



## MINUTES

of the „Communication Forum on the health issues”

June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Venue:** The Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Moldova, Great Hall (IV<sup>th</sup> floor), 7, Constantin Tanase street, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**Date/Time:** June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 14:00 p.m.

**Moderator:** **Mr. Boris GÎLCA**, Secretary General of State, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection

**Mrs. Tatiana IVANICICHINA**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Finance

**Mr. Andrei MATEI**, WHO Country Office in the Republic of Moldova

### Participants:

Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection	Mr. Boris Gilca Mrs. Aliona Serbulenco Mrs. Rodica Scutelnic Mrs. Anastasia Oceretnii Mrs. Viorica Dumbraveanu Mrs. Nelea Rusu Mr. Juozis Galdikas Mrs. Lilia Nita Mrs. Marcela Tirdea Mrs. Iulia Mihalachi Mrs. Tatiana Zatic Mrs. Lilia Gantea Mrs. Lilia Oleinic Mr. Valeriu Goncear Mrs. Cristina Stratulat
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Ministry of Finance	Mrs. Tatiana Ivanicichina Mrs. Iulia Ciumac Mrs. Irina Babuci Mrs. Natalia Caraus Mrs. Mariana Rotaru Mrs. Marina Semeniuc Mrs. Ana Ambrosii
SPHM	Mr. Ion Ababii Mr. Oleg Lozan Mrs. Evelina Gherghelegiu
NAPH	Mrs. Elena Palanciuc
IEM	Mr. Mihai Ciocanu Mr. Gheorghe Cociorva
NHIC	Mrs. Maria Lifciu
CIMUP	Mr. Nicolae Jelamschi
PAS Center	Mrs. Stela Bivol Mrs. Svetlana Nicolaescu
IAEA	Mr. Ion Apostol
SDCA	Mr. Valeriu Sava
European Union Delegation to Moldova	Mrs. Anzelika Oraite
WHO	Mrs. Angela Ciobanu Mr. Andrei Matei
UNDP	Mr. Stefan Liller Mr. Dorin Rotaru
UNICEF	Mrs. Desiree Jongsma Mrs. Cristina Gaberi
UNFPA	Mrs. Rita Columbia

UNAIDS	Mrs. Svetlana Plamadeala
WB	Mrs. Irina Guban
IOM	Mr. Simion Terzioglo
GIZ	Mr. Cornel Riscanu
Embassy of Czech Republic in the Republic of Moldova	Mr. Jan Husak
Embassy of Japan in Chisinau	Mr. Alexandr Hripton
Embassy of the Republic of Italy in Chisinau	Mrs. Stefania Run
Embassy of Romania in Chisinau	Mr. Alexandru Muresan
Soros Foundation Moldova	Mrs. Liliana Gherman Mr. Vitalie Slobozian
Y-Peer Moldova	Mrs. Anna Susarenco

**Distributed** Agenda;

**Materials:** Presentations in Power Point format.

**Meeting agenda:**

- *“Brief introduction on the new aid coordination mechanism”*, Mrs. Tatiana Ivanicichina, Secretary of State, Ministry of Finance;
- *“MHLSP Action Plan for 2018”*, Mr. Boris Gilca, Secretary General of State, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection;
- *“Official Development Assistance provided by the external partners to the Health Sector during the 2017 year, survey preliminary results”*, Mrs. Lilia Nita, Consultant on external assistance, WHO/Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection;

- “WHO and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”,  
Mr. Andrei Matei, World Health Organisation;
- “UNFPA and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”,  
Mrs. Rita Columbia, UNFPA Representative;
- “UNICEF and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”,  
Mrs. Desiree Jongsma, UNICEF Representative;
- “UNDP and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”,  
Mr. Stefan LILLER, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative.

## **SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION ACCORDING TO THE AGENDA**

### **I. Opening meeting, welcoming remarks**

According to the provisions of the recently adopted *Government Decision no. 377 of 25 April 2018 on the regulation of the institutional framework and the mechanism for the coordination and management of external assistance*, starting with the second quarter of this year, the Ministry of Finance is responsible at the national level for the external assistance coordination and management mechanism and fulfills the unique role of contact/control in relation with external development partners and public authorities on project proposals/external assistance programs. Thus, this year the health sector external assistance coordination meeting, was organized within the Ministry of Finance premises, as a “Communication Forum on the health issues”.

