bodies

Existing legislation on racial hatred and racially-motivated acts is rarely applied, non-traditional religions are reportedly subject to widespread intolerance. Jewish communities are concerned of cases of desecration of Jewish cemeteries and tombstones, even though they consider that it is difficult to establish whether they should be qualified as mere vandalism or as anti-Semitic acts. Jewish communities but also other minority religious groups face the issue of restitution of religious properties confiscated by previous regimes.

General lack of awareness of the importance of racist offenses as an issue may result in a failure to treat racist offenses as such. It is considered that specific training for all those involved in the criminal justice system – police, prosecution and judiciary – is needed to raise officials' awareness of issues of racism, discrimination and intolerance and to ensure that the relevant cases are treated appropriately. Sources report allegations of racial discrimination on the part of some private parties, particularly discrimination against immigrants from African and Asian countries, though these cases are not brought to justice.

In 2010 Muslim organizations have not succeeded in having Islam recognized as a religion preventing them from effectively exercising their right to manifest their religion and establish religious institutions, organizations and associations. Only in 2011 the Islamic cult was registered. Muslim ethnic minorities have repeatedly asked to be assigned separate burial site. Police and other authorities sometimes interfere in religious activities of religious groups on the grounds that they are not registered, even though registration should not be a precondition for running these activities. Members of Muslim communities have been unduly prosecuted by law enforcement officials for practicing their faith in private premises, a right which does not depend on registration. They are subject to harassment on the part of members of the majority population or members of the majority church, particularly in rural areas.

Muslim minority representatives complain of facing unjustified and disproportionate administrative obstacles in their attempts to have their confession registered and that authorities refuse to engage in an open dialogue with them on this issue. Muslim believers complain about frequent and unjustified police raids at their places of worship. Police misconduct does not seem to be systematically investigated and sanctioned as necessary and there is at present no independent body monitoring the conduct of the police and investigating complaints. There are a disproportionate number of controls, including fiscal ones. Muslims also stress the

difficulty to find premises to practice their religion, due *inter alia* to the lack of official registration.

Recommendations refer that racially-motivated or anti-Semitic acts should be effectively investigated and sanctioned as necessary. Systematic monitoring of these acts should be carried out by the authorities. Comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation should be adopted. The state should resolute measures to combat all forms of intolerance, including in the media and in political life, and promote mutual respect and understanding. Actions should be taken at facilitation of the registration of Muslim ethnic minorities such as the Tatars as religious communities. The possibility of members of Muslim ethnic minorities such as the Tatars to be buried in accordance with their beliefs and preferences should be ensured.

The state should also ensure that Muslim believers, and persons belonging to other religions, can effectively enjoy the right to manifest their religion or belief and establish religious institutions, organizations and associations. Measures to combat all forms of intolerance and promote understanding and mutual respect, including respect for religious diversity should be taken. Measures should, in particular, be taken to prevent and combat intolerance and hate speech in politics.

It is recommended to implement a training Programme for all those involved in the criminal justice system – police, prosecution and judiciary – in order to raise these officials' awareness of issues of racism, discrimination and intolerance. A supplementation of the existing provisions by adopting comprehensive legislation prohibiting racial discrimination in a precise and exhaustive manner to ensure that all areas of life such as education, access to housing, public services and public places and contractual relations between individuals are covered is required. Authorities are recommended to look into means of setting up a full and coherent system of data collection so as to evaluate the situation regarding the different minority groups in Moldova, and determine the extent of manifestations of racism and racial discrimination. There is a general lack of reference to the history and culture of ethnic minorities living in Moldova, limiting to only children belonging to these minorities and who study in minority schools. Both children belonging to minorities and to majority should be aware of the history and culture of the different ethnic minorities living in the country such as for instance the Ukrainians, the Bulgarians, the Gagauz, the Roma and the Jews. Human rights education and particularly the principle of non-discrimination

and the need to combat racism and intolerance should be taught at all levels and across all disciplines.

## Gender

### ***Discrimination and hatred against LGBT persons***

Discrimination based on sexual orientation appears to be widespread, and violence and hatred against homosexuals is a concern.

