

Increasing the Integrity of Public Procurement in the Republic of Moldova

Final Project Report

Partnership for Transparency

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Executive Summary

The project “Increasing the Integrity of Public Procurement” in the Republic of Moldova was implemented in the period from September 2020 to April 2025. The Partnership for Transparency (PTF) was the grant recipient and selected as its local partner and sub-contractor in Moldova, IDIS “Viitorul” (IDIS), an experienced and competent CSO in Chisinau that enjoys a strong reputation for its expertise. The project was funded by the US Department of State in the amount of US\$1.7 million. As part of the US administration’s policy changes with regard to international development aid, this project, which was originally funded to June 30, 2025, was terminated as of April 25, 2025.

The Overarching Goal was to increase transparency and integrity in public procurement in Moldova. This was achieved primarily through capacitating and empowering civil society organizations (CSOs) to engage in responsible and effective monitoring. CSO monitors submitted their findings of irregularities and abuses to relevant authorities, with a request for review and remedial action where appropriate. This process supported a related goal of holding stakeholders involved in public procurement processes accountable, inducing them to operate with integrity to perform their duties more effectively.

The primary objectives in support of the overall goal were:

Objective 1 – Capacity Building: Moldovan CSOs and journalists are sufficiently equipped to conduct meaningful monitoring of procurement processes.
Objective 2 – Active Monitoring: Procurement procedures and practices are appropriately monitored by Moldovan CSOs and journalists making use of the e-procurement system and other sources of information.
Objective 3 – System Strengthening: Findings and recommendations resulting from credible and professional CSO monitoring are taken seriously and acted upon by Contracting Agencies (CAs), contractors and government oversight and law enforcement entities including the National Anti-Corruption Center.

Monitoring activities: A tailored training program was developed and delivered to equip CSOs with the knowledge and tools to engage in monitoring. A total of 34 participants completed the training, of which 22 were representatives of 20 different CSOs, seven were representatives of investigative journalist and media organizations, and five were representatives of economic operators (EOs), i.e. contractors.

Competitively awarded grant funding to CSOs and investigative journalists for specific monitoring projects provided them with the financial means to monitor specific procurements over a period of several months. The program financed a total of 13 monitoring projects implemented by eleven different grantees, with total grant funding of USD300,600 and 58 grantee staff members involved in monitoring.

CSOs and investigative journalists that received funding for monitoring of specific procurements were

supported with advice and mentoring by local experts at IDIS. The mentoring helped monitors develop, substantiate, and submit evidence-based findings to relevant CAs with a request for corrective action.

Other instruments to support increased transparency: In addition to enhancing the capacity of civil society to engage in responsible and informed monitoring activities, the project was instrumental in establishing an “ecosystem” to promote policy changes to strengthen the integrity of public procurement in Moldova. It consists of two components: 1) A **Coalition of Monitors** that meets regularly to learn from each other, identify common challenges, and advocate for reform based on these shortcomings in the system “with one voice”. 2) A multi-stakeholder mechanism, the **National Platform for Public Procurement (NPPP)**, that meets regularly to bring together public and private sector stakeholders to discuss legal, regulatory and procedural reforms to improve the transparency and effectiveness of public procurement in Moldova. Recommendations from civil society monitors, represented by delegates of the Coalition of Monitors, are an important input into the agenda of the NPPP, which also includes issues raised by the members of the platform. The explicitly stated support of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) for the formation of the platform and the MoF’s commitment to receiving and responding to recommendations from the NPPP are key elements in its success.

A Digital Platform ([PulsAchizitii](#)) was developed and launched. It serves as a community-building website that provides tools, research, and information. The functionality does not include procurement data or user interaction; however, the platform could potentially serve as foundational block for a more sophisticated tool to be developed in the future

Advice and input at the national level. Other important achievements of the project are in the form of direct contributions of advice and expertise, provided at the invitation of the MoF, most notably through input into the formulation of the new draft law on procurement, as well as producing a research paper on “Risks in Public Procurement”, one of the MoF’s deliverables (under the implementation plan) of the National Program to reform Public Procurement 2023-2026. Based on the experience of monitoring by CSOs and drawing on other local and international sources, the project has also provided input into the government-level discussion of the future of the existing MTender e-procurement platform, including what features a revamped or replaced platform should include.

Outcomes of monitoring: Supporting monitoring of 288 procedures spread across 166 Contracting Agencies in Moldova, the project has put additional scrutiny on the public spending of MDL2.67bn (USD156m). These monitoring activities resulted in identification of 23 findings of irregularities which were then submitted to the responsible CAs with a request for corrective action. In addition to such requests, 120

recommendations for improving procedures and systems were submitted to relevant agencies and the MoF, of which 41 have been accepted (partially) for action and another 21 have already been acted upon.

Sustainability of the outcomes of the project: The systemic approach of linking civil society monitors and their recommendations to the NPPP, which in turn has a direct and formalized path for providing recommendations to the MoF, brings together in a collaborative way many elements that were previously separate or non-existent.

In summary, the project has created a climate of constructive dialogue and institutionalized an “eco-system” of multi-stakeholder dialogue that has generated momentum, including through strong recommendations from a unified voice of civil society demanding reform. It has also contributed to creating a cadre of trained CSOs capable of monitoring procurement in the future if funded to do so.

As of September 2025, a follow-up project has been initiated with EU funding: “Supporting Moldova’s public procurement reform in the EU accession context” (EUR60,000). As part of its activities, this project will support the Coalition of Monitors and the NPPP to conduct four meetings each between October 2025 and September 2026. Details are currently being planned – see section III.B)

This report provides a summary of the project to allow anyone interested to implement similar work in Moldova or elsewhere can benefit from the experience and the material produced. It is:

Concise: Limited to key information. Details are available on the PTF [project website](#) and the [Digital Platform](#) – they are linked throughout the text.

Modular: The reader can directly go to the section of interest:

Modular Structure – Overview			
	Chapter I Description	Chapter II Assessment	Chapter III Lessons & Recommendations
Content	Activities implemented and Outputs produced.	Assessment of Outcomes and Impact that were achieved.	Lessons extracted for future similar work.
Purpose	Learn how the project was implemented.	Understand what the project has achieved.	Understand what has (not) worked well.
Structure	<u>Chronological</u> : project phases 1. Inception 2. Training 3. Monitoring 4. Reporting	<u>Logical</u> : project objectives 1. Objective 1 2. Objective 2 3. Objective 3 4. Project Goal	<u>Source and use</u> of lessons: 1. Looking Back 2. Looking Forward

Acronyms and abbreviations

ANI:	National Integrity Authority
CA:	Contracting Authority
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
EO:	Economic Operator (contractor)
IDIS:	Institute for Development and Social Initiatives “Viitorul”
KPI:	Key Performance Indicator
M&E:	Monitoring & Evaluation
MoF:	Ministry of Finance
MDL:	Moldovan Leu, rate applied for conversion (as of 25 April 2025): USD = MDL17.14
NPPP:	National Platform on Public Procurement
PITT:	Performance Indicator Tracking Table
PTF:	Partnership for Transparency
SVP:	Small-Value Procurement
SWO:	Stop Work Order
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
USD:	United States Dollar, rate applied for conversion (as of 25 April 2025): USD = MDL17.14

I. Description of Activities

A. Project Implementation: Components

Chapter I – Snapshot

Content: This Chapter provides information on the Activities conducted and Outputs produced.

Structure: It is structured by Project Phases and in chronological order.

Purpose: The reader will understand how the project was implemented.

Project Activities and Outputs

Project partners: *Partnership for Transparency* (PTF), headquartered in Washington, DC, as overall project manager, and the *Institute for Development and Social Initiatives “Viitorul”* (IDIS), based in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova, as local partner, jointly implemented the project.

Phases: The project was implemented over a period of 56 months between September 4th, 2020, and April 25th, 2025, divided into four phases:

1. Inception (Sep 2020 – May 2021)
2. Training (May 2021 – Dec 2021)
3. Monitoring (Jan 2022 – Sep 2024)
4. Reporting (Oct 2024 – Apr 2025)

Timeline: The [project website](#) provides an overview of Activities and Key Outputs in those phases.

Monitoring Implementation

The Monitoring and Evaluation ([M&E framework](#)) applied to the project contains a total of 19 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). At the end of each section, this report refers to the respective KPIs.

Annex I.A

- [Project website](#)
- [Digital Platform](#)

B. Phase 1: Inception (Sep 2020 – May 2021)

Rationale and project context

Analyzing and understanding the situation in Moldova was the basis of this successful project. It included developing a knowledge of the circumstances and framework of public procurement, identifying key stakeholders, local and international, reviewing the legal and regulatory environment as well as existing monitoring activities, and performing a risk analysis. This knowledge was the foundation of the project design and guided the development of the project plan.

Activities and Outputs

A **baseline study** was conducted of the legal and regulatory environment, based on consultations with Moldovan stakeholders involved with public procurement, key agencies and authorities, civil society organizations (CSOs) and investigative journalists, international donors, and associations of contractors, referred to in this report as Economic Operators (EOs). It included an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT).

An **Inception Report** was developed in May 2021, summarizing all activities and information gathered during this first phase including the results of the Baseline Study and the Project Implementation Plan.

Monitoring implementation: KPIs 1 and 2 relate to the Inception Phase. Their targets were completed.