The meeting was opened by Mrs. Tatiana Ivanicichina, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, as the national coordinator of the external assistance provided by the external partners to the Republic of Moldova and the representative of the host institution for the meeting.

#### ***1. Presentation on “Brief introduction on the new aid coordination mechanism”, Mrs. Tatiana Ivanicichina, Secretary of State, Ministry of Finance;***

Thus, Madame Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance welcomed the audience and proceeded to introduce the new mechanism of the external assistance coordination approved by the new normative framework, and namely the *Government Decision no. 377 of 25 April 2018*. In this context, she remarked that the purpose of this new mechanism is to maximize the efficient use of available resources and to have a greater impact of external assistance in complementing the most stringent needs set by the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the medium and long term. Also, Madame Ivanicichina underlined that this mechanism comes to ensure the consistency between the donor

planning framework and government budget planning, as well as to achieve a sustainable external assistance management that involves transparency and effective dialogue between donors and the Government.

Therefore, Mrs. Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance gave the floor to Mr. Boris Gilca, Secretary General of State of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, who welcomed, on behalf of Madame Minister Svetlana Cebotari, all the participants at the meeting and thanked them for their presence and for the interest shown for this important quarterly organised event. Therewith, Mr. Secretary General of State welcomed the new format of discussions which, as he mentioned, is very important for making external assistance more efficient for medium-term health resource planning and represents, in fact, a continuation of those consultations previously organized with the strong support of the WHO Country Office in the Republic of Moldova within the health sector meetings in the field of external assistance. Hence, Mr. Gilca noted that the health system's reform, as one of the most important priorities according to the Government's Working Plan, has now all the political support. Thus, he expressed the hope that by continuing the external partner's consistent support that the health system has received permanently, namely through expertise and technical assistance and combining joint efforts - it will be possible to achieve universal access to quality health services and to provide an efficient health system for the citizens of the Republic of Moldova.

***2. Presentation on “MHLSP Action Plan for 2018”, Mr. Boris Gilca, Secretary General of State, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection;***

Therefore, Mr. Secretary General of State continued with the second subject from the agenda and proceeded to present the Action Plan of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection for 2018 year. First of all, Mr. Gilca outlined the main policy documents on which the action plan is based referring to the “Law no. 112 from 2 July 2014 on the ratification of the EU – Republic of Moldova Association Agreement”, “National Action Plan on implementation of the EU – RM Association Agreement for 2017-2019”, the new strategic document “Sustainable Development Agenda - 2030” developed with the external partners and civil society support on which were held extensive consultations and in which the health area that was not specified in the previous strategy is for the first time remarked. Furthermore, Mr. Gilca noted the seven main components provided in the plan of action: 1. the financial management and control system; 2. coordination of public policies in health, work and social protection; 3. public health; 4. health care; 5. social assistance; 6. social and medical insurance; and 7. work and demography – components that come as a result of the government reform and the merging of two ministries in the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection. As was specified by Mr. Secretary General of State, the MHLSP Action Plan for 2018 contains 43 objectives and 157 actions (in the Power Point presentation, the health sector

priorities and objectives being inserted in red). In this regard, in addition to the new strategy “Moldova 2030” and its component on ensuring the fundamental right to the best physical and mental health, Mr. Gilca also mentioned other policy documents and normative acts that guide the Ministry in achieving its objectives, such as: the “Anticorruption action plan in the health and health insurance sector for the 2018-2020 years” which aims to return the safety and the dignity of the health system through quality services, sufficient communication and through a transparent and integral system; the draft of the “Malpractice Law” to be approved primarily as safety for the patient as well as for the safety of the medical personnel employed in the Republic of Moldova; and the last but no less important the “Health Code of the Republic of Moldova” which remains a priority for development. Returning to the main priorities of reforming the Moldovan health system, Mr. Secretary General of State reiterated once again the importance of external development partners' support in achievement of: - *strengthening the public health state surveillance service, strengthening the National Agency for Public Health* – a very courageous and, but on contrary very resilient reform, that will bring results and efficiency and for which Mr. Gilca expressed appreciation to external partners for their support; - *improving the health system by reforming the hospital sector and strengthening primary care* – including the reconceptualization of hospital reform which is the most resilient reform in the health sector, but for which the system has all the political support for starting it probably next year; and the primary health care reform necessary to promote free practice of the family doctors, ensure the efficiency of primary health care services, and to increase the interest of primary health care professionals to work in this field; - *ensuring the health system with medical staff* – a more challenging field, as Mr Gilca mentioned, but for which the system again has the Government's overall support to motivate medical staff and increase their remuneration.