Actions should be ensured to punish hate crimes as acts of intolerance and incitation to hatred and violence based on sexual orientation. It is important to ensure that the relevant existing legal and administrative measures are strictly observed and that training curricula and administrative directives constantly communicate to staff the message that incitation to hatred and violence will not be tolerated and will be sanctioned. Measures to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation should be adopted, including training programmes for police officers and health-care professionals.

### ***Gender inequality***

In Moldova, while women in general face gender-based discrimination, certain groups of women face additional forms of discrimination, social exclusion and marginalization based on additional grounds such as race, ethnic or religious identity, disability, or other factors. Yet even the discrimination they face due to such factors is gender specific. Thus, in 2006 the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern on a number of issues, including:

- increased feminization of poverty, particularly among vulnerable groups of women such as rural women, single women heads of households, women belonging to ethnic groups, in particular Roma women, women with disabilities and older women;
- prevalence of domestic violence and the lack of efficient legal remedies and relevant legal assistance in case of violations widely spread patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society;
- the limited availability of statistical data disaggregated by sex, ethnicity and age, and by urban and rural areas.

Participation of women in the employment market remains considerably lower than that of men and a significant gender wage gap persists as a result. Gender inequality persists in the gap in wages between women and men despite the Remuneration Act No. 847 of 14 February 2002, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex in determining remuneration.

The situation of women in the labor market is characterized, in spite of women's high level of education, by increasingly high female unemployment, the concentration of women in low-paid sectors of public employment such as health, social welfare and education, and the wage gap between women and men in both the public and private sectors. The number of women in decision-making positions in political and public life remains low, including in the parliament, the civil service and the judiciary. A concern is also the low representation of women in decision-making positions in the Foreign Service.

Recommendations establish concrete goals and timetables to accelerate women's equal participation in public and political life at all levels. The importance to society as a whole of women's full and equal participation in leadership positions at all levels of decision-making for the development of the country, ensure that women enjoy equal access to the labor market and receive equal pay for work of equal value.

Equality of opportunities for women and men in the labor market, including through temporary special measures should be ensured. There should be efforts to eliminate occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical, and to narrow and close the wage gap between women and men through, inter alia, additional wage increases in female-dominated sectors of public employment and ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.

### ***Domestic violence against women***

Concerns are expressed on the prevalence of violence against women, including domestic violence, and lack of availability of updated sex-disaggregated data on all forms of violence against women. Violence against women remains widespread, existing legislation does not define "domestic violence" as a specific offense. Persistence of violence against women and children, including domestic violence, the rarity of intervention measures by the judiciary is reported.

Lack of crisis centers for victims of domestic violence is also a cause for concern. Victims of domestic violence have no

## Evidence of and recommendations on vulnerable groups from international bodies

access to immediate means of redress and protection, including protection orders, and access to a sufficient number of safe shelters and legal aid. There is limited number and capacity of shelters for victims of domestic violence, and it is reported that domestic violence is deemed to warrant the intervention of the police only in cases where it has resulted in serious injury.

Authorities should aim at establishment of additional shelters and provision of free counseling services and such other measures as necessary for the protection of victims. It is needed the provision of training on the handling of domestic violence to all professionals involved in such cases, including police officers, prosecutors, judges and social workers, with emphasis on the gender aspects of domestic violence.

