



MINUTES

of the „Health Sector External Assistance Coordination Meeting”

April 13th, 2017

Venue: The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova, Conference Room (II floor), 2, V. Alecsandri street, MD 2009, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Date/Time: April 13th, 2017, 13:00 p.m.

Moderator: Dr. Ruxanda Glavan, Minister of Health
Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic, WHO Representative in the Republic of Moldova

Participants:

Ministry of Health	Mrs. Rodica Scutelnic, State secretary Mr. Victor Savin Mrs. Maria Diminet Mr. Andrei Cazacu Ms. Lilia Nita Ms. Tatiana Onufrei Mrs. Marcela Tirdea Ms. Stela Cheptene Mr. Denis Valac Mrs. Maria Lapteanu Mr. Andrei Svet Mrs. Tatiana Zatic Mrs. Daniela Demiscan Mr. Pavel Moraru Mrs. Natalia Popa Mr. Oleg Hincu
State Chancellery	Mrs. Daria Stratan

SUMP „Nicolae Testemitanu”	Mr. Oleg Lozan
NHIC	Mr. Dumitru Parfentiev Mrs. Maria Lifciu
NCEAH	Mrs. Maria Cumpana
HDCD	Mr. Igor Condrat
CIMUP	Mr. Victor Volovei
PAS Center	Mrs. Stela Bivol
IAEA	Mr. Ion Apostol
SDCA	Mr. Matthias Leicht-Miranda Mr. Valeriu Sava Mr. Lajoc Kovacs Mrs. Natalia Zamea
European Union Delegation to the Republic of Moldova	Mrs. Iuliana Stratan Ms. Anzelika Oraite Mrs. Ana Gilca
WHO	Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic
UNDP	Mr. Evghenii Golosceapov
UNICEF	Mrs. Angela Capcelea
UNFPA	Mrs. Natalia Plugaru
UNODC	Mrs. Ina Tcaci
World Bank	Mrs. Irina Guban
TIKA	Mr. Mert Baris
GIZ	Mr. Martin Kade Mr. Cornel Riscanu
ILO	Mr. Semion Terzioglo
IAEA	Mr. Ion Apostol
SOROS Foundation	Mrs. Liliana Gherman

Embassy of Czech Republic in the Republic of Moldova	Mr. Dumitru Comerzan
Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Chisinau	Mrs. Justina Jakavonyte Paune

Distributed Agenda;
Materials: Presentations in Power Point format.

Meeting agenda:

- *Minister's briefing about the results of the Fourth SEE Health Ministerial Forum, that took place in Chisinau, on 3-4 April 2017*, Dr. Ruxanda Glavan, Minister of Health;
- *"Presentation of the Republic of Moldova Profile of Health and Well-being"*, Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic, WHO Representative;
- *"Presentation of the Healthy Life Project "Reducing the Burden of Non-Communicable Diseases ""*, Mr. Lajos Kovacs, Team Leader;
- *"Presentation of the EU Twinning Project - Strengthening of the Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Moldova as regulatory agency in the field of medicines, medical devices and pharmaceutical activity"*, Mrs. Anzelika Oraite, Resident Twinning Adviser to the Republic of Moldova;
- *"Presentation on Ministry of Health's Report of Activities, 2016"*, Mrs. Marcela Tirdea, Head of Division analysis, monitoring and evaluation of policies, Ministry of Health;
- *"Presentation on the Official Development Assistance provided by external partners to the health sector during the 2016 year, survey preliminary results "*, Ms. Lilia Nita, consultant WHO/ Ministry of Health.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION ACCORDING TO THE AGENDA

1. Opening meeting, welcoming remarks

The Health Sector Council Meeting in the field of External Assistance was opened by Dr. Ruxanda Glavan, Minister of Health that co-chaired this session together with Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic, WHO Representative in the Republic of Moldova. Thereby, Madam Minister welcomed all the participants at the meeting and thanked them for their presence and interest for this event.