Using this opportunity, Mr. Secretary General of State highlighted the importance of the assistance provided by the Delegation of the European Union to the Ministry of Health Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova, especially by delegating two senior advisors, one of them for health and thus introduced Mr. Juozas Galdikas, EU High Level Adviser for Health.

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Gilca came up with a quote “*Delivering together for change: we can't think of a better way to move forward*”, that in his view, would mark the purpose of the meeting, as well as the assistance provided by the external partners for the development of the health sector.

On this note, Mr. Secretary General of State thanked the audience for their attention and asked the Secretaries of State from the MHLSP to come with some completions and suggestions on those priorities that are less or even not at all covered. Thus the floor was passed to Mrs. Aliona Serbulenco, Secretary of State on public health.

Firstly, Madam Serbulenco welcomed the participants and thanked Mr. Gilca for the opportunity to use the created Platform of communication to address the most important issues faced by the health system. In this context, Mrs. Secretary of State underlined two issues for which the external partners support will be very much appreciated and namely: first issue related to the necessity to have an automated information system that would allow evidence and control of HIV prevention and sexually transmitted infections, software development and implementation; and second issue related to tobacco control in the Republic of Moldova and owning a unique database to have clarity and efficiency in controlling tobacco on the domestic market, an issue recently and repeatedly reiterated on the Parliamentary Platform.

Mr. Secretary General of State thanked Madam Serbulenco and has emphasized once again the importance and necessity of the information systems both in the public health field and in the fields of primary health care as well as hospital care - which, in his opinion, are critical for the health system functionality. On this note, he passed the floor to Mrs. Rodica Scutelnic, Secretary of State on medical assistance, MHLSP.

Madame Scutelnic also thanked for the provided opportunity and in addition to the ones outlined, stated some deficiencies encountered that would require the assistance and support of external partners, including: - the harmonizing of policies in the field of medicines, developing and promoting mechanisms for implementation of the Medicines Law; - the centralized procurement mechanisms for medicines and medical devices; - the mechanism of purchasing medical services, good practices and possibilities of implementation of a new mechanism relying on the realities of the system, including the information system from Moldova; - the plan for organizing the human health resources available in the country at this stage, in addition to the technical assistance provided in the sector; - strengthening human resources to develop medical services for patients suffering from autism; - the development of high-performance services and namely with reference to modular transplantation for which the system has medical devices but does not have the necessary conditions and human resources to provide these kind of services. Concluding, Mrs. Scutelnic mentioned that there are still many priorities and deficiencies, but they are already descending.

Mr. Secretary General of State thanked Madame Scutelnic for the mentioned priority details and stressed that the system remains open and will appreciate any additional information, consultations and initiatives of meeting and discussions to approach the outlined issues and priorities. Hence, Mr. Gilca proposed to listen all the presentations and then to proceed to the questions, answers and discussion session.

Respectively, Mr. Secretary General of State gave the floor to Mr. Andrei Matei, the representative delegated by the WHO Country Office from Moldova.

First of all, Mr. Matei welcomed the audience on behalf of Mr. Haris Hajrulahovic, Head of the WHO Country Office from Moldova, and noted that the WHO continues to provide the strategic assistance to the MHLSP in two directions for coordination of the external assistance in the health sector: - organization of the quarterly donor's meetings, and in this context he thanked the Ministry of Finances for hosting this event and – for mapping the ODA in the health sector, mentioning that it is the X<sup>th</sup> edition of the ODA mapping exercise that has proven to be one effective, providing an ample information on assistance to the health sector. Therewith, Mr. Matei welcomed the new institutional coordination mechanism of the external assistance and the Ministry of Finance roll in this process and using this opportunity launched an invitation to the Ministry of Finance representatives to attend the meetings organized regularly by the WHO Country Office in this regard. Therefore, the floor was passed to Mrs. Lilia Nita, WHO/MHLSP Consultant on external assistance.