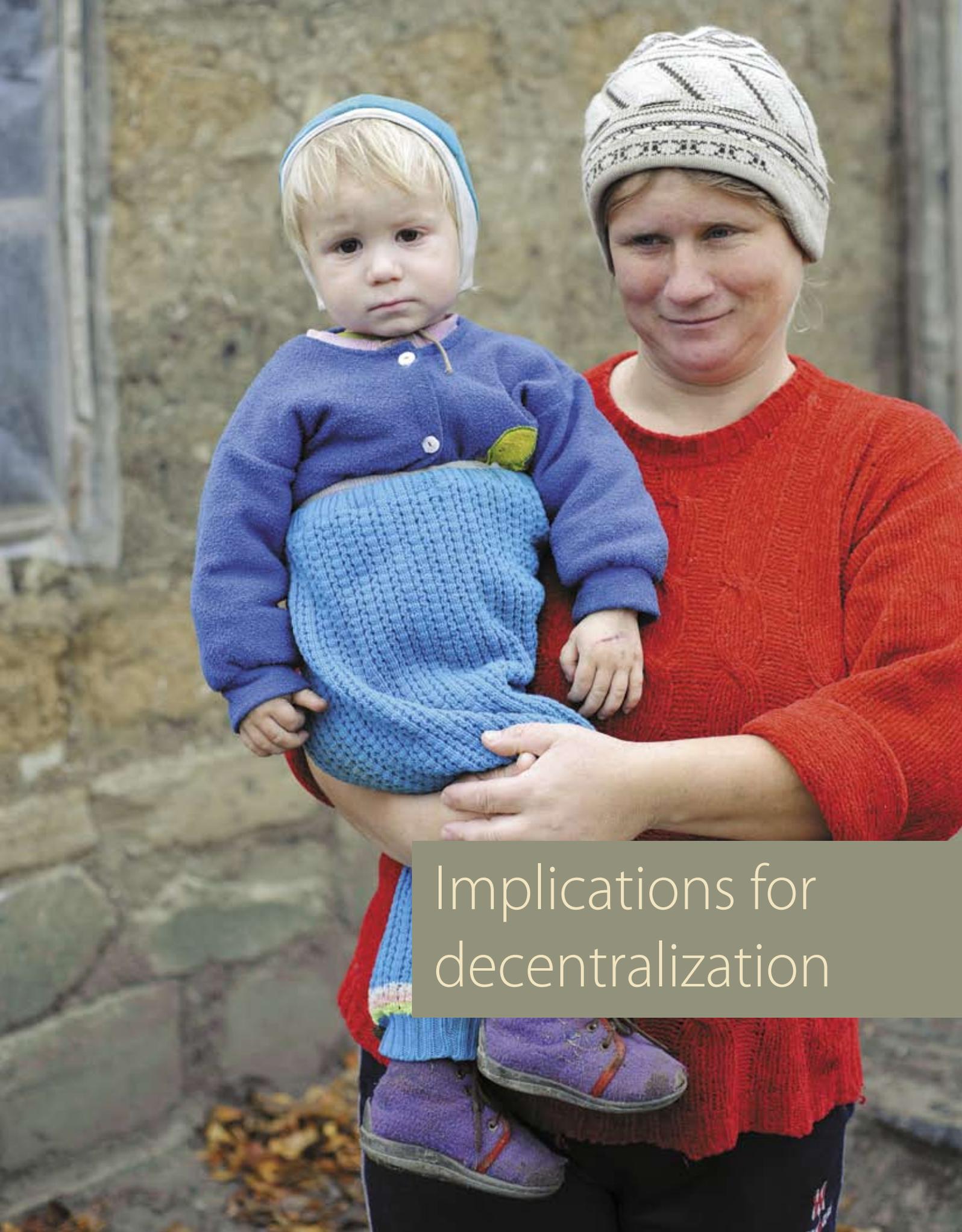
### ***Persons living with HIV/AIDS***

Concerns have been expressed that persons infected with HIV/AIDS face discrimination and stigmatization including in the fields of education, employment, housing and health care, as well as on the rising incidence of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. The high percentage of women with anemia and the increase in HIV/AIDS infection rates and in sexually transmitted diseases is confirmed.

It has been recommended for efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, including through public information campaigns and by ensuring that sex education is also introduced to schools in rural areas; to ensure the effective implementation of programmes to prevent and combat drug abuse, especially among young people; and adopt measures to address the stigmatization of HIV/AIDS sufferers through, among other things, awareness raising campaigns on HIV/AIDS, including removing the prohibition on the adoption of children living with HIV/AIDS, as well as any other discriminatory laws or rules pertaining to HIV/AIDS.