Annex I.B

- [Project website/Phase 1: Inception](#)

C. Phase 2: Training (May 2021 – Dec 2021)

Rationale and project context

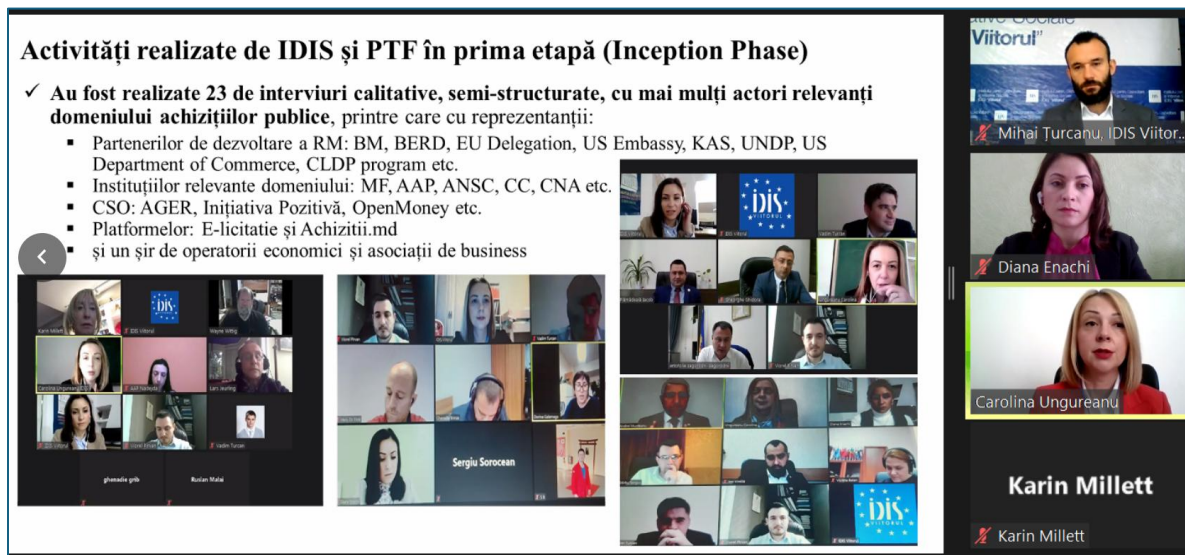
Formal launch of the project: Visibility on both the national and international levels was an important success factor of the project. It generated interest and thus strengthened advocacy efforts, and it increased chances of successful coordination and alignment with other actors active in this field in Moldova.

Capacity Building (Objective 1): A group of capable and willing monitors is the basis on which this project is built. Guided by a needs assessment and an understanding of the situation (inception report), interested and committed individuals and organizations were competitively selected and trained in effectively monitoring public procurement, and equipped with tools to do so.

Activities and Outputs

Launch event (Sept. 2021): To engage stakeholders and to generate interest, the formal project launch event was held on September 30, 2021. Due to COVID restrictions, it was conducted virtually and postponed from the Inception to the Training Phase. The event was attended by 150 individuals from close to 100 external organizations and saw contributions from 17 panelists.

Figure 1: Virtual Project Launch



Training Program (June – Dec. 2021)

Preparation (June – Sept. 2021): The project team, consisting of PTF and IDIS experts, supported by external specialists, developed a training curriculum based on the previously conducted needs assessment. Eleven external trainers were selected from a pool of procurement experts working with IDIS to supplement the project team in conducting the training.

Implementation (Oct. – Dec. 2021): The curriculum consisted of 12 modules and included training materials, activities and case studies. Write-ups of actual cases of monitoring in Moldova by selected CSOs were commissioned in advance and used in trainings as local examples of factual cases. Due to COVID restrictions, the training was conducted virtually two days twice a month for a total of [12 training days](#).

Responding to the call for expressions of interest, a total of 45 individuals applied and were enrolled, 34 participated in the program (attended at least three sessions): 22 representatives of 20 different CSOs, seven representatives of investigative journalist and media organizations, and five representatives of economic operators (EOs).

Data collection for project evaluation (Sept. and Dec 2021): To assess the perceived value of the training program, participants were administered an online questionnaire before and after the training. A total of 60 responses were collected, 30 before and 30 after the training. The training was well received, see chapter II.A for detailed results.

Monitoring implementation: KPIs 3, 4, 5 relate to the Training Phase. Their targets were completed.

[Annex I.C](#)

- [PTF website/Phase2: Training](#)

D. Phase 3: Monitoring (Jan. 2022 – Oct. 2024)

1. Overview

Monitoring Public Procurement was the core of the project, with the aim of fostering responsible and effective monitoring activities, producing results that lead to change. To achieve this, a phased approach was applied comprising the following **four main components**:

1. Grants Program

Purpose: Put the training to use in monitoring, supported by continued capacity building through mentoring and peer learning.

Approach: Competitively award grants to CSOs and investigative journalists to engage in monitoring specific procurements and provide them with mentoring and technical support.

2. Coalition Building – Civil Society

Purpose: Foster cooperation among like-minded CSOs in defining and promoting reform proposals based on problems collectively identified through monitoring.

Approach: Engage a community of active CSO monitors to cooperate and jointly advocate for reforms with “one voice” (Coalition of Monitors).

3. Coalition Building – Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

Purpose: Foster constructive dialogue among key stakeholders from different sectors to increase chances of advocacy efforts leading to reform.

Approach: Convene a cross-sectoral stakeholder forum (National Platform on Public Procurement, NPPP).

4. Resources

Purpose: Produce and make available research, materials, and tools to support those engaged in monitoring to identify issues and formulate findings and recommendations.

Approach: Develop and operate a public repository of research, resources, and tools (Digital Platform).

This section describes how these project components were implemented.

2. Grants Program

Rationale and project context

Effective monitoring of public procurement by CSOs and investigative journalists was a key component of the project that produced the results to achieve its objectives.

Monitoring Public Procurement – Results

Through scrutiny applied to public procurement procedures, monitoring by CSOs and investigative journalists produces two types of results:

1. Findings (case-based): Identification of issues with the monitored procedures, such as a lack of transparency (availability of information), non-adherence to laws and regulations by CAs, malfeasance (fraud, corruption), sub-standard quality of goods and services procured, delays, etc. Monitors document the issues and submit them to relevant agencies or authorities who should then take corrective action to remediate the problem.

2. Recommendations (system-based): Identification of problems in the way the monitored procurement is conducted, such as loopholes, inconsistencies, lack of transparency in the process, violation of procedures, laws or regulations. The documentation by monitors forms the basis for strengthening the system. The recommendation can be submitted to relevant stakeholders either by the monitor directly and/or can form the basis of joint advocacy by the Coalition of Monitors and the NPPP.

Chapter II.C provides details on what was achieved by these results.

The project supported CSOs and investigative journalists to ensure they conduct monitoring activities that are comprehensive, i.e., covering a wide variety of procurement activities (levels, region, sectors, Contracting Authorities (CAs), etc.) and of a high quality, i.e., professionally implemented leading to documented, verified and measurable results. To achieve this, the project provided grantees with financial, technical, and capacity-building support.

The project team worked on these Monitoring Projects in **three stages**:

- Prior to initiation: selection of grantees on a competitive basis and awarding of grants
- During implementation of monitoring activities: mentoring and technical support
- After conclusion of monitoring activities: follow-up

Activities and Outputs

Selection and Awarding: The quality of results achieved in monitoring projects inherently depends on the capacity and commitment of the organizations and individuals implementing them. Thus, choosing the right grantees was a key success factor. The following activities were implemented in each round of grants:

- Criteria for selection: Developed criteria (Funding Guide) to select the most suitable proposals.

- Call for Proposals: Published the opportunity and shared it actively to maximize reach.
- Clarification of questions: Held info sessions to address questions and published the responses.
- Evaluation of proposals: Assessed applications in two steps: an administrative check followed by an assessment of merit and a selection of the highest scoring winning bids according to the criteria. It was conducted by an internal committee and included clarification of questions from bidders.
- Contracting: Signed contracts and initiated project implementation.

Financial Support: The program financed a total of 13 monitoring projects implemented by eleven different grantees, with a total volume of USD300,600 and 58 grantee staff members involved.

It was implemented in two rounds:

- Round 1: USD185,607 awarded to 8 grantees between April 2022 and April 2023
- Round 2: USD114,993 awarded to 5 grantees between September 2023 and September 2024

The table on the next page provides an overview.

Grants Program - Overview											
Grantee						Grant					
No.		Name	Type	City	Region	Amount	Duration	Staff			Object of Monitoring Project (CA or law)
						(USD)	(months)	♀	♂	total	
Round 1	1	AGER	CSO	Chişinău	Center	24,678	9	4	0	4	Law 74 of 2020 (energy, water, transport, postal services)
	2	Prospect	CSO	Cimişlia	South	19,061	9	4	2	6	Cimişlia District Council
	3	LEX XXI	CSO	Bălţi	North	24,496	12	2	0	2	Bălţi City Hall and Municipal Enterprises
	4	LocalInvest	CSO	Rîşcani	North	17,396	12	3	1	4	Riscani District Council and District Hospital
	5	Contact Cahul	CSO	Cahul	South	25,000	10	2	2	4	Cahul District Council and City Hall
	6	Părinţi Solidari	CSO	Chişinău	Center	24,982	10	4	1	5	Ministry of Education and Research and subordinate institutions
	7	Media Guard	Journalist	Chişinău	Center	24,994	8	2	2	4	Investigations - Moldova
	8	Cu sens	Journalist	Chişinău	Center	25,000	12	6	1	7	Ministries and subordinate State Institutions
	Subtotal Round 1					185,607		27	9	36	
Round 2	9	AGER	CSO	Chişinău	Center	24,994	9	4	1	5	Law 74 of 2020 (energy, water, transport, postal services)
	10	LEX XXI	CSO	Bălţi	North	18,125	10	3	0	3	Ministry of Labor & Social Protection: General Directorates of Social Assistance in Northern Area
	11	Părinţi Solidari	CSO	Chişinău	Center	24,930	13	2	1	3	Education, youth & sport directorates: Chisinau, Botanica, Buiucani, Centru, Ciocana, Rîşcani
	12	API	Journalist	Chişinău	Center	24,910	12	4	1	5	LPA (level 1) procurement financed by the National Program "European Express Village"
	13	TI Moldova	CSO	Chişinău	Center	22,034	9	5	1	6	Chisinau City Hall (Architecture & Urban Planning; municipal enterprises)
	Subtotal Round 2					114,993		18	4	22	
Total						300,600		45	13	58	

Toolset: CSO monitoring under the project was guided by the [Procurement Monitoring Guide: A Tool for Civil Society](#). The original version, developed by IDIS in 2018, was updated and augmented, and revised versions were published in [2022](#) and in [2025](#). These integrated legal and regulatory changes as well as the training material supplemented with up-to-date knowledge and tools for CSO monitoring of public procurement.