***3. Presentation on “Official Development Assistance provided by the external partners to the Health Sector during the 2017 year – survey preliminary results”, Mrs. Lilia Nita, Consultant on external assistance, WHO/Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection;***

Mrs. Nita welcomed the audience and thanked for given opportunity to present the preliminary data on the Annual Report on Official Development Assistance offered to the Health Sector of the Republic of Moldova - 2017. So, as she mentioned, the 2017 year mapping exercise represents the tenth 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. Also, Mrs. Nita noted that 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.

Thus, Mrs. Nita listed the development partners who provided ODA during 2017: 11 donors being multilateral and 7 bilateral. Therewith, it was presented the total of the official development assistance provided to the health sector in 2017, including the grant and soft loan components. So, according to the presentation, in 2017 the type of funding registered 6.9% of tied and 93.1% of untied funding, accounting a total of 32 243 210 USD. At the same time, for grants and loans the tendencies was the same. Grants overcome loans, but the difference was more significant, the loans decreased in



comparison with grants amounting 5.5%, but grants increased 94.5% in 2017.

In the terms of geographical coverage, the distribution of development partner's support was uniform and there were no regions not covered by ODA assistance in the last three years.

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, there were presented the categories in which the investments were focused during the period of 2011- 2017; the percentage of funds disbursed for technical assistance in 2017; the percentage of total funds disbursed in 2011-2017 according to the main functions of health systems; percentage of funds disbursed for health services provision by components in 2011-2017; percentage of total funds disbursed in 2017 by program priority areas; alignment with national health policies.

In terms of donor's alignment to health sector priorities - all of them are providing support in line with the national health policies and national programs; however some national strategies and programmes received less attention, such as the areas related to "*Transplant*" and "*National Blood Transfusion Safety*" Programmes. In the same time, it was pictured the ODA alignment to MTBF categories for 2017 year and ODA alignment towards MTBF for 2018-2020.

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.

Mr. Secretary General of State thanked for that presentation and expressed the appreciation to the WHO Country Office for its support in achieving ODA Survey, emphasizing the importance of this analysis and the necessity of using these evidences in the planning of allocations for the health system and in the planning of budgets by the Ministry of Finance.

Returning to the agenda of the meeting, the floor was passed to Mr. Andrei Matei, the representative delegated by the WHO Country Office from Moldova.

Reflecting on the presented ODA Survey preliminary results, Mr. Matei noted that taking into account that the share of ODA to the policy, legal framework and governance

components increased it can be concluded that the external partners come to support the reforms initiated by the Government. Therewith, returning to the field of human resources mentioned earlier, he noted that the share of ODA distributed by functions and namely for resource generation decreased and suggested to have discussions with the donor's community to strengthen the support for this area.

**4. Presentation on “WHO and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”, Mr Andrei Matei, World Health Organisation;**

Hence, Mr. Matei continued with the presentation on WHO and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health and emphasized the signed Biennial Collaboration Agreement for 2018-2019 which serves as a basic collaborative document between the WHO and the Government and stipulates five categories for cooperation and programme areas in which WHO is actively involved: - communicable diseases (especially HIV and Hepatitis); - NCDs (non-communicable diseases, violence and injuries, nutrition); - promoting health through the life course (reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health); - health systems (national health policies, strategies and plans, integrated people-centered health services, health system information and evidence); - preparedness, surveillance and response (infectious hazard management, country health emergency preparedness and the IHR).