### ***Persons with mental disabilities***

Concerns have been raised about the treatment of psychiatric patients, including lack of legal safeguards and poor living conditions in places where persons are held for involuntary treatment, as well as about the lack of independent monitoring of such places of deprivation of liberty. Moldova was recommended to improve the living conditions for patients in psychiatric institutions and ensure that all places where mental health patients are held for involuntary treatment are regularly visited by independent monitoring entities to guarantee the proper implementation of the safeguards set out to secure their rights, and that alternative forms of treatment are developed.



Implications for  
decentralization

## Implications for decentralization

### *Current degree of decentralization of policies*

*Pre-university education services:* implemented by schools (founders are district, local authorities), kindergartens. 70% of finance comes from transfers from central government, the rest from local government. Indirect support comes from local and district authorities while methodological support comes from district authorities and the Ministry of Education. Content of education and curricular, number of personnel are established by the Ministry of Education, while local authorities have degree of discretion of 5% of the curricular.

*Welfare policies* are present through cash benefits transfers and social services. The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family and Ministry of Finance determine the policy. Cash benefits are paid out and their eligibility are assessed by de-concentrated National Social Insurance House (NSIH) district agencies. Exception constitutes social aid programme (Law no 133 implemented in 2009), where eligibility is assessed by social assistants from the mayor's offices, and money paid from the state budget. The provision of social services is done by district and local authority social workers who are financed in share from local authorities and central authorities.

*Health services* are provided by district hospitals (with local authorities as founders of hospitals, licensed by central specialized state agency) and centers for family doctors. Up to 95% of finances come from central budget based on National Health Insurance Company contracts, where district hospitals manage finances for family doctors centers. District authorities pay for some indirect costs of the district hospitals. District-based epidemiological centers of preventive medicine are financed directly from the state budget.

*Police services* are provided by the Police commissariats in all towns and district levels as well as by sector police in each community. The district police and police commissariats are financed by 70% from the state and the rest from district authorities. Police is subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

*Implementation of fiscal policies* is done by district fiscal authorities (de-concentrated agencies), and for local taxes – by tax collectors at community level, paid by the mayor's offices. District authorities and mayor's offices have limited authority over setting local taxes. The fiscal basis of the local authorities is limited to personal income tax, corporate tax (percentage is set by annual law on Budget).

*Environmental policies* are implemented by Ecological Agency – de-concentrated agency.

*Construction, building implementation policies* are shared by mayor's office and district authorities. Permits are given by the mayor's office, and designs are approved by the district based architectural units in district authorities, with a number of certificates to be obtained from the de-concentrated agencies (Ecological, Construction Inspection, etc).

*Road, infrastructure policies* for the territory of district and local authorities are determined by the district authorities and mayor's offices. Local roads maintaining is the responsibility of district and local authorities.

*Justice policies* are subject of the elaboration and implementation by the central authorities. No role of the local authorities is envisioned.

Table of provision of services and policies at local level:

Service	Degree of decentralization	Role of district, mayor's offices	Conclusion
1. Pre-university education: schools, kindergarten	<i>Delegated</i> tightly regulated delivery, financed and oversight by central government	Founders of schools, kindergartens, provide overheads, determine 5% of curricular	Feasible option to decentralize further curricular, further deregulation on oversight. Narrow fiscal basis makes impossible further decentralization.  <i>Capacity limited (only elements of regulation, limited subsidy). Role of central authorities' determinative on outcomes of the educational policies.</i>
2. Welfare: cash, services	<i>De-concentrated</i> delivery and eligibility of cash Programmes (one exception social aid means-tested assessment by local authorities). Services are delegated and tightly regulated, and oversight Services are provided by share of state financing and local provision	Local authorities support social assistants by mayor's office (overheads), district authorities	Feasible option to decentralize further regulation of social services and their oversight. Narrow fiscal basis makes impossible cash Programmes and low capacity for their administration. Cash eligibility administration could be improved.  <i>Capacity limited, yet availability of premises, overhead and political support exists. Role of central authorities' determinative on outcomes of the social welfare policies.</i>
3. Health services	<i>De-concentrated</i> delivery	District authorities are founders of district hospitals	Feasible option to extend the overheads support and delegated role of rayon authorities, yet privatization and liberalization are better choice.  <i>Local authorities have very limited role. Central authorities have determinative role.</i>
4. Police services	<i>De-concentrated</i> delivery	Mayor's office provides overheads for sector policemen	No feasible roles for the extension of local authorities.  <i>Role of central authorities is a key one.</i>
5. Fiscal policies	<i>Centralized.</i> Annual budget sets the type and quantum of local taxes	District authorities collect local taxes, set the waivers for local taxes	Extending fiscal basis for local authorities could be an option. Transfer of assets to local authorities, including for taxable purposes could be an option as well.  <i>Role of local authorities could increase, yet, it is quite complex, and thus help other types of policies.</i>
6. Construction, building	Decentralized level 2, centralized regulated	Mayor's office issue permits for construction	Местные органы власти играют существенную роль в поддержании местных дорог в хорошем состоянии. Процесс развития инфраструктуры местными органами власти должен учитывать нужды уязвимых групп.
7. Environment	<i>De-concentrated</i>	No role	No possible role for local authorities.
8. Roads, water	Decentralized for local roads	Maintaining local roads	Narrow fiscal basis hinders role of local authorities.  <i>Infrastructure development by local authorities should be vulnerability sensitive</i>
9. Justice policies	Centralized	Absence or identification by collection of information or support	Role of central authorities is substantial.