Technical support: During the implementation of the monitoring activities, grantees received constant support at each step: collecting and analyzing data and information, identifying and documenting issues worth reporting, and submitting appropriately formulated requests and recommendations for remedial action to the correct recipient entity through the required channels. To ensure these activities were performed professionally, the project conducted the following activities:

- **Mentoring:** Constant support of monitoring practices, tools, defining and identifying issues, formulating findings and recommendations, and submitting them appropriately (correct format and recipient). IDIS experts conducted a minimum of one individual mentoring session per month with each grantee, in addition to ad-hoc support upon request from the grantees at any time. Due to the complexity of the issues at stake, the latter form of support was frequently requested.
- **Peer learning:** Joint virtual meetings of all grantees under the project to present the status of their activities, receive guidance, and exchange ideas on a quarterly basis.

The following table provides an overview of technical support provided:

Grants Program – Technical Support		
Timing	Mentoring	Peer learning
Round 1	45	3
Round 2	38	2
Total	83	5

Follow Up: To trigger action based on the results submitted, it is important to follow-up with concerned stakeholders. In most cases, the period of time in which such action can be expected goes beyond the end date of the grant. Almost three quarters of surveyed grantees (71% in Round 1, 73% in Round 2) indicated that follow-up beyond the grant duration was required – and the report results support this assertion (see chapter III.A). Such longer-term follow-up greatly increases the likelihood of results leading to change. To ensure this was appropriately accomplished, the project team conducted the following activities:

- **Documentation:** A structured approach was applied (M&E Results Tracker) to record results, their submission including status, and highlight the need for continued action after completion of monitoring activities.

- **Advocacy:** Monitoring results form the basis for corrective action and improving the system. In the latter case, it is beneficial to join forces with multiple stakeholders in advocating reform. To that end, monitoring results need to be shared with like-minded organizations to compare experiences of similar projects and extract common challenges and lessons learned and formulate recommendations. A structured follow-up approach combined with opportunities to join forces helps bridge the gap between problem analysis and advocacy for a solution that can lead to positive change. The project created this opportunity through the peer learning sessions and the Coalition of Monitors. It provided a platform to formulate recommendations and submit them as a joint civil society voice to stakeholders, including through the National Platform on Public Procurement (NPPP).

Data collection for project evaluation: To assess the value of the Grants Program, identify strengths and weaknesses, and apply lessons learned, the project conducted two activities after each round: 1) a survey of grantees and 2) an internal stocktaking to extract lessons learned and key takeaways.

Monitoring implementation: KPIs 6-10 relate to the Grants Program. Their targets were completed

[Annex II.D.2](#)

- [PTF /Phase 3: Monitoring](#)

3. Coalition of Monitors

Rationale and project context

A group of qualified and committed CSOs and journalists with knowledge, experience, or at least interest in monitoring public procurement is at the core of achieving change.

The project supported them in forming a Coalition that effectively fostered their work as follows:

Monitoring: Activities benefit from cooperation, knowledge sharing, peer learning, tools, and training.

Advocacy: Results submitted to relevant authorities benefit from being sent by various monitors who encountered the same issues and challenges and raise them jointly (“strength is in numbers”).

This was achieved by IDIS in its role as Secretariat of the Coalition as follows:

Convening the Coalition: Identified and invited suitable members, i.e., interested and capable, and brought them on board. They then jointly defined structure, strategy and operating rules of the group.

Operating the Coalition: Prepared and organized meetings (logistics and research as input for discussion), facilitated meetings, ensured follow-up (captured results and shared them with members to get agreement, submitted recommendations to appropriate recipients, including through the NPPP).

Capacity building: Defined training topics jointly with members, based on needs expressed by them, and implemented the requested supplemental training program.

Publicity: Ensured visibility of the Coalition through the Digital Platform and numerous publications.

Activities and Outputs

Convening the Coalition (May – June 2023): Based on a mapping of suitable candidates, IDIS selected and invited them to join (May 2023). 19 organizations accepted and established the Coalition in its inaugural meeting (29 June 2023), defining its core documents (Strategy and Operating Rules).

Operating the Coalition (since June 2023): Upon election as Secretariat in the inaugural meeting, IDIS fulfilled this role as described above to facilitate brainstorming and collaboration in the development of recommendations based on collective monitoring experience as the basis for joint advocacy. These recommendations are pursued through the NPPP, to which the Coalition elected three delegates as representatives (in addition to IDIS): AGER, TI Moldova, and LocalInvest.

Figure 2: Monitoring Coalition: meeting on 13 December 2023



Ongoing Capacity Building (Dec 2024): A training concept was developed for continuous capacity building of active members. To ensure it met the practical needs of monitors, it was based on a survey and subsequent discussions that jointly identified topics most useful for further training. The curriculum outlined four workshops to be held between Dec. 2024 and May 2025 to equip Coalition members, as well as selected investigative journalists and independent monitors, with practical skills for monitoring. The concept combined expert lectures with hands-on case exercises to generate evidence-based results. Unfortunately, only one session was implemented, the others were cancelled due to the project termination.

Monitoring Coalition Activities: Meetings and Trainings		
Activity	Date	Topic
Meeting 1	Jun 29, 2023	Inaugural meeting: Presentation of the operating rules
Meeting 2	Sept 29, 2023	Low value purchases
Meeting 3	Dec 13, 2023	Activities of the Open Spending EU Coalition
Meeting 4	Mar 29, 2023	Preliminary results of subgrant monitoring projects
Meeting 5	Jun 26, 2023	The Digital Platform
Meeting 6	Nov 13, 2024	Final results of the subgrant monitoring projects
Training 1	Dec 27, 2024	Public procurement of Works
Meeting 7	Jan 28, 2025	Draft of the new law on public procurement
Training 2	cancelled	Cost estimates
Training 3	cancelled	Anti-competitive practices and collusion
Training 4	cancelled	Control, audit, and performance review

Monitoring implementation: KPI 13 relates to the Coalition. Its target was completed.

[Annex II.D.3](#)

- [PulsAchiziții Coalition](#)
- [Project website/Phase3: Monitoring](#)

4. Multistakeholder Dialogue: National Public Procurement Platform (NPPP)

Rationale and project context

Strengthening the system benefits all stakeholders – and can best be achieved through an inclusive and constructive regular dialogue among key stakeholders in public procurement.

An institutionalized platform allows the review and discussion of evidence-based recommendations from CSO monitors and formulation of actionable recommendations to concerned authorities.

This was achieved by IDIS in its role as Secretariat – analogously to the Coalition of Monitors:

Convening the NPPP: Identified and invited suitable members and brought them on board. They then jointly defined structure, strategy and operating rules of the platform.

Operating the NPPP: Prepared and organized meetings (logistics and research as input, including from the Monitoring Coalition), facilitated the discussion, and ensured follow-up (captured results, shared them with members to get agreement, and followed-up to ensure recommendations are implemented by concerned stakeholders).

Publicity: Ensured visibility of the NPPP through the Digital Platform and numerous press releases.

Activities and Outputs

Convening the Platform (May – Dec 2023)

Preparation: Based on stakeholder mapping and monitoring experience, IDIS identified key stakeholders before spending significant preparatory efforts on engaging them. Initially, several bilateral meetings took place with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) as the main partner. They resulted in an [MoU](#) signed in September 2023, in which the MoF agreed to receive and review recommendations coming from the NPPP. This written support of the MoF for the NPPP is an important declaration of the commitment on the part of the Government of Moldova to improving transparency in public procurement. Subsequently, 14 additional bilateral meetings were held with key stakeholders between October and December 2023. These meetings served to generate interest in the initiative and to identify joint objectives to define common ground that allowed bringing them on board – or “to the table”. A total of 45 topics were proposed and documented as items to be put on the agenda of the NPPP.

Launch: 17 key stakeholders from all sectors (public, private, civil society), accepted the invitation and jointly defined structure, goals, operating rules, strategy, as well as format and frequency of meetings in the inaugural session on 19 December 2023. As of August 2025, the NPPP consists of [19 institutional members](#) with civil society represented by elected members IDIS, AGER, TI Moldova, LocalInvest.

Figure 3: NPPP: inaugural meeting on 19 December 2023



Operating the Platform (since Dec 2023): Upon election as Secretariat in the inaugural meeting, IDIS fulfilled this role as described above jointly with the MoF as co-organizer. As of August 2025, the NPPP has conducted the following meetings:

NPPP: Meetings		
Meeting	Date	Topic
1	Dec 23, 2023	Public works (Inaugural meeting)
2	May 16, 2024	Frivolous complaints
3	Sep 26, 2024	Low-value procurement
4	Jan 30, 2025	The draft law on public procurement
5	Apr 10, 2025	Public procurement of works
6	Jun 3, 2025	Planning of public procurements

Between October 2025 and August 2026, four additional meetings are currently being planned as part of the follow-up project funded by the EU Delegation (see section III.B).

Monitoring implementation: KPI 14 relates to the NPPP. Its target was completed.

Annex II.D.4

- [PulsAchiziții/NPPP](#)
- [Project website/Phase3 Monitoring](#)

5. Digital Platform (PulsAchiziții)

Rationale and project context

An active community is the centerpiece of a national “ecosystem” for monitoring public procurement – that allows civil society to hold to account those conducting procurement procedures.

Development and sharing of research, knowledge, and tools is an important component of the project to generate and maintain the momentum of such a group.

To foster cooperation and knowledge sharing, a website was designed and launched as a digital platform to provide a community space for civil society and serve as repository of information, research, and tools.