Also, Mr. Matei mentioned that for achieving the proposed activities, the WHO is strongly supported by the key donors/development partners as: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, European Union, Government of Japan, UNAIDS, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Further, he focused on the activities proposed for the current year according to the categories of cooperation and programme areas set in the BCA. Thus, under the category of *communicable diseases* it was proposed to achieve: re-validation of elimination of mother-to child transmission of syphilis and later in 2018 of HIV; implementation of the new approach on HIV lab testing and treatment protocols; monitoring and evaluation of national program on prevention and control of tuberculosis; strengthening of immunization system and evaluation of HPV vaccine implementation; etc. Under the category of *NCDs* it was proposed to achieve: monitoring and evaluation of a pilot implementation of essential interventions for the prevention of cardiovascular diseases in PHC; publication and sharing results of the national salt consumption Survey; preparing communication campaign on key NCD risk factors for children in schools; etc. Under the third category which is focused on *promoting health through the life course*, it was planned to piloting the health promotion program in selected schools; implement the Sexual Reproductive Health activities based on selected priorities from National SRH Program; also to support capacity building activities and technical support in the related

areas; etc. Under the *health systems* category to which the largest share of support is directed, it was planned to support the strengthening of pharmaceutical sector; introduction of a new System of Health Accounts; strengthening capacities of the new National Public Health Agency; strengthening national capacities in generating evidences for policies (antimicrobial resistance, salt intake; improvement purchasing of health care services; implementation of the PHC strategy; end-term assessment of the Health Sector Development Strategy for 2008-2017, etc.; And finally, under the *preparedness, surveillance and response* category are planned the following activities: initiation of the joint external evaluation in the framework of International Health Regulation; strengthening capacities in the area of outbreak investigation, early warning and rapid response; development of the Strategy on Combating of Antimicrobial Resistance and the Action Plan.

Mr. Secretary General of State thanked Mr. Matei for the presentation and mentioned that it was necessary and very important in order to ensure an effective communication with the donors and the effectiveness of resources, as well as to avoid the duplications.

Forwards, the floor was passed to Mrs. Rita Columbia, the Representative of the UNFPA in the Republic of Moldova.

***5. Presentation on “UNFPA and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”, Dr Rita Columbia, UNFPA Representative;***

Mrs. Columbia thanked Mr. Secretary General of State for the given opportunity to approach the collaboration between the UNFPA and the Republic of Moldova in the health sector. In this context she mentioned the signed for five years Memorandum of Understanding, that as she stated is fully in line with the national priorities of the Republic of Moldova in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and is based on the policies focused on population's needs, as well as on the mutual commitments according to the SDGs and the 2030 Development Agenda. Therefore, the UNFPA Representative congratulated the MHLSP with the key activities achieved and especially with the adoption of the National Programme on Sexual and Reproductive Health, which in her opinion serves as an example of future collaboration between different partners and the MHLSP. Mrs. Columbia also stressed that the UNFPA and WHO worked very close with the Ministry to make sure that the Programme to be well developed and to base on European Action Plan and Global Strategy in the field of sexual and reproductive health and to be aligned with the 2030 Development Agenda. As she mentioned, the National Programme on Sexual and Reproductive health focuses on ensuring the access to sexual and reproductive health services, including population information and education on sexual and reproductive health, as well as to establish a coordination mechanism in this area becoming as a compass between the UNFPA and the MHLSP to work closely and

reproductively to meet the needs of woman and girls. Another important document mentioned by Madam Columbia was the Joint Project on prevention and control of Cancer which was already implemented for one year achieving the expected results.

In conclusion, the UNFPA Representative assured that the UNFPA will continue to support health system of the Republic of Moldova in improving the access and quality of sexual and reproductive health services, preventing the HIV infections among the key populations, building health behaviors of young people preventing the reproductive health; building a reliable database on sexual and reproductive health as a part of the health management information system, etc.

Mr. Boris Gilca thanked the UNFPA Representative for their interventions in supporting the health system of the Republic of Moldova on the reproductive health component and passed the floor to Madame Desiree Jongsma, UNICEF Representative in the Republic of Moldova.

***6. Presentation on “UNICEF and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”, Dr Desiree Jongsma, UNICEF Representative;***

Mrs. Desiree Jongsma welcomed Mr. Secretary General of State and thanked for the opportunity offered to approach the support provided by the UNICEF to the health sector of the Republic of Moldova which as she said is focused on the first and second decades of children’s lives. Thus, she underlined the strategic partnership framework for collaboration signed for five years and the Working Plan signed recently with the MHLSP for two years (2018-2019), both coming with the commitments of the Government for the 2030 Development Agenda as well as with the SDGs.