### ***Decentralization and its possible impact on vulnerable groups***

Possible decentralization may shift the role of the local authorities. Local authorities (district level) could become more involved in the delivery of the policies by delegation or by delivery based on the greater fiscal capacity. At the same time, the delegation, decentralization in most case means more resources to manage and administer the services.

The current version of the draft Government Decentralization Strategy does not provide for the specific understanding of the decentralization efforts in each area. It sets out principles and important definitions of the decentralization and key areas for the intervention. Possible evaluation of the impact of the decentralization strategy could be only made once the specific provisions of the decentralization will be outlined. The Decentralization Strategy can also provide for the centralization of some services, yet this is subject of another study.

Research on the decentralization possible impact on vulnerable groups is diverse. Generally the process of decentralization includes mostly the process of sharing competences and co-participation of central and local government, rather than total decentralization. Some core considerations for this are:

- 1) requirement for a higher *efficiency* of local government services, improved management techniques or developing new rules of modern administrative ethics;
- 2) concerns of a higher *public participation*, more transparent operation of municipalities and the establishment of direct contacts with citizens are high priority goals of reform;
- 3) needed professionalization of local government staff and municipal service organization.

Decentralization processes in education in Central European context shows that at local level there is insufficient information and skills to manage the process, systems, and approaches for the evaluation, and monitoring is also absent frequently. The relationships among local and central authorities remains formal rather than cooperative – in the course of transformation support mechanisms are absent. The central government should still be involved and provide regulatory support and balance the possible inequalities.

Decentralization in health care in European context appear to reflect a growing pattern of the retreating from the core concepts of decentralization, recentralizing important functions of financing, quality supervision, given pressure of the need to innovation, introduction of more efficient technologies. Finally, a mix policy of central-local government participation in delivery is the most adequate approach.

Decentralization of services for persons with disabilities shows that the process can have deep uncertainty attitudes and distrust on behalf of the people with disabilities. In local context this type of reforms for this type of services would require substantial investment and long-term engagement from the central government to create community-based care.

One research conclude that in very centralized countries, where central government controls strictly budget and expenses, the needs of the local communities are poorly addressed in terms of education, access to resources, etc. Other sources underline that decentralization comes with challenges of local authorities perceived as inefficient and lack enthusiasm in carrying out their duties due to the following:

- a) local administration may not necessarily be able to expand its existing sources of income;
- b) even with increase revenue for local administrations, local governments still lack the authority and powers to determine their own sources of revenue;
- c) lack of capable personnel to manage local budgets;
- d) devolution occurred without the appropriate mechanisms to help support the process;
- e) persistence of the bias at local level against some groups within the communities with absence of the adequate instruments to address. Adequate under-resourcing is likely to be among the key problem with some types of decentralization, where central government required providing support.

