



# COMUNITATEA MEA

USAID's Comunitatea Mea (CM) is an eight-year assistance program to help local governments become more effective, transparent, and accountable to citizens while building local government's capacity to meet citizens' needs. CM is USAID's flagship local government program providing comprehensive assistance to communities, primarily targeting local governments, known as Local Public Authorities (LPAs). The total number of assisted communities is currently 123.

## MAJOR AREAS OF SUPPORT

### IMPROVING QUALITY AND ACCESS TO MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Comunitatea Mea supports elected officials and their staff to establish meaningful engagement with constituents in developing prioritized plans to improve government services. CM supports improvements in public services (such as water and sanitation, waste management, street lighting, green space management, transportation, etc.), along with e-services, administrative, and social services. The program focuses on increasing government responsiveness to the needs of all citizens, with a goal of forging accountability mechanisms to ensure that national mandates for inclusion are translated by LPAs into local services and operating procedures. Small-scale development projects are used as a teaching exercise by which LPAs and communities learn how to collaborate in identifying, planning, designing, building, and monitoring municipal investment programs in response to continued constructive engagement.

### STRENGTHENING CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The program establishes a two-way platform for citizen engagement and communication while also supporting CSOs, community initiative groups (including youth), and media in developing a platform for involvement. The program introduces simple tools and innovations and works with local partners to ensure that citizens are knowledgeable about democratic and transparent government processes, so that they are more engaged and active in local government affairs. This allows CM to ensure that marginalized and vulnerable groups play meaningful roles in local government decisions.

### DECENTRALIZATION POLICY REFORMS

Comunitatea Mea supports Moldova's efforts to strengthen and rationalize the institutional framework for local service delivery and democracy. The program provides policy and legislative technical support for advancing decentralization reform, strengthening the role of local government associations in representing interests of LPAs, and facilitates broad-based dialogue on decentralization reform. The program works with key national and sub-national organizations to bridge the gaps in communication, understanding, coordination, and effective reform process of existing policy and regulations.

### INCREASING LOCALLY-OWNED REVENUES AND IMPROVING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Comunitatea Mea helps maximize local revenue potential, and strengthens transparent planning, budgeting practices, and financial management by assisting local governments with local economic development and asset management, resulting in new and more diversified revenue sources. CM also improves financial reporting, generating more accurate and reliable financial information, and promotes budget transparency -- fostering transparency and accountability in public financial management. The program assists local governments to improve their internal managerial control procedures and adopt new borrowing practices, ensuring better management and alignment with national standards and evolving legislation on public financial and asset management.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROJECT SUPPORT**

LPAs receive support for the planning and implementation of community development projects. Local leaders work collaboratively with community stakeholders to identify service gaps and develop a project concept that reflects community priorities and enables the LPA to develop best practices in project design, budgeting, and public procurement. Projects fall into two major categories: individual community development projects (CDPs) and inter-municipal cooperation (IMC) projects involving multiple communities.

## **RESULTS ACHIEVED TO DATE**

- CM completed 75 community development projects, including two intermunicipal projects. These projects include 10.4 km of local roads rehabilitated in 14 communities, 25.3 km of water supply system and 10.4 km of sewerage networks rehabilitated in 13 localities, 138.5 km of modern and efficient public lighting networks installed in 12 partner communities, and 16.6 km of sidewalks built in 8 localities. The total number of beneficiaries is 469,000. 2,895 children along with 854 teachers enjoy improved conditions in renovated schools/kindergartens in 10 partner communities. These projects are monitored by Citizen Oversight Groups comprising 2,000 citizens. Over 209,000 citizens from 119 localities participated in prioritizing the major challenges facing their communities using the Grassroots for Democratic Development (GDD) methodology. Around 4,000 citizens participated in prioritization sessions for infrastructure projects.
- Over 130,000 citizens enjoy access to more transparent and efficient administrative services in 12 communities due to Citizen Information and Service Centers (CISCs) established in partnership with Slovak Aid. To date, over 23,500 citizens and over 4,500 companies have been serviced through the 12 CISCs. The average processing time for requests was reduced from 30 days to nine.
- 26 communities benefited from energy efficiency support by replacing existing bulbs and fixtures with efficient LED lights in 38 public institutions, with over 10,000 efficient lighting fixtures being installed.
- Around 4,000 citizens from 40 localities participated in the evaluation of public services using the Citizen Report Card/Social Audit tool. This initiative enabled respondents to express their opinions about both the quality of the evaluated public services and the transparency of the service provider.
- 11 draft laws/recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Moldova. CM policy recommendations developed in consultation with local authorities, the Ministry of Finance, and stakeholders, resulted in improvements to the Tax Code, the 2021 draft Fiscal Policy, the Territorial Administrative Reform (TAR)/Voluntary Amalgamation framework, and public services.
- 252 LPAs implement Local Geographic Information System to streamline land property registration and delimitation process.
- LPAs recorded an average increase in their own revenues of 97% compared to the year in which they joined the program, increasing revenues from public property management by 84%. 512 million lei of total new revenues were collected by the partner municipalities.
- 114 LPAs institutionalized the transparent program-based budgeting (PBB) process by applying new practices that align with annual MoF requirements and translating budget projections for 2021-2024 into easy-to-understand infographics and presentations to be shared with citizens.

- Supported 111 partner LPAs in the organization of annual budget public hearings on the draft budget 2024 and estimates for 2025-2026 with the participation of 1,806 people (1,219 women and 587 men), including 497 young people. Since the beginning of the program, 116 LPAs have received support so that they can organize public budget hearings for more than 5,000 citizens.
- 121 partner LPAs (98% of the total 123) benefited from improved budgeting and financial management practices/improved revenues collected. Partner municipalities collected total revenues worth \$17 million lei from improved public property management processes.

For more information about the activity:

Program Duration:  
March 5, 2018 – March 4, 2026  
Budget: \$ 35,499,961