Hence, Mrs. Jongsma noted that the UNICEF is jointly working together with various partners as UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNDP and WHO, different ministries and civil society to address different sector coming together with health. Further, the UNICEF Representative highlighted the most important areas of working and described the selected key achievements for 2017 and activities for 2018. Thus, as was mentioned by Mrs. Jongsma, in the area of “*nurturing care*” with the support of the UNICEF were developed the Guidelines on home visiting, including family wellbeing assessment tools; was strengthened the maternal health regulatory framework with the development of antenatal care standards on the left bank of Nistru river; were trained 30 health professionals from the left bank of Nistru river in using evidence-based data for development of local standards. Therewith, for 2018 is planned to expand access to effective and essential Early Childhood Development services: scale up early intervention services to 10 districts in Moldova; Nurses and Family Doctors to acquire enhanced skills to provide Home Visiting programmes and improve good nutrition and

positive parenting skills of mothers and fathers; Pre-service and In-service curricula of nurses and family doctors to include new child care and development standards, including home visiting; and also 30 health professionals from the left bank of Nistru river to be trained in implementation of antenatal care standards. In the area of “immunization” with the UNICEF support, >1,389K Vaccine doses were acquired through UNICEF supported mechanism; 384 Health Professionals acquired enhanced skills in interpersonal communication; Communication and Behavior Change strategy to increase demand for immunization was developed. Therewith, for 2018 is planned the procurement of >1,330K vaccine doses and 52 cold chain equipment through UNICEF procurement mechanism; to support in implementation of the Communication and Behavior Change strategy to increase demand for immunization; to support the functioning of the intersectoral platform to increase demand for immunization services; to adjust medical university/college curricula to build interpersonal communication skills in health workers. In the area of “youth friendly health services (YFHS)” with the UNICEF support was initiated A performance-based financing (PBF) pilot for YFHS and were developed and tested in four pilot centers qualitative and quantitative PBF indicators; also in five districts were adopted YFHS Communication for Behavior Change Strategies to boost health seeking behaviors among adolescents. Therewith, for 2018 is planned the piloting of the performance based payment mechanism for Youth Friendly Health Services in four districts; 15% increase in YFHS able to provide services to the most vulnerable and at risk groups of adolescents; strengthen the referral system for most vulnerable and at risk groups of adolescents in 10 districts; and support the MHLSP in the validation status of elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV infection in the Republic of Moldova.

In order to promote the financial sustainability for children, Mrs. Jongsma highlighted that the Government of the Republic of Moldova took responsibility to fully self-finance the National Immunization Programme. In the same context, she underlined that the YFHS are financed from the National Health Insurance Fund. And the implementation and financing of the home-visiting programmes as she mentioned will ensure good child outcomes from nutrition and development perspectives, thereby decreasing the burden of non-communicable diseases.

Mr. Secretary General of State expressed appreciations to Mrs. Jongsma for the UNICEF involvement and support which is one sectoral implying health and social protection ensuring children rights. On this note, the floor was passed to Mr. Stefan Liller, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative.

***7. Presentation on “UNDP and MHLSP collaboration in the field of health”, Dr Stefan LILLER, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative;***

Mr. Liller thanked Mr. Secretary General of State and noted that the UNDP is working on more issues with many national public institutions as Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Interior, etc., within more important programmes including that on Confidence building. At the same time, regarding the collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative stressed that in the last years UNDP supported the health system in procurement of medicines and medical devices within the national and special programmes.

Thus, due to the strategic partnership between the UNDP and the MHLSP, significant amounts of money have been saved that have allowed the purchase of additional stocks of vital drugs for patients suffering from cancer, diabetes or mental health problems, all purchased medical products and devices meeting the highest quality standards and the EU and WHO quality requirements. At the same time, Mr. Liller emphasized that due to this partnership, last year, the degree of coverage of human insulin analogues, medicines purchased under the National Diabetes Control Program, increased as well as the accessibility with ARV treatment for new patients enrolled in treatment and the accessibility of cancer patients in the National Cancer Control Program. These efforts have brought significant savings to the state budget, as stressed Mr. Liller.