A study in a local context finds that decentralization has both positive and negative consequences:

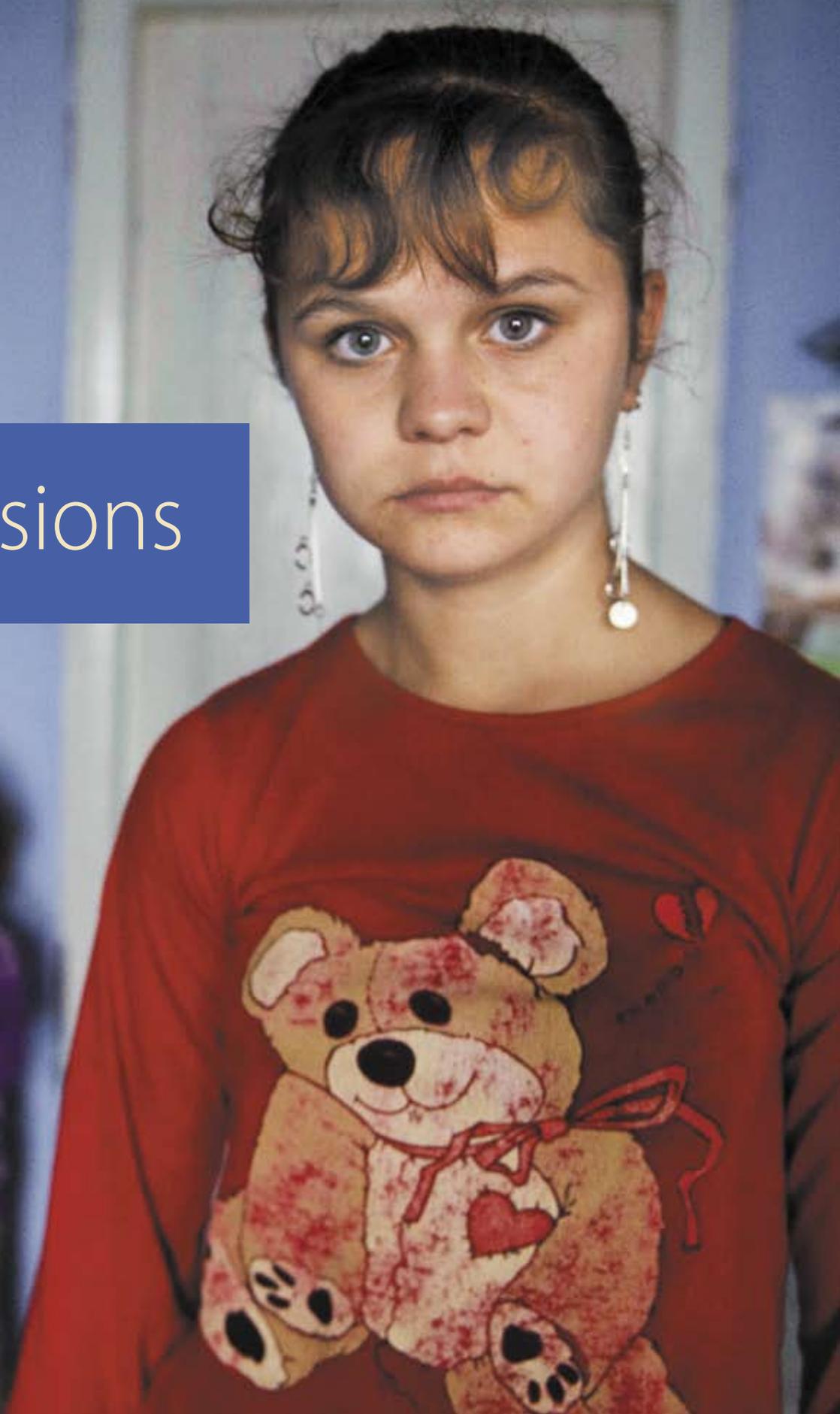
- 1) it can reinforce local prejudices and marginalization of local vulnerable groups;
- 2) decentralization, if not regulated properly, does not provide adequate greater participation in education and has almost no effect on accountability;

- 3) in social/health service provision, if not matched with government roles, no progress could be noticed;
- 4) local administration cannot attract adequate staff for service delivery.