Therewith, Dr. Ruxanda Glavan listed all the topics according to the agenda of the meeting. Firstly, the Ministry of Health underlined the *“Presentation of the Republic of Moldova Profile of Health and Well-being”*, provided by Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic, WHO Representative.

The second presentation, named *“Presentation of the SDC project on Non-Communicable Diseases”* – was presented by Mr. Lajos Kovacs.

The third presentation, named *“Presentation of the EU Twinning Project - Strengthening of the Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Moldova as regulatory agency in the field of medicines, medical devices and pharmaceutical activity”*, was presented by Mrs. Anzelika Oraite, Resident Twinning Adviser to the Republic of Moldova.

The following was the *“Presentation on Ministry of Health’s Report of Activities, 2016”*, provided by Mrs. Marcela Tirdea, Head of Division analysis, monitoring and evaluation of policies, Ministry of Health;

The last *“Presentation on the Official Development Assistance provided by external partners to the health sector during the 2016 year, survey preliminary results”*, was offered by Ms. Lilia Nita, consultant, Department of foreign relations and European integration, Ministry of Health.

Hence, Madame Minister expressed the gratitude to the donor community for their active and constant support provided to the health sector and declared the meeting opened.

In this context, the floor was passed to the WHO Representative Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic.

Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic greeted Madame Minister Dr. Ruxanda Glavan and thanked the development partners for their presence. He expressed his great pleasure to be present at that meeting and began the opening address by expressing hard thanks to the Ministry of Health for organizing this meeting.

On this occasion, Madam Minister has expressed her desire to make a small presentation on the recently held Fourth SEE Health Ministerial Forum.

1. Presentation on “Minister’s briefing about the results of the Fourth SEE Health Ministerial Forum, that took place in Chisinau, on 3-4 April 2017”, (Dr. Ruxanda Glavan, Minister of Health);

In this context, she mentioned the historical moment that took place in Chisinau, in the period of 3-4 April 2017, the Fourth SEEHN Ministerial Forum and the adoption of Chisinau Pledge signed during the Forum and the importance of its provisions, purposes for the Republic of Moldova, and namely: Sustaining and strengthening the regional cooperation in public health in South-eastern Europe; Achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Achieving universal health coverage (UHC) for our populations; Further upgrading public health services and capacities; Further strengthening our mutual regional and national action in cases of regional emergencies

and related important migrations; Working more closely and efficiently with our partners to make the best use of their unprecedented support;

After that the Minister of Health Dr. Ruxanda Glavan proposed to proceed with the agenda and invited the WHO Representative Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic to take the floor.

2. Presentation on “Presentation of the Republic of Moldova Profile of Health and Well-being”, (Dr. Haris Hajrulahovic, WHO Representative);

Mr. Hajrulahovic presented the country profile on health and well-being giving an overview of a country’s health status, describing data on mortality, morbidity and exposure to key factors along with trends over time. The WHO Representative underlined that there is an alignment of the national policies to the Health 2020 which could further accelerate progress towards the WHO policy framework targets. Also it was mentioned that the health situation has started to improve and progress has picked up in recent years and the improved trends have been observed for 10 of the 19 core indicators in the Health 2020 targets in Europe since 2000.

In this context, the WHO Representative remarked that Republic of Moldova has made a substantial progress in reduction of mortality from infectious disease, but incidences of TB and HIV remain very high; at the same time deaths from most causes are falling fast but the rates are still very high. Many of these deaths could be attributable to key lifestyle factors, including high intake of alcohol and smocking. Therewith, it was underlined that the membership in the networks such as European Health Information Initiative and South-east Europe Health Network will help spread innovation and good practices;

In conclusion, Dr. Hajrulahovic emphasized that the major global and European challenges, such as migration and global emergencies need to be taken into account when considering future developments.

Madam Minister, Dr. Ruxanda Glavan thanked Mr. Hajrulahovic for the important and comprehensive information provided and then the floor was past to Mr. Lajos Kovacs.