Finally, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative stated that UNDP will continue in the following years to support the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection in purchase of the medicines and medical devices provided in national and special health programs, including the coverage of HIV and STI patients, oncological, haematological, tuberculosis, rare diseases, diabetes etc. suffering patients, using modern tools and transparent procurement procedures. As he ensured, the UNDP will also contribute to the upgrading of drug storage infrastructure, in line with international standards in the field.

Mr. Gilca thanked Mr. Liller and emphasized once again the importance of the roll of UNDP as coordinator for the development of the UN Partnership Programme (UNDAF) and expressed appreciation for efficient activities within the mentioned Programme, as well as for all the support provided to the health system of the Republic of Moldova.

Therefore, Mr. Secretary General of State, thanked all the speakers for the very important subjects presented and proposed to proceed to discussion session.

Thus, Mr. Sava thanked Mr. Secretary General of State for that opportunity and asked two questions. First question was referred to the new procedure of signing of the next Memorandum of Understanding between the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation on behalf of Switzerland and the MHLSP on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Moldova in the context of changing the paradigm of assistance, the new adopted SADC Strategy of Cooperation for 2018-2022, the next phases of ongoing

project and the new project to be launched. The second question referred to the re-alignment of the strategies under the Government Program, the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Government priorities and the mechanism of their harmonization in order to avoid later technical problems that may arise.

Mr. Gilca thanked Mr. Sava for the raised questions and clarified that as was mentioned by the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, according to the new Government Decision regarding the coordination of the external assistance, the agreements to be signed by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection in the field of external assistance will be mandatory coordinated with the Ministry of Finance. With reference to the re-alignment of the new strategy Mr. Gilca mentioned that the Ministry will work together with the Swiss Agency to review the health components from the strategy and ensured maximum flexibility considering that many of those certainly represent a continuity of the previous program that are of enormous importance for both the health system and the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

Finally, Mr. Secretary General of State thanked all the participants for attending the „Communication Forum on the health issues” and wondered to make some conclusions.

### ***III. Conclusions***

In conclusion, Mr. Gilca emphasized the Government contribution that for the first time assumed a number of priorities and first of all for implementation of the emergency pre-hospital healthcare Programme, and namely the Government intention for centralized procurement of ambulances of types B and C. Thus, as mentioned the Secretary General of State, it is hard working jointly with the Ministry of Finance regarding the planning of necessary resources for procurement in 2018 of over 200 new ambulances which certainly will facilitate the quality of emergency healthcare services, especially in rural or hard-to-reach areas.

Another important activity which the Government has assumed, as mentioned Mr. Secretary General of State, is the responsibility of building a new central hospital in Balti District in the years to come, which is planned to be a modern one. As well a direct planned contribution of the Government is planned to be the procurement of very expensive equipment for radiotherapy – which is a major issue for those patients who needs these kinds of services.

At the same time, Mr. Secretary General of State has highlighted another issue of major importance for the health system, and namely the communication in health sector which also represents a priority. As he mentioned, the enhancing of communication capacities respecting patients' rights, developing communication skills according to international standards, training the medical staff at national level – remains to be a necessity and the involvement of external partners in this activities of investing and training of human

resources will be appreciated by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection at the highest level.

Using this opportunity, Mr. Gilca mentioned also that the activity of external partners which implement projects and other interventions in the Transnistrian region is especially appreciated.

Finally, to sum up, Mr. Gilca presented his gratitude to every representative for participation within the Health Sector Meeting in the field of External Assistance and noted that this Platform represents a valuable tool of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection which allow meeting quarterly, discussing the measures taken, as well as, furthering priorities of the health system. Therefore, Mr. Secretary General of State has once again emphasized the importance of external support and the concrete, tangible and necessary results for the health of the Moldovan population, achieved with joint efforts. The Secretary General of State also expressed his hope to continue to have this beautiful and fruitful partnership with the health system's development partners.

*Lilia Nita*  
*Consultant on external assistance*  
*WHO/Ministry of Health Labour and Social Protection*