This research demonstrates the need for the central government stay-on and facilitation approach role in the service delivery of services by local authorities.



# Conclusions



## Conclusions

The table below represents hypothetical situations and analysis. Concrete details of the possible decentralization impacts very much the situation of the vulnerable groups. The impact also depends on the type of vulnerable group. It will be recommendable to do a targeted social impact analysis for each group separately based on the proposed decentralizing policy.

### Scheme: HRIA decentralization impact matrix (possible scenario)

Best option for decentralization proposed	Vulnerable groups affected (as per groups identified)	Complementary measure (opportunity to improve vulnerable situation)	Conclusion
<p><b>Health services:</b> Primary health liberalized, managed by district authorities. Health Programme run by Ministry of Health and NHIC to involve family doctors</p>	<p>Poverty: a) older, b) large households, c) children; Age: a) older, b) young people, c) children; Disability: a) persons with mental disability, b) children with disability</p>	<p>NHIC to stimulate by performance indicators targeted services for these vulnerable groups Government targeted Programmes for these vulnerable groups in cooperation with local authorities and through NHIC run Programmes</p>	<p>Health services decentralization are unlikely. Yet, suggested measures will have good impact on vulnerable groups</p>
<p><b>Social services</b> Social services provided and ran by local authorities Management of determination of eligibility for social services</p>	<p>Poverty: a) older, b) large households, c) children; Age: a) older, b) young people, c) children; Disability: a) persons with mental disability, b) children with disability; Rural regions: a) children of educational age, b) active part of population</p>	<p>Government Programmes providing matching funds for local authorities to create social services and vulnerability indicators attached Social assistants mapping out community charts with the vulnerable groups representation</p>	<p>Social decentralization is viewed positively</p>
<p><b>Educational services</b> Provision of educational services by decentralized school network Partly decentralization of content and linguistic content</p>	<p>Rural regions: a) children of educational age; Language/ethnicity: a) Roma, b) Bulgarians, c) Ukrainians, d) Gagauz, e) Moldovans in Transnistria; Disability: a) children with disability</p>	<p>Government to provide matching funds and regulatory oversight of their use for the promotion of integration and identity development Mapping out community charts with the vulnerable groups representation</p>	<p>This decentralization seem to be unlikely, yet, the proposed measures would have positive impact on the vulnerable groups</p>
<p><b>Policing services</b> Police-Community partnership Community policing entrusted to municipal authorities Policing is fair and sensitive to human rights</p>	<p>Gender: a) LGBT, b) trafficking, domestic violence; Religion: a) Muslims, b) Non-orthodox Christian, c) Jews</p>	<p>Elaboration and adoption of a detailed guidelines and rules for the human rights sensitive policing Mapping out community charts with the vulnerable groups representation</p>	<p>The proposed measure is not likely, yet will have good impact on the vulnerable groups</p>



# Recommendations

## Recommendations

### Generic proposals

- 1) (participation/representation) election process in local councils should include quota (reserved place) for participation of vulnerable groups conditioned with a certain percentage (starting 5-7%) of vulnerable group population;
- 2) (participation/representation) non-elected public servants positions should be subject of affirmative action Programme for better representation of vulnerable groups representatives or at least appointed responsible persons handling interests of the vulnerable groups as paid or non-remunerated positions;
- 3) (accountability/transparency) governmental policy-making and regional authorities decisions should encompass the component of the vulnerable groups impact analysis (or more generically Human Rights Impact Analysis), central authorities decisions affecting local communities are subject to impact on vulnerability;
- 4) (accountability/transparency) decisions of local authorities are subject of publication and availability for review by the interested parties and vulnerable groups, including designing and redesigning of territorial borders related to use and exploitation of assets and resources;
- 5) decentralization of certain percent of the educational curricular (and linguistic) content, local curricular determined by local authorities (up to 30%), for the decision of district and local authorities with matching funds from central authorities for innovation;
- 6) decentralization of the determination of the eligibility for the social cash Programmes, while the criteria set by central government;
- 7) introduction of quota for the participation and representation of the vulnerable groups in the local councils by reserved places (when proportion of vulnerable groups reach certain percent, say 5-10%, and election process does not yield vulnerable group representation) or proportionate places;
- 8) accessibility of local authorities to central government grants and subsidies for the creation of the local community centers to serve the needs of the vulnerable groups;
- 9) local authorities of first level accessibility to establishment of centers for family doctors and medical points with matching funds from National Health Insurance Company (NHIC);