Activities and Outputs

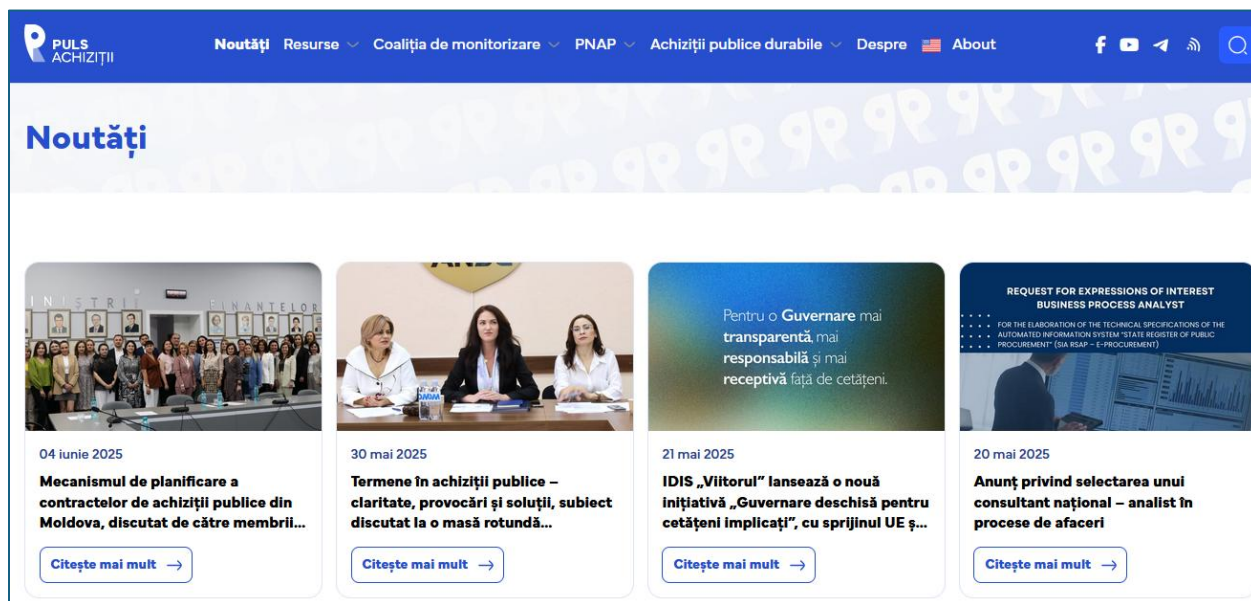
Development (June 2023 – June 2024)

Defined the concept: CSO monitoring of public procurement can be enhanced by technology on different levels. The spectrum is wide, from a simple website to one with functionalities that actively support monitoring by integrating (live) procurement data and allowing its extraction, analysis, including red flag algorithms, and visualization. Further potential features are cooperation and communication of monitors, and integrated channels for the submission of results to concerned authorities. While the approach outlined would be the gold standard, the project team, after extensive consideration and consultation, opted for a community-building website that provides tools, research, and information without including procurement data or user interaction, and that could potentially serve as foundational block of a more sophisticated tool to be developed in the future.

Contracted a service provider: A local company was engaged to build a website according to the ToR developed based on the Concept.

Developed and uploaded content: To make the Digital Platform appealing, it requires high-quality content meeting the interests of the target community that is constantly updated. The project team populated the Platform with the following content (as of 25 April 2025). A total of 488 items were published, including 206 news publications, 96 analytical papers and reports, 14 newsletters, 47 infographics, 22 videos, and seven monitoring tools. In addition, a frequently-asked-questions and ask-an-expert sections were maintained. Given that the target group are Moldovan, the content is mainly in Romanian, with English translations of some documents available.

Figure 4: [PulsAchiziții](#) – Digital Platform of the project



Launch and Operation (since June 2024)

Ensured quality prior to launch: With help from a consultant who accompanied the development of the website up to its launch, the team made sure it meets technical specifications and requirements.

Ensured functioning following the launch: Through the service provider who conducted frequent updates to warrant website was reliably and continuously functioning.

Promoted the Platform: In addition to the constant inclusion of the Digital Platform in all project publicity, IDIS conducted an online campaign in April 2025.

Monitoring implementation: KPI 12 relates to the Digital Platform. Its target was completed.

[Annex II.D.5](#)

- [PulsAchiziții](#)

E. Phase 4: Reporting (Oct. 2024 – April 2025)

Rationale and project context

Successful advocacy for change is contingent on project visibility as it increases the interest of stakeholders and creates pressure for reform.

Reporting Phase: The final part of the project included plans to reach out to stakeholders and donors, including a final project event to share results and findings, foster visibility and increase chances of sustainability. Originally conceived for the final twelve months (July 2024 – June 2025), it was shortened to effectively 6.5 months for three reasons: 1) Extension of the Monitoring Phase by two months until September 2024 to allow finalization of grants; 2) Stop Work Order (SWO) from the US Government (25 Jan – 10 March 2025; and 3) Termination of the project by the US Government (25 Apr 2025).

Continuous reporting: Throughout the project, there was continuous reporting, both internally (quarterly reports) and externally (quarterly and ad-hoc by project partners, grantees, Coalition members).

Activities and Outputs

Reporting phase

Final Outreach: The project team initiated and maintained dialogue with 27 international actors active in Moldova, with the intention of seeking future funding to build on this project after its completion. Due to the truncation of the Reporting Phase and related disruptions, outreach to and interaction with these individuals and organizations did not reach the anticipated level.

External evaluation: An external evaluator was contracted and initiated his work in January 2025 with a timeline to deliver his report in May 2025, but the activity was cancelled due to the project termination.

Data collection: A workshop to collect data for assessing coalition-building efforts was cancelled due to project termination; however, a survey of the users of the Digital Platform was still conducted.

Final event: A conference was scheduled for 3 June 2025 but cancelled due to project termination.

Coalition building: Platforms continued their work (see sections II.D.3 and II.D.4.).

Continuous project reporting and publicity

Throughout its duration, the project produced the required reporting internally (21 quarterly reports) and publicly (14 [newsletters](#)) and 65 press releases by the project team and an additional 297 by grantees.

Monitoring implementation: KPIs 18, 19 relate to project visibility. Their targets were completed.

Annex II.E

- [Project website/Phase 4: Reporting](#)

II. Assessment of Achievements

A. Project Appraisal: M&E concept and data

Chapter II – Snapshot

Content: This Chapter provides information on the results (Outcomes) the project has achieved.

Structure: It is structured according to the program logic (Objectives and Project Goal).

Purpose: The reader will understand how the project has (not) achieved its objectives.

M&E concept and data

The following **goal setting** defines the project:

Increasing the integrity in public procurement
Overall Goal: Increased public procurement transparency through citizen monitoring and reporting in Moldova to hold stakeholders involved in public procurement processes accountable, inducing them to operate with integrity to perform their duties more effectively.
Objective 1 – Capacity Building: Moldovan CSOs and journalists are sufficiently equipped to conduct meaningful monitoring of procurement processes.
Objective 2 – Active Monitoring: Procurement procedures and practices are appropriately monitored by Moldovan CSOs and journalists making use of the e-procurement system and other sources of information.
Objective 3 – System Strengthening: Findings and recommendations resulting from credible and professional CSO monitoring are taken seriously and acted upon by CAs, contractors and government oversight and law enforcement entities including the National Anti-Corruption Center.

M&E Concept: The project M&E plan was developed at the beginning of the project (Oct. 2020) with an update following the project extension (Jan. 2023). It contains 19 KPIs that cover all project components.

Monitoring: Progress was constantly monitored and reported on a quarterly basis to ensure the project was on track. Implementation met all targets, as noted at the end of each section of Chapter I.

Evaluation: The M&E plan foresaw external evaluations at mid-term and in the final project phase (not ex-post). No mid-term evaluation was conducted, as agreed with DRL, because the required resources (time, money) exceeded the expected benefits. The project did not include repetitive activities apart from the Grants Program and therefore offered little potential for optimizing the approach based on the results of a mid-term evaluation. The final evaluation was cancelled due to project termination.

Data Collection: Throughout the project, data was collected to allow an evaluation of achievements. The table below provides an overview of data sources and their usefulness for assessing project objectives.

Evaluation: Data Collection – Overview				
Project Component	Objective 1: Capacity	Objective 2: Monitoring	Objective 3: Action	Project Goal: Integrity
Training	Survey of participants	(Training is not suitable to achieve these objectives)		
Grants Program	Surveys of grantees	Surveys of grantees M&E	M&E	
Coalition of Monitors	Survey of training participants	(No data: workshop with members was cancelled due to termination)		
NPPP	(NPPP does not pursue these objectives)		M&E	
Digital Platform	Survey of users User reports		(Digital Platform is not designed for these objectives)	

These collection efforts produced the following data:

- Training – survey of participants: An online survey was submitted to participants before and after the training. 30 out of 34 participants filled it out on both occasions.
- Grants Program – survey of grantees: After each round, grantees were administered an online survey. They were completed by 14/14 individuals of 8/5 grantees in Round 1/Round 2, respectively.
- M&E: Results tracker documents findings and recommendations including status of follow-up.
- Coalition of Monitors – training: Only one advanced training (out of a planned series of four) was implemented for Coalition members. A survey was administered afterwards and completed by 15 of the 25 participants.
- Coalition of Monitors – workshop: Collection of feedback from members was planned for June 2025 but then cancelled due to the termination of the project.
- Digital Platform – survey of users: An online survey was made available through a link on the website with a request to be filled by users. 35 users completed it.
- Digital Platform – user reports: Google Analytics reports provide statistics of activity on the website.

Approach of the internal evaluation: Using these data, project achievements were appraised as follows:

Objective 1: Based on the self-assessed progress of monitors participating in Training, Grants Program, Coalition of Monitors – supported by information on the usefulness of the Digital Platform. These data allow an assessment of the extent to which capacity has been enhanced by the project.