3. Presentation on “Presentation of the Healthy Life Project “Reducing the Burden of Non-Communicable Diseases””, (Mr. Lajos Kovacs, Team Leader);

Mr. Lajos Kovacs presented the Healthy Life Project “Reducing the Burden of Non-Communicable Diseases”, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and implemented by the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute and CRED. As the team leader of the project, Mr. Kovacs mentioned that the project aims to contribute to the improvement of health status of the Moldovan population, especially in rural areas through reduction of burden of NCDs. Therewith, it was remarked that the projects will be implemented according to the following principles: alignment with the National Health Policy; complementarity to existing interventions; translation of the national strategies into local action; implementation through local and national institutions and communities; and generate evidence from implementation to improve national strategies.

The team leader of the project noted that among the priority areas of the project should be listed the clinical protocols which implies concrete actions reviewing the existing materials and guidelines for family physicians and nurses on NCDs to provide for patient education and case management in collaboration with WHO/PEN protocols, as well as develop materials for patient information regarding NCDs management to complement PEN protocols; another priority area is focused on the facilitation of the development of concept of community nursing, professional profile and qualification standards, and review of the existing curriculum; another target field to be mentioned is the support to capacity building of Public Health Centres on health promotion through staff training and institutional development and strengthening of Public Health Task Forces at rayon level to coordinate health promotion activities across sectors with diverse stakeholders; and the last but not less important area is the health promotion which foreseen to analyse health promotion, identify health problems, assess training needs, raise awareness, etc.

Finally, Mr. Kovacs remarked the three projects outcomes and namely: - national health authorities create an for enabling policy environment decentralized and integrated management of NCDs; - the population in target districts has access to and uses quality integrated care, including outreach services, related to NCDs; - the population in target districts has improved health seeking behaviour and reduced NCDs risk behaviour. As the pilot rayons within the project was mentioned: in the Northern region – Falesti, Briceni and Edinet; in the Central region – Ungheni, Orhei and Criuleni; in the Southern region – Cahul, Stefan Voda, Taraclia and Vulcanesti.

To sum up, Mr. Kovacs noted that the next steps within the project are focused on facilitation of the analysis and use of health profiles at rayon level to identify subpopulations with specific health risks and needs; development of a health action plan to meet the needs of these priority subpopulations; strengthening the local capacities and capacity of Public Health Centres to design and conduct targeted health promotion, and to coordinate health promotion actions locally; and developing of the local partnership amongst multisectoral partners at rayon level to collectively address priority health issues in the communities related to NCDs.

Madam Minister, Dr. Ruxanda Glavan thanked Mr. Lajos Kovacs for the presentation provided and the floor was past to Mrs. Anzelika Oraite, Resident Twinning Adviser to the Republic of Moldova.

4. Presentation on “Presentation of the EU Twinning Project - Strengthening of the Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Moldova as regulatory agency in the field of medicines, medical devices and pharmaceutical activity”, (Mrs. Anzelika Oraite, Resident Twinning Adviser to the Republic of Moldova);

Mrs. Anzelika Oraite made a presentation on the EU Twinning Project - Strengthening of the Medicines and Medical Devices Agency (MMDA) of Moldova as regulatory agency in the field of medicines, medical devices and pharmaceutical activity mentioning that the project overall objective consists in a full and correct implementation of the EU acquis in the area of medicinal products and medical devices and preparation of the MMDA for joining the EU regulatory agencies network as an equal partner.

Therefore, Mrs. Oraite listed the project components, as follows: - approximation of the legal framework and strengthening of MMDA's institutional and organizational capacities; - strengthening of MMDA's regulatory functioning with respect to medicinal products; - strengthening of MMDA's regulatory functioning with respect to medical devices; - improvement of rational use of medicines and medical devices; - transition of the MMDA to full compliance with the EU requirements.