- 10) Improved data disaggregated by multiple vulnerability parameters/dimensions: territory, ethnicity, age, sex, disabilities and others should be applied for decentralization policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Data on various vulnerable groups could be collected through official statistics, different types of administrative sources, including Household Registry (National Bureau of Statistics), socioeconomic indicators on living conditions of communities and SADI (Ministry of Economy), social assistance and disability databases (Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family) as well as through qualitative research and selected in-community quantitative research, particularly through the use of Household Budget Survey, Labor Force Market Review etc. Capacity of the National Bureau of Statistics, line ministries and LPAs should be developed accordingly.

### Specific vulnerable group proposals in the context of decentralization

- 1) Roma in rural communities face multiple vulnerability factors. Roma children face unequal access to adequate education, higher degree of poverty, unequal access to health services, and absence of the opportunities for cultural development. Roma rural population faces unemployment and poor access to governmental benefits:
    - Decentralization of certain percent of educational curricular language content for the decision of local authorities matched with central government Programmes.
- Rural Roma population is likely to be poorer than other ethnic groups and communities:
- Decentralization of determination of eligibility for the social cash Programmes to reduce the cost of documents preparation by Roma;
  - Introduction of quota places to improve Roma elected representatives (a reserved place beyond a certain percentage of representation), creation of self-governance bodies in some areas.
- 2) Persons with severe forms of disability (especially children facing multiple vulnerabilities regarding their exclusion from society), poverty, stigma and access to public services:
    - Decentralization of decision-making on the introduction of personal assistants to help children integration into mainstream schools, on accessibility to central government matching funds;
    - Decentralization of determination of eligibility for the

- social cash Programmes to reduce the cost of documents preparation;
- Accessibility of local authorities to central government grants and subsidies for the creation of the local community centers to serve the needs.
- 3) Ethnic linguistic minority face vulnerability regarding access to integrative linguistic education, lacking Romanian language skills:
- Decentralization of certain percent of educational curricular language content for the decision of district authorities matched with governmental Programmes.
- 4) Older persons face vulnerability of better integration into society, and some face poverty situation:
- Decentralization of determination of eligibility for the social cash Programmes to reduce the cost of documents preparation,
  - Assistance in the creation of community social centers supported by matched funds from local authorities and central authorities.
- 5) Trafficking in children and women lead to vulnerability of poverty, stigma for reintegration and abandonment by society and family:
- Assistance in the creation of the community social centers supported by matched funds from local authorities and central authorities to reintegrate victims and inform on consequences.
- 6) Children in difficult situation as socially abandoned:
- Assistance in the creation of the community social centers supported by matched funds from local authorities and central authorities to help social integration and coping with difficulties.
- 7) Women face cases of domestic violence:
- Assistance in the creation of the shelter centers and legal assistance supported by matched funds from local authorities and central authorities to help victims to cope with the reintegration protection.





## **About the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP)**

In 2010 the Government of Moldova, UNDP and UN Women launched the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP), which was funded by the Government of Sweden.

The development objective of the JILDP is to assist the Republic of Moldova in ensuring that vulnerable groups in poor rural and urban areas take advantage of sustainable socioeconomic development opportunities through adequate regional and local policies implemented by Local Public Authorities (LPA) and their partners in a rights-based and gender sensitive manner.

The JILDP works to improve the policy and legal frameworks, as well as to support administrative systems and procedures that are focused on the efficient transfer of competencies to LPA, as well as to support decentralization and the promotion of LPA's roles in decision-making through its four components: Policy Advisory and Advocacy, Local Self-Governance and Participation, Community Empowerment, Transnistria and Security zone.

To advance human rights and gender responsive development at the regional and local level the Programme partners place the human rights based approach, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment at the heart of all Programme activities.

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