

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation Report

Executive summary **Moldova**

Critical perspectives on media content:
Media and Information Literacy in Moldova

Background

The objectives of the external evaluation were to assess the performance of the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) project in Moldova against key parameters, including the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and its strengths and weaknesses, to provide DW Akademie and its implementing partners with a professional assessment of achievements and to advance recommendations for future similar actions.

The project evaluation was guided by the OECD/DAC criteria. The sampling framework consulted during the field mission included 91 project stakeholders representing: children, teachers, youth media producers, implementing partners, DW Akademie project team, authors of media literacy manuals, DW Akademie country coordinators in Georgia and Ukraine, and representatives of: MoE, German Embassy, and other media literacy actors.

Conclusions of the project evaluation

Relevance: The evaluation concluded that the project is highly relevant in the national context of Moldova and it is in line with the mission of DW Akademie and with the strategic priorities of the BMZ. It involved the requisite thematic state and non-state actors (MoE, primary and secondary schools, State Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga" and key implementing partners IJC, CMT and BAS TV). An analysis of the relevance shows that the initial intervention logic of the project was consistent and coherent, i.e. there is logic between the planned activities and expected results. The project is measurable with a set of performance indicators and targets. However, the project design mostly incorporated quantitative indicators and less qualitative ones. The "digital aspects" were not reflected in the project design, but were actively mainstreamed in the project implementation and reporting. The criterion Relevance therefore is rated as "overall fulfilled".

Effectiveness: DW Akademie and its implementation partners fulfilled the commitments assumed in the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the MoE. Thus, MIL is integrated in the Moldovan educational system, particularly in the primary and secondary levels, and is one of the 17 optional disciplines. The desk review and the field mission consultations with the schoolchildren, both younger and older, revealed that they have increased their media literacy levels and have expanded their media knowledge and skills as a result of the practical projects and hands-on lessons and workshops delivered by the teachers and the implementing partners. The project also strengthened the media literacy of the young people from Chisinau, although there is no available information on the extent to which the disadvantaged or people from remote areas benefitted from the project. This represents a failing of design and data collection aspects rather than performance-related ones and should be tackled in the future.

The hackathon proved to be a good platform for launching the start-up MIL ideas. It raised great interest, bringing together about 40 participants who benefitted from a unique experience and learned new, innovative approaches on media production shared by Moldovan and German media producers and experts.

As for the youth media production, it represents one of the key strengths of the MIL Project, likewise the Media Literacy discipline in schools. The young people from Chisinau and Basarabasca overachieved the target (40) and produced 63 youth TV programs in Romanian and Russian, broadcast nationwide via public service broadcasters—a great illustration of their active involvement in the initiatives for the promotion of media literacy. The project did not plan and the young people were not involved in monitoring and assessing the effects of their TV programs on the audience, which represents a potential development intervention for the next phase.

The project established and maintained systematic communication and information sharing with the key national implementation partners, but communication and information sharing with the international development stakeholders presents a mixed picture. On the one hand, the project cooperated with Internews on the hackathon and on TTTs (train-the-trainers) for MIL teachers; on the other hand, it seems to have been insufficient and in the future a more consistent interaction is needed. Overall, the Effectiveness criterion is assessed as "comprehensively fulfilled".

Efficiency: The findings show that the project was implemented according to the initial schedule, without significant delays. The expertise and financial resources invested for the key project interventions were adequate and mostly sufficient in terms of reaching the planned results of the project. The Efficiency criterion is assessed as "overall fulfilled".

Impact: Generally, the impact level performance requires more time, and coherent and consistent interventions, and therefore it is too soon to be able to assess with any accuracy the long-term results. However, given the findings of the evaluation, it can be preliminarily concluded that the project contributed to the enabling of its main target group—young people and children from Moldova—to adequately assess media information by increasing their media literacy levels. Alongside children and young people, adults also increased also their overall media literacy, particularly Moldovan MIL teachers, as a result of seminars and didactical materials delivered by the project. The support for youth media production, promotion of MIL, the international expertise delivered by the project and capacity strengthening for project partners increased the visibility of MIL in Moldova, energized the young people and boosted their participation in the media literacy initiatives. They also positively impacted the "modus operandi" of both implementing partners (CMT and BAS TV) and improved the quality of media output, e.g. Youth TV Programs.

Two actions were identified as having generated the highest impact:

1) The Trolless application—a digital tool to help identify fake, i.e. troll profiles on Facebook and isolate disinformation sources, developed by a group of young social activists from Moldova and supported by the project through the hackathon—which raised public interest in the country, generated a reaction within Government and led to the removal of 68 Facebook accounts, 28 pages and eight Instagram accounts by the Facebook Corporation; and

2) Mainstreaming MIL as an optional discipline in the education system at primary and secondary levels and in the State Pedagogical University “Ion Creanga” as mandatory modular topics within the different disciplines.

Both project achievements have significant transformational potential via their impact on a great number of children, youth, and current and future teachers. The question that remains open is: How many schools, teachers, parents and young people will select the available optional MIL discipline? The Impact is rated as “overall fulfilled”.

Sustainability: In terms of the likelihood of sustaining the benefits of the project, the evaluation concluded that, generally, the sustainability prospects of the project’s achievements are very good. The project

was geared towards influencing the existing education policy of the country by mainstreaming media literacy. The media literacy curriculum developed by the project experts and approved by the MoE derives its long-lasting sustainability prospects from the fact that it was introduced as an optional discipline for an undefined period of time. The same is valid in the case of the mainstreamed media literacy topics in the educational curricula of the Pedagogical University. The policy sustainability is also illustrated in terms of political will of the national education policy maker.





In terms of institutional and financial sustainability, the institutional development actions, e.g. provision of TV equipment, TTTs and tailored MIL training, strengthened the thematic capacity of the implementation partners; they learned interactive methods of teaching media literacy, improved media literacy production and promotion and developed a thematic webpage. These achievements have some promising sustainability prospects, not least because they led to the identification of new partnerships and the development of follow-up projects as mentioned in the final evaluation report. The Sustainability criterion is rated as “comprehensively fulfilled”.

DW Akademie

is Deutsche Welle’s center for international media development. As a strategic partner of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), DW Akademie carries out media development projects that strengthen the human right to freedom of opinion and promote free access to information. DW Akademie also works on projects funded by the German Foreign Office and the European Union—in approximately 50 developing and emerging countries.

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The objective of the external evaluation is to provide a constructive assessment of the project results. It does not necessarily align with the perspective and planning of DW Akademie. Nevertheless, all findings were discussed in order to allow lessons learned to be incorporated into the development of future strategies.