Objectives 2 & 3 and Project Goal: Based on the monitoring results, supported by data from the surveys of grantees and users of the Digital Platform. These data allow an assessment of the extent to which the results led to an improvement of monitoring and advocacy exerted by CSOs. It is based on the concept

that CSO monitoring is a form of public accountability. The results and the actions it triggers indicate its value, i.e., the degree of the consequence achieved through increased accountability as follows:

- 1) Scrutiny: There is inherent value in CSOs monitoring public procurement even in the absence of tangible results, as the additional scrutiny strengthens accountability – “someone is watching”. Therefore, mere implementation of monitoring projects constitutes increased levels of accountability, i.e., an achievement of Objective 2 – which is not recorded as KPI but is documented in this report.
- 2) Findings: The identification of an issue, its documentation and submission constitute evidence of contributions to generating accountability, i.e., an achievement of objective 2, captured by KPI 15.
- 3) Recommendations: Identification, formulation, and submission of an opportunity to increase transparency, integrity, or accountability in future procurement procedures constitutes documented evidence of an effort to strengthen the system, i.e. an achievement of Objective 3, captured by KPI 16.
- 4) Achieving change: Confirmation that a recommendation was implemented constitutes evidence of an improvement to the system, i.e., a contribution to the Project Goal, captured by KPI 17.

The project endeavored to produce evidence of effective monitoring and system strengthening, maximizing results counted under KPIs 17, 16, 15 or to ensure additional scrutiny – in descending order of priority.

Caveat: Limitations of an Internal Evaluation

The internal appraisal conducted in the absence of an external evaluation relies on valid data sources. However, it cannot compensate for the absence of data that would have been collected by an external evaluation, nor for the credibility an external objective evaluator would have brought to the table. The results presented in this report therefore come with inherent challenges that cannot be conclusively resolved – most importantly:

1) Data: The basis of an external evaluation would have been stronger, as additional data would have been collected externally. Internally collected data is challenged by *social desirability bias*: respondents may provide answers they think are desired. For example, a grantee surveyed after Round 1 may be less likely to give negative feedback to the organization that provided the grants than to an external evaluator who ensures confidentiality – especially in light of the potential opportunity for funding in Round 2 of grants.

2) Attribution: For the purposes of this internal appraisal, it is assumed that none of the Activities and Outputs described in Chapter I would have materialized in the absence of the project. Therefore, the results they have produced to achieve Objectives 1-3 are attributed to the project. While this assumption appears reasonable, an external evaluation would establish this attribution more reliably.

In conclusion: The achievements presented in this report are to be understood with the caveats inherent to the approach. All things considered, the project team considers that the results speak for themselves.

Annex II.A

- [PTF website/M&E Framework](#)

B. Objective 1: Capacity Building

Rationale and project context

Capacity: A strong base of CSOs and investigative journalists should be capable of and committed to monitoring effectively, producing findings, and ensuring they lead to action, i.e., results.

Approach: The project supported the strengthening of capacity and encouraged commitment of monitors during the Training and the Monitoring Phase. To assess achievement of the objective, the efforts undertaken and the results produced are appraised using the data available

Achievements – concepts for assessment and data

The capacity-building opportunity was well received, thus allowing selection of qualified and committed participants who were and are expected to benefit from it and have use for it.

Demand: High interest in participation combined with low drop-out rates indicate usefulness attributed to the training by the target group, observed as follows: 45 qualified individuals applied, 34 completed the training – and there were several demands for additional support on topics including sector specific monitoring (education, infrastructure works), negotiation without publication, legal provisions, procurement rigging and anti-competitive practices, tools and access to data.

Commitment: Participants indicated strong and continued interest in monitoring, observed as follows:

1) Training survey:

<i>Do you plan to monitor public procurement in the future?</i>		
	Survey before the training	Survey after the training
Yes	29 (97%)	28 (93%)
Don't know	1 (3%)	2 (7%)
No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	30	30

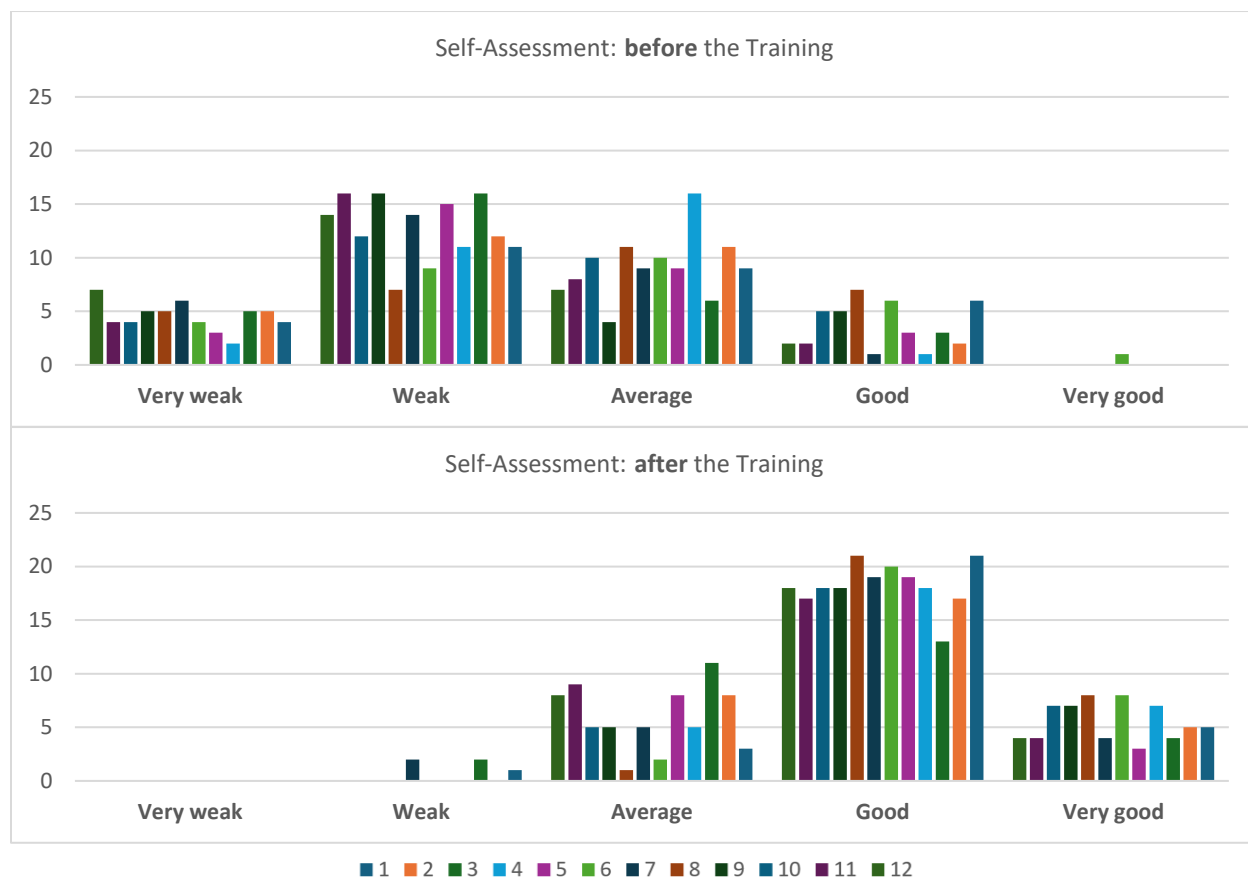
2) Grants Program surveys: Six out of 14 (43%) and seven out of 14 (50%) of grantees in rounds 1 and 2, respectively, had already participated in the training. Additionally, in each round, 12 of 14 (85%) responded that participation had motivated them to become more actively involved in monitoring procurement in the future, and all 14 (100%) expressed the desire to continue after the project ends.

The Training effectively strengthened the capacity of participants.

Participants self-assessed their knowledge before and after the training on the following topics:

1. *Civil society monitoring of public procurement*
2. *Legal framework for public procurement, including legislative changes made in 2020-2021*
3. *Law on Public Procurement in the utilities sector: water, energy, transport, and postal services*
4. *Public procurement process (pre-tender, tender, post-tender, and contract) and procedures*
5. *The remedy system: legal framework for complaints against the procurement procedure*

6. Public procurement data sources: access and analysis
7. Anti-competitive practices in public procurement
8. Public procurement monitoring tools
9. Identification of red flags
10. Procurement rules on conflicts of interest
11. Legal provisions on securing competition in public procurement
12. Sanctions and post-monitoring system



The charts illustrate the positive effect of the training – as the answers “move” from the left side (*very weak*) to the right (*very good*). The legend indicates the question to which the bars correspond.

Straight from the horse’s mouth – feedback from participants

“As an organization with a strong focus on public procurement monitoring, the very idea of a grant that gives us the possibility to continue and improve our public procurement monitoring work, but also to explore new areas, is very useful and attractive to us. We also cannot neglect the focus on the learning part from the PTF experts, IDIS experts, but also the networking and interaction with the members of the Procurement Monitoring Coalition and the Platform, which gives us the possibility to voice the challenges we identify.”

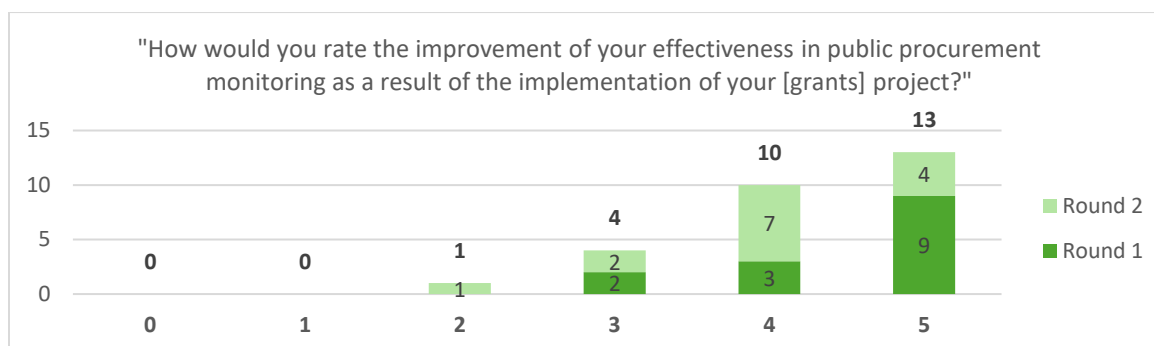
“Most useful was the coordination/mentoring work with the IDIS experts.”