The Resident Twinning Adviser to the Republic of Moldova also mentioned as the project targets and expected major achievements the legal frame approximation to the EU requirements, MMDA with capacities at the same level as peer institutions in the EU Member States, well-trained MMDA officials, improvement of the rational use of medicines and medical devices and safer, better quality and more effective medicinal products and medical devices to the public.

Madam Minister, Dr. Ruxanda Glavan thanked Mrs. Anzelika Oraite for the presentation and the floor was past to Mrs. Marcela Tirdea, Head of Division analysis, monitoring and evaluation of policies.

5. Presentation on "Presentation on Ministry of Health's Report of Activities, 2016", (Mrs. Marcela Tirdea, Head of Division analysis, monitoring and evaluation of policies, Ministry of Health);

Mrs. Tirdea presented the Ministry of Health's Report of Activities for 2016 according to the established objectives. Thus, during the 2016 activities were implemented in line with the national priorities and specific objectives settled for 2016: improving the health of the population in the Republic of Moldova (a 3.5% reduction in overall mortality and with 4.7% - deaths from circulatory illnesses; a double reduction in maternal mortality that remains to be a challenge and slightly reduction of the infant mortality); capacity building of the human resources in the health sector (improving the human resource management process in health; providing sustainable funding for the training, maintenance and development of human health resources; developing and implementing effective mechanisms for retention and efficient management of medical staff mobility; changing the payroll mechanism; raising the salary by type of institution); financing health and efficient use of result-oriented resources (creation of the Health Procurement Center; economies of 170 million MD Lei); ensuring access to medicines (providing the population with compensated medicines under national programs and controlling specific diseases); ensuring access to medicines (ensuring people's access to quality and safe medical services; development of community medical services; developing services according to the needs of the population; efficient use of hospital sector capabilities); capacity building of public health services (strengthening the public health service; creating public health councils in all 36 administrative units; reforming laboratory services by organizing and functioning of 10 performance laboratories with collection/sampling groups, etc.).

Concluding, Mrs. Tirdea listed the priorities and objectives for the development of the health system in 2017.

Madam Minister, Dr. Ruxanda Glavan thanked Mrs. Marcela Tirdea for the presentation and the floor was past to Mrs. Lilia Nita, consultant WHO/Ministry of Health.

6. Presentation on “Presentation on the Official Development Assistance provided by external partners to the health sector during the 2016 year, survey preliminary results”, (Ms. Lilia Nita, consultant WHO/Ministry of Health).

Ms. Lilia Nita presented the preliminary data on the Annual Report on Official Development Assistance offered to the Health Sector of the Republic of Moldova – 2016. This year was the ninth edition and the survey is expected to be replicated on an annual basis. The exercise aims to increase transparency and predictability of the development aid. The report’s objectives remained the same: to picture donors alignment towards the Moldovan health system strategies; to improve quality of information available for sector coordination and strategic decision-making for strategic planning of financial resources in health sector; to provide evidences to strengthen donor coordination mechanism towards the on-going reforms in the Moldovan health sector; to illustrate donors’ short and medium term commitments to the Moldovan health sector; to inform on future sectorial strategic plans and donors’ strategies to support the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova.

Ms. Nita listed the development partners who provided ODA during 2016: 12 donors being multilateral and 7 bilateral. Therewith, it was presented the total of the official development assistance provided to the health sector in 2016, including the grant and soft loan components. So, in 2016 the type of funding was for the second consecutive year 100% untied, accounting a total of 30 642 651 USD. Thus, for grants and loans the tendencies are the same. Grants overcome loans, but the loans increased in comparison with grants amounting 29%, but grants decreased slightly to 71% in 2016.

In the terms of geographical coverage, the distribution of development partners is more uniform and there are no regions not covered by the ODA assistance. At the moment we have 100% presence of the developments partners in all Moldavian Districts.