"I can say with certainty that I am satisfied with all the effort made by the IDIS team during the implementation of this project: from coaching to the massive distribution on social media of all the materials we published, which contributed to an even greater visibility of the monitoring results."

"We have started to monitor a sectoral procurement, which is new to us."

The Grants Program further strengthened capacity.

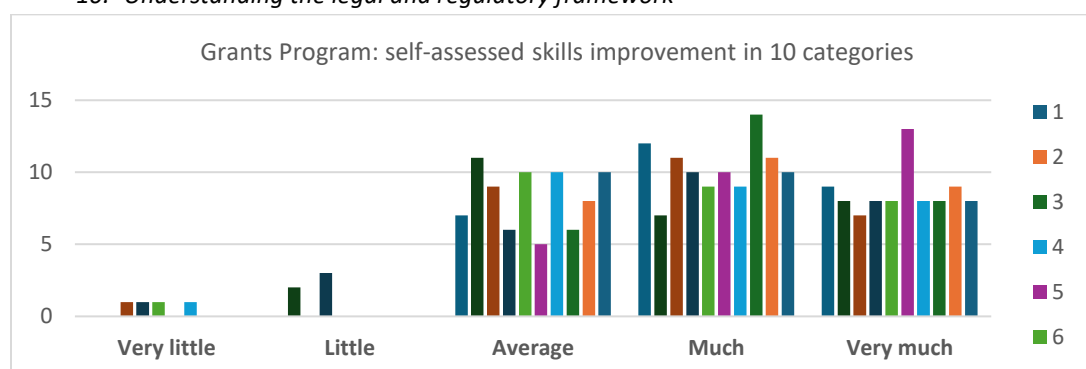
Grantees self-assessed a strong improvement in the surveys, as the following charts illustrate:



On a scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*), 23 out of 28 (82%) rated their improvement with a 4 or 5.

Additionally, self-assessed capacity improvement of monitoring in ten categories was positive:

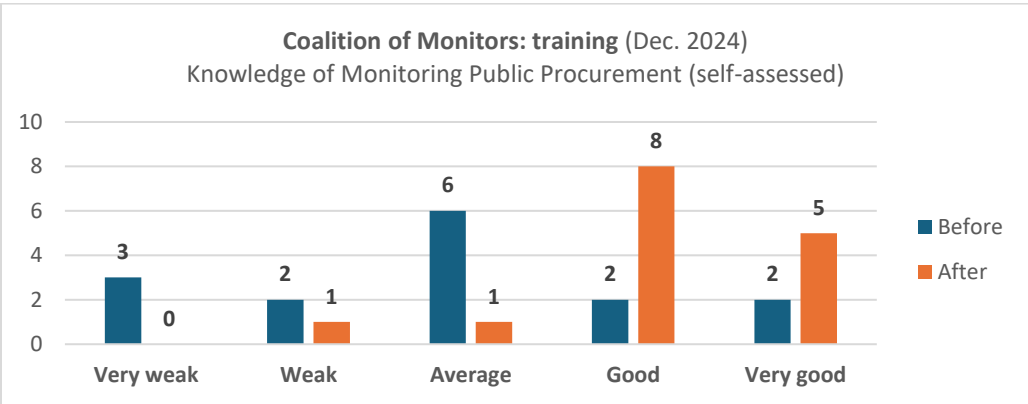
1. Identification of risk indicators
2. Methodologies and monitoring tools
3. Data Analysis
4. Interaction with contracting authorities
5. Understanding of regulatory institutions
6. Obtaining information from authorities
7. Community awareness and communication
8. Collaboration with other organizations
9. Journalistic investigation skills
10. Understanding the legal and regulatory framework



The chart above combines both rounds and thus contains 28 responses. It illustrates the effectiveness of the Grants Program in enhancing capacity – in particular considering that some respondents had already participated in the training and/or the first round of grants.

The Coalition of Monitors continuously strengthened the capacity of its members – ensuring their skills were maintained and refined.

Out of the 25 coalition members (five men and 20 women) who participated, 15 responded to an online questionnaire administered before and after the training. They assessed it as highly useful: 14 (93%) rated it *very good*, one (7%) as *good*. It boosted their self-assessed knowledge, as the following chart shows:



Unfortunately, only one of four planned advanced training sessions was implemented (see section II.D.3).

The Digital Platform successfully supported those already engaged – and interested others – in monitoring public procurement in Moldova.

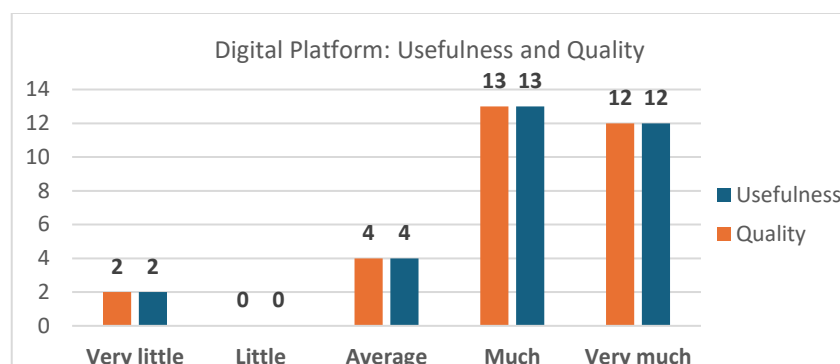
User reports (Google Analytics) for the period June 2024 – July 2025 show that the Digital Platform experienced regular traffic, with the following key indicators: 1,000 *active users* (90% from Moldova), 204 *returning users* (95% from Moldova), and 190 file downloads. In April 2025, the project conducted an online publicity campaign to promote the website. User statistics of *new users* spiked, indicating its success. However, the *returning users* remained constant.

The survey of users showed that the website was considered useful by CSO monitors as well as others:

1. Supporting the monitoring community: The main purpose was to provide effective support to those already engaged in monitoring procurement, which is a small target group given the specificity of the topic. The following responses (by 31 of 35 respondents to the survey) indicate its achievement:

Usefulness: *PulsAchizitii provides useful content for anyone interested in monitoring procurement in Moldova*

Quality: *PulsAchizitii is a well-designed and functional platform that allows me to quickly find and use information*



2. Expanding the base of monitors: A secondary target was to provide information on monitoring and generate interest from others not yet engaged. The responses to the user survey indicate its achievement. First, eight respondents had not monitored public procurement before. Second, several survey respondents did not belong to the group already engaged in monitoring:

<i>Are you a member of the...</i>			
	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<i>...Monitoring Coalition?</i>	10	24	1
<i>...NPPP?</i>	9	25	2

In combination, the results of the user report and survey indicate that the website was well received, providing effective support to the monitoring community and generating interest beyond.

Summary

The project made significant achievements in strengthening the capacity of CSO monitors to effectively monitor public procurement through all its components, Training, Grants Program with its monitoring support and coaching components, Coalition of Monitors, and Digital Platform.

C. Objective 2: Active Monitoring

Rationale and project context

Monitoring concept: CSOs and journalists uncover issues in public procurement that are caused by a lack of knowledge on the part of CAs of the applicable legal and regulatory framework, transparency, integrity, or accountability. They also identify incidents of malfeasance which are brought to the attention of relevant authorities for remediation. These findings form the basis for recommendations for corrective actions and advocacy.

Approach: The project supported CSOs and journalists to professionally monitor procurement on a broad basis to maximize the effect of their monitoring activities. According to the concept described in section II.A, three dimensions are applied to assess the project's achievements of Objective 2:

1. Scrutiny applied by monitors is assessed by the coverage of monitoring, i.e., the quantity of CAs and contract volume subject to monitoring activities
2. Findings identified and brought to the attention of respective stakeholders is a measure of the quality of monitoring activities
3. Quality and commitment of monitors as additional (indirect) measurement of the expected extent of monitoring efforts

Achievements – concepts for assessment and data

Contracting Authorities: In Moldova, public procurement is conducted by about 3,000 CAs from local to national level. The volume and nature of their procurements vary significantly, and so do the challenges they encounter. The project endeavored to conduct large coverage of monitoring activities, both in terms of quantity and diversity of CAs around Moldova, with the following result:

1. Level: CAs of all levels of administration were subject to monitoring

Contracting Agencies Monitored			
	National Level	Local Level	Total
Round 1	38	33	71
Round 2	9	86	95
Total	47	119	166

Note: Each CA monitored by a CSO is counted. CAs monitored by two projects are counted twice accordingly.