An overview of aid modalities used by the donor community in implementing ODA; proportion of grants to loans; and types of funding showed as share of technical assistance, investments and administrative costs were also presented. Further were presented the categories in which investments were focused during the period of 2011-2016; the percentage of funds disbursed for technical assistance in 2016; the percentage of total funds disbursed in 2011-2016 according to the main functions of health systems; percentage of funds disbursed for health services provision by components in 2011-2016; percentage of total funds disbursed in 2016 by program priority areas; alignment with national health policies.

In terms of donor’s alignment to health sector priorities – all are providing support in line with the national health policies and national programs; however some national strategies and programmes receive less attention, such as the areas related to *Hepatitis, Blood Transfusion Safety, Iron and Folic Acid Deficiencies* and *Prevention and Reduction of the morbidity and mortality of children with congenital malformations and hereditary*

pathologies. In the same time, it was pictured the ODA alignment to MTBF categories for 2016 year and ODA alignment towards MTBF for 2017-2019.

Elaborations regarding achievements towards relevant for the sector Busan commitments and the Global Partnership Monitoring Framework were presented, as well few targets of the Paris Declaration indicators were tracked being considered relevant in terms of donor coordination mechanism. In conclusion, Ms. Nita emphasized the importance to health sector as a key component of sustainable development and underlined some challenging key facts revealed by the survey that need policy decision at the present stage.

Discussions

Madam Minister thanked all the speakers for the provided information and declared de session of presentations closed. Therewith, Madam Minister proposed that before proceeding to discussions to give the floor to the Mr. Pavlos Theodorakis, WHO expert that came recently to the Republic of Moldova. Madam Minister also, remarked that the mission of Mr. Theodorakis is to provide support in the processes initiated by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova, particularly with regard to primary medicine, the Strategy to be developed, etc.

Thus, Mr. Theodorakis thanked Madam Minister for the opportunity to introduce himself and has shown an enormous interest and openness to offer all the support necessary to achieve the goals proposed by the health system of the Republic of Moldova.

Therefore, Madam Minister proposed to proceed to questions, suggestions and comments on the topics discussed according to the agenda.

In this context, Mr. Parfentiev thanked for the invitation to the Health Sector Council Meeting in the field of External Assistance. Mr. Parfentiev appreciated the multitude and diversity of the implemented projects and its orientation to different levels of assistance. He also manifested the interest of promoting the project of the primary health care system reform. Mr. Parfentiev remarked that it will be welcomed to have more activities on assessment of the situation in the field of primary health care and underlined the evolution and achievements reached in health promotion, especially the progress in drafting normative acts regarding the method of using and announcing the contest through the fund for prevention. At the same time Mr. Parfentiev suggested that all the external assistance projects to be coordinated with the National Health Insurance Company, so as requesting an additional funding for implementation of the reached results within these projects and to ensure its sustainability, it is necessary to mention this expenditures in the NHIC action plan and in the budget.

Madam Minister thanked Mr. Parfentiev for the raised question and expressed her hope that the international organization representatives who intend to implement new projects in the health sector, will consider the mentioned suggestion.

Mr. Sava thanked Madam Minister for the organized meeting and additionally to the comments of Mr. Parfentiev, added that it would be very appropriate to create a database of all past projects that have made a significant contribution and finished with reports and recommendations that justify the use of international money. Therewith, Mr. Sava remarked this database will be useful, first of all, for the international community, avoiding the duplication of activities, ensuring a consequent development and avoiding the unfounded criticism.

Madame Minister thanked Mr. Sava for the raised question and sustained the idea of development a database noting that the projects of external assistance must be finalized with changes based on received recommendations but not just with receiving recommendations.

Conclusions

The Ministry of Health and WHO as co-chair of the Health Sector Council on External Assistance in collaboration with external development partners, will organise the next health coordination meeting scheduled for the beginning of July 2017. Therewith, it was agreed that all subject to be presented shall be discussed and fixed based on informal consultations lead by the Secretariat of the mentioned Council during the upcoming weeks.

Secretary of the Health Sector Coordination
Council on External Assistance

Lilia Nita