2. Geographic distribution: Monitoring Projects were implemented in all regions of Moldova:

Geographic Distribution of Monitoring Projects				
	North	Center	South	Total
Round 1	2	4	2	8
Round 2	1	4	0	5
Total	3	8	2	13

Sectors: As in most countries, the rules applied to procurement vary significantly between sectors – and so do the challenges. The project endeavored to cover a wide variety of sectors, with the following results:

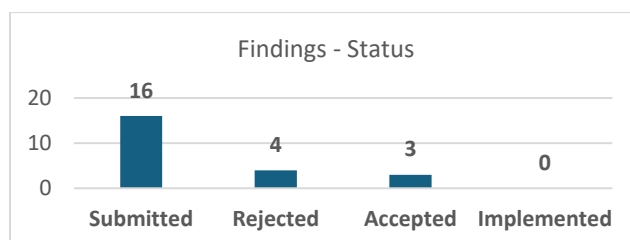
Sectors Covered by Monitoring Projects					
	Health	Education	Infrastructure	Utilities	Total
Round 1	1	3	6	1	11
Round 2	1	3	3	2	9
Total	2	6	9	3	20

Note: Utilities include Energy, Water, Transportation, Postal Services, Telecommunications

Contract volume: The type of procurement procedure (goods, works, or services), its value, and the method determine the applicable rules as well as the potential complexity. The project endeavored to 1) Cover a high total value of contracts monitored to maximize the effect the project creates, but also 2) Ensure different types of procurement are covered to understand all forms of potential issues. The following table provides an overview of how this was achieved:

Organization			Procedures Monitored				
Name			Qty.	Procurement Type and Contract Value (estimated, in MDL)			
				Small Value	Regular	Utilities	Total
Round 1	1	AGER	37	148,680	624,481,365		624,630,082
	2	Prospect	7		10,902,000		10,902,007
	3	LEX XXI	5		37,598,736		37,598,741
	4	LocalInvest	30	461,241	29,611,701		30,072,972
	5	Contact Cahul	6		21,350,000		21,350,006
	6	Părinți Solidari	20		771,719,221		771,719,241
	7	Media Guard	2	149,340	151,002,141		151,151,483
	8	Cu sens	20		94,243,849		94,243,869
Subtotal Round 1			127	759,261	1,740,909,013		1,741,668,401
Round 2	9	AGER	60			633,865,799	633,865,859
	10	LEX XXI	7	170,000	44,156,347		44,326,354
	11	Părinți Solidari	15	79,760,000	600,000		80,360,015
	12	API	65	524,842	125,595,579		126,120,486
	13	TI Moldova	14		37,485,000		37,485,014
	Subtotal Round 2			161	80,454,842	207,836,926	633,865,799
Total			288	81,214,103	1,948,745,939	633,865,799	2,663,826,129

Findings: Grantees submitted a total of 23 case-related submissions to relevant recipients to address a defective procurement. As the chart shows, only three (13%) were accepted (partially), four (17%) rejected while 16 (70%) did not elicit any reaction – the weakest result:



Quality of Monitors: The quality of results inherently depends on a combination of the procurement procedures selected (i.e., whether there are any issues to be discovered, information available, etc.) and the capacity and commitment of the organizations and individuals implementing the activities. The project endeavored to generate as many proposals as possible and select those expected to produce the best results, i.e., most likely to identify issues and pursue them in a way that will trigger change. The following three observations indicate the project succeeded in attracting capable and committed monitors:

1. Number of bids: 33 valid bids (meeting administrative requirements) from all regions were received, indicating strong interest in the program, as preparation requires considerable effort:

Proposals Received: Valid Bids				
	North	Center	South	Total
Round 1	4	8	6	18
Round 2	3	10	2	15
Total	7	18	8	33

2. Quality of proposals: 20 eligible proposals (meeting technical requirements) could not be funded:
 - Round 1: 8 grants provided, 14 proposals met the funding criteria (175%)
 - Round 2: 5 grants provided, 15 proposals met the funding criteria (300%)
3. Continued commitment: 12 of the 33 proposals (36%) were submitted by organizations who had previously participated in the training.

Summary

The project made significant achievements in actively monitoring a wide variety of CAs across Moldova and across sectors, safeguarding the spending of MDL2.67bn (USD156m).

Related strictly to findings, corrective action was low: 23 findings were submitted. Only three (13%) were (partially) accepted, and none was resolved. Considering that 288 procedures were monitored, this

number appears low. However, many of the observations led to more significant results – general recommendations, see next sections.

The project attracted significant interest: The amount and the quality of bids for participation in the program received indicate that the program was able to select from a pool that included qualified and capable monitors and interesting projects – which is an indirect indicator that the results could be expected to be of high quality.

D. Objective 3: System Strengthening

Rationale and project context

Effective improvement of the system is contingent on responsible stakeholders receiving, considering, and acting on findings by implementing corrective action and/or adopting recommendations.

Approach: The project pursued a two-pronged strategy to ensure monitoring results led to action:

- 1) Generated input and momentum for strengthening the system through submission of evidence-based results to concerned stakeholders and following up to trigger action.
- 2) Fostered a climate receptive to corrective action and advocacy by supporting and convening key stakeholders and establishing mechanisms that increase the chances of results leading to action.

Achievements – concepts for assessment and data

Generating input and momentum for improvement: The strength of calls for corrective action and advocacy depends on the quality of findings and recommendations, including the evidence presented and the formal correctness. Public calls for action increase pressure on those responsible to take action. The project endeavored to ensure the calls for corrective action and advocacy carried weight – through a large number of substantiated findings and recommendations, appropriately formulated, submitted through the right channels to the correct recipient, supported by public attention, and followed up actively. This section provides an overview of how it was achieved. For details, see the [Grants Program Report](#).

Monitoring Results: The project generated 221 documented results based on issues identified by grantees in the procurement procedures they monitored: 23 findings and 198 recommendations. Grantees directly submitted all 23 findings and 120 recommendations; the remaining 76 recommendations were introduced via the Coalition of Monitors and submitted by the NPPP. The charts below provide an overview:

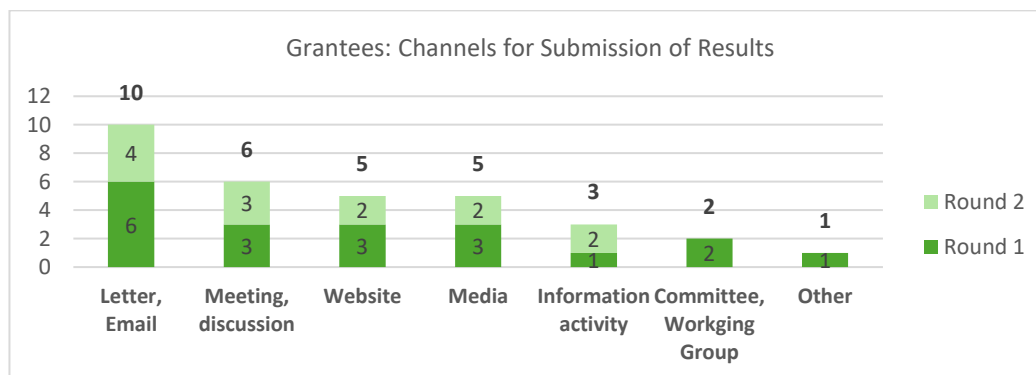
1. Results produced by Grantees (Findings and Recommendations)

Monitoring Results – Grantees					
Grantee	Findings		Recommendations		Total
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 1	Round 2	
AGER			8	16	24
API Moldova		1		9	10
Contact Cahul			12		12
Cu Sens	2		1		3
LEX XXI	2	5	7	21	35
LocalInvest	2		3		5
Media Guard			2		2
Părinți Solidari	4	3	16	15	38
Prospect	1		2		3
TI Moldova		3		8	11
Total	11	12	51	69	143
	23		120		

2. Results produced by the NPPP (recommendations only, as NPPP does not deal with findings)

Results – NPPP	
Meeting	Recommendations
1	5
2	7
3	4
4	43
5	8
6	11
Total	78

3. Channels of submission used by grantees



All NPPP recommendations were submitted to recipients by the Secretariat (IDIS) in writing.

4. Recipients

Monitoring Results – Recipients			
Level	Findings	Recomm's	Total
Local	12	50	62
City Halls	5	27	32
District Councils	3	12	15
Other local institutions	4	11	15
National	11	146	157
Court of Accounts	1		1
Court of Justice	1		1
Financial Inspection Service	1		1
Government of Moldova		2	2
Ministry of Education & Research	4	16	20
Ministry of Finance and/or Public Procurement Agency		107	107
Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development		1	1
Ministry of Labor & Social Protection	2	6	8
National Agency for Solving Complaints		1	1
National Anticorruption Center	2	1	3
National Integrity Authority (ANI) and the courts		1	1
National Social Insurance Company		4	4
Parliament		9	9
Total	23	198	221

In summary, the project produced a significant number of results, both locally and nationally, and submitted to numerous stakeholders, thus creating momentum for corrective action and system strengthening.

Tangible results produced by the project – some examples for illustration

Findings (i.e., case-based issues) included requests to:

1. Ensure compliance, for example, to a) Familiarize CA's leadership, its subdivisions, and municipal enterprises with public procurement rules, access-to-information laws, and petition right; b) Adjust specifications for the construction of a sidewalk that were incorrectly drafted.
2. Apply control, for example, to a) Launch an audit or inspection on certain procedures and publish the results on the CA's website; b) Examine a certain procedure or its result; c) Review the audit and consider taking action;

Recommendations (i.e., opportunities to strengthen the system) included proposals for:

1. Legislative and policy reforms, for example, to a) Introduce a MDL10,000 threshold for SVP to be conducted via MTender; b) Clearly define "contract splitting" through quantitative indicators to discourage it and allow holding CAs accountable; c) Make contract execution reports mandatory on public platforms to enhance accountability.
2. Electronic procurement and programmatic framework, for example, to improve MTender's search functionality and integrate it with state databases like e-Invoice and the State Registry of Legal Entities for automated reporting, as one grantee noted that inconsistent data in MTender prevented monitoring of key contracts in its project.

3. Training and capacity building, for example, to a) Train procurement officers in drafting objective technical specifications to avoid discriminatory practices; b) Conduct regular audits, prioritizing CAs with issues identified during monitoring activities.

4. Strengthened monitoring, for example, to: a) Ensure stricter compliance with laws by introducing sanctions for late reporting and procedural violations; b) Monitor contract performance and publish execution results. One grantee reported that lack of supervision of contracts in municipalities led to inefficiencies and delayed implementation.

Fostering a climate receptive to corrective action and advocacy: To achieve change, the receiving side is as important as the momentum created by strong input. Institutions responsible for acting on submitted results must be willing to do so. The project endeavored to build coalitions and institutionalize constructive dialogue rather than a confrontational approach to deal with specific proposals substantiated by evidence in the form of monitoring results and research. This was achieved through the Coalition Building efforts described in chapter I.D. In sum, these steps have led to a strong ecosystem of Monitoring CSOs that has fostered the receptiveness of institutions to constructive dialogue – at least on the national level. And the results speak for themselves (see section III.B).

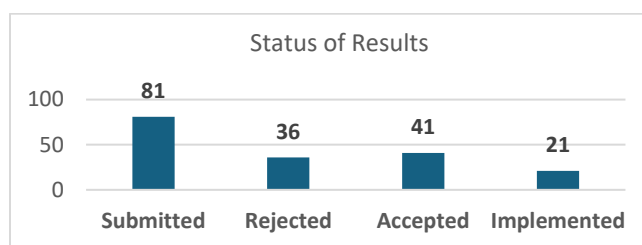
Achieving Change – Corrective Action and System Strengthening: The value of results for strengthening the system greatly depends on the extent to which they are considered and implemented by relevant stakeholders. The project endeavored to maximize the response triggered and the effect created. To this end, their status is documented as follows – from worst result to best:

- Submitted: Recipient did not provide information on any consequences other than confirmation of receipt, in some cases. Submission of each result was documented to ensure it was done in the appropriate format and through the correct channel, thus eliminating the risk that the results in this category had not reached the recipient properly.
- Rejected: Recipient confirmed it will not take action, providing as justification disagreement, irrelevance, or alternative plans to resolve the issue reported.
- Accepted: Recipient confirmed agreement with the proposal and intention to implement it.
- Implemented: Recipient implemented the proposal and there is documentation to verify this.

The M&E Results Tracker provides full details – including the separation between partially/fully accepted and partially/fully implemented, which are joined categories in this report for simplicity purposes.

Status of Results: The chart below shows the status of 202 results as of April 2025. Note that the 19 recommendations produced in NPPP meetings 5 and 6 are excluded, as there was not enough time

between their submission and final status update – their status in the M&E Results Tracker is *Submitted*.



As the chart shows, 65 results are either expected to lead to change in due course (44 with status *Accepted*) or have already done so (21 with status *Implemented*). The former constitutes documented achievement of Objective 3, the latter a direct contribution to the Project Goal.

Not all results are equal

For purposes of documentation, all findings and recommendations are counted equally, even though the data show that the number of results reported by grantees and NPPP meetings varies considerably. Therefore, it is important to consider two points with this approach:

1. Not every project or topic offers the same opportunities: NPPP Meeting 4 was on the new draft procurement law – and the members agreed on many recommendations on how to strengthen the formulation of the law. Therefore, the meeting produced many recommendations – prepared by the Coalition and the project team, IDIS, and PTF experts. Recommendations from such an endeavor will permeate the whole country’s procurement system at all levels. The same goes for the Methodological Note and recommendations for the professionalization of the procurement function. These recommended changes may even have an impact on other public management functions such as audit and control, judicial, budget, and civil service.

2. Not all results carry the same weight: While the M&E concept does not attribute levels of importance or weight of results, it is clear that its consequences are a key characteristic. For example, a recommendation that leads to a change in the new procurement law will have a stronger impact on the overall system than a recommendation that leads to one town hall improving transparency by adding information on its website.

To do justice to these considerations and put them in perspective, section II.E highlights the project’s most important achievements.

Summary

The project produced a significant number of evidence-supported opportunities to improve public procurement processes, procedures, regulations, and laws in Moldova. It has already triggered documented improvement in 21 instances with potentially many more being implemented in the near future.

E. Project Goal: Increased Transparency and Integrity of Public Procurement

Rationale and project context

According to the Program Logic, achievement of Objectives 1-3 (Outcomes) will, over time, contribute to the overall Project Goal.

The M&E concept foresaw an external evaluation of project Outputs and Objectives. A measurement of the achievement of the Project Goal would require an ex-post evaluation including suitable indicators and baseline data to assess the transparency and integrity of public procurement in Moldova, appropriate assumptions and, ideally, a method of attributing the change to the project (counterfactual). The effort and budget such an analysis would require is not considered commensurate with the project dimensions – aside from the fact that it would need to happen after project end, ideally in one to two years' time.

However, in addition to the achievement of Outcomes, presented in the previous sections, some results **directly contribute to strengthening of the transparency and integrity** of public procurement in Moldova. They constitute an achievement of the Project Goal and thus the project's **Most Significant Achievements**. This section highlights them, separating them into two sections: general and specific system strengthening.

General system strengthening – improvements caused by project activities

1. Legal Framework: Provided input to strengthen draft laws.

The [fourth NPPP meeting](#) (January 2025) was dedicated to the draft of the revision of law 131/2015 on public procurement. The NPPP submitted 43 recommendations, 17 of which were (partially) accepted – thus directly strengthening the key law on procurement. Additionally, the project contributed to enhancing the legal framework as follows: participation in a multi-stakeholder [working group](#) convened by the MoF (April 2022) to discuss risks in public procurement, preparation of a [position paper](#) (May 2022) and submission of an [opinion](#) to Parliament (Feb. 2023) on the draft revision of law 131/2015 on SVP, and of a [proposal](#) to MoF (April 2023) on the draft to amend Law 74/2020 on Sectoral Procurement (April 2023).

Conclusion: The project has supported effective strengthening of the legal framework. In particular, the considerable input to its centerpiece, the law on Public Procurement, is a strong result that will enhance the Integrity of public procurement in Moldova on a permanent basis.

2. Strategic Framework: Supported the national reform of Public Procurement.

The public procurement system in Moldova is undergoing major legislative and institutional reform as part of the country's EU integration efforts. The commitments to align the national legislation to the EU acquis communautaire of chapter V (Public Procurement) are laid out in the national accession plan, according to which Moldova must be aligned with EU regulations and directives of public procurement in 2027. Additionally, the country is implementing the [National Program for the Development of the Public Procurement System \(2023–2026\)](#) and the [EU Growth Plan](#). Despite progress made, pressing gaps remain in the alignment of secondary legislation, institutional capacity, and public understanding of ongoing reforms. PTF, IDIS and Coalition members engaged with the MoF and, upon request from the Ministry, directly supported reforms through submission of deliverables included in its implementation plan:

Strategic Framework: contributions to the National Program for Public Procurement (2023–2026)	
Contribution Title (English Translation)	National Program (Activity)
1. Recommendations for the new regulation on the planning of public procurement contracts	3.4.1
2. Risks in public procurement in the Republic of Moldova	3.4.4
3. Analysis of the existing mechanism for joint procurement and factors hindering association	4.2.1
4. Recommendations for the Regulation on the planning of public procurement contracts	3.4.1
5. The professionalization and certification system in public procurement	5.3.1

Conclusion: Direct input in form of deliverables included in the National Program is a strong result that will permanently strengthen public procurement in Moldova. Additional endeavors from team members' activities to multi-stakeholder mechanisms complemented these efforts.

3. Stakeholders: Strengthened the role of Civil Society as watchdog and partner in policy reform.

Effective monitoring: 13 civil-society grant programs monitored 288 procurement processes worth an estimated MDL2.67bn (USD156m) across sectors, levels of CAs, and regions of Moldova, producing 221 documented results that have already triggered action. In ten cases, project grantees were included as members of the procurement working groups convened by the CAs they were monitoring.

Strengthening the e-procurement system: IDIS actively contributed to several national multi-stakeholder mechanisms. Based on a request from IDIS, MoF included two Civil Society representatives (one each from IDIS and AGER) in the permanent Working Group that discussed the reform of the e-procurement system MTender in May 2022. Expert Diana Enachi [was nominated](#) as co-president of the committee on *Open Government Partnership* (May 2023) and as member of the MoF's *Advisory Group on the Re-engineering of the Electronic Procurement System* (Sept. 2023). This has allowed a contribution of Civil Society to ensure that the new system is compliant with the principles of transparency and provides timely and free access to relevant data and information throughout the entire procurement process.

Establishing an ecosystem for Monitoring Public Procurement: Section I.D.IV describes in detail the successful establishment of infrastructure that allows meaningful contribution by Civil Society as watchdog and as partner in the policy dialogue, and also the tangible results it has already achieved.

Conclusion: The project has played a significant part in establishing the role of Civil Society in being able to contribute to the Integrity and Transparency of Public Procurement in Moldova.

4. Public awareness: Generated momentum and support for reform by highlighting challenges.

The multitude of detailed reports and investigations produced by the project highlighted existing challenges in public procurement across sectors, institutions and regions. Almost 300 publications and events drew attention to the public procurement risks. As a result of widely sharing them through social media and public platforms, they have attracted the attention of all actors involved (CAs, authorities, contractors, and citizens), leading to authorities reconsidering their approaches to procurement and encouraging stronger public scrutiny. Some examples include *AO AGER* convening stakeholders to discuss transparency in sectoral procurement, *AO Părinți Solidari* revealing widespread irregularities in SVP worth MDL80m (USD4.7m), through repeatedly awarding contracts to the same groups of companies across multiple procedures, and the investigative story “[*Why can’t I hear*](#)” from *AO CuSens* that received widespread attention.

Conclusion: The project produced and widely distributed evidence of challenges in public procurement and thus supported the creation of public awareness of the problem, which, in turn, has already strengthened momentum for reform and will – hopefully – continue to do so.

Specific system strengthening – measures caused by project results

An implemented recommendation constitutes a documented improvement of the system in the sense of the overall Project Goal. As of April 2025, 21 recommendations were implemented, resulting in a public procurement system with higher levels of transparency, integrity, or accountability. The [M&E Results Tracker](#) provides details under KPI17. A few highlights are included here for illustration:

- 1. Increased transparency and accountability through tender cancellation or review:** *AO ADO LEX XXI’s* findings led to the cancellation of a flawed tender for laptops and printers. Similarly, *AO API’s* efforts prompted a CA to review contract modifications worth over MDL1m.
- 2. Policy influence through advocacy:** *AO AGER’s* efforts resulted in broader discussions about mandatory inclusion of sectoral procurement on the MTender platform. Their findings on two sectoral procurements at a value of MDL633m (USD36.9m) highlighted the need for legislative changes to ensure transparency which resulted in a policy note submitted to the MoF and Parliament

(June 2024), consultation convened by the National Agency for Solving Complaints (June 2024), and initial commitments to review proposed amendments to Law No. 74/2020 and the Competition Law to mandate use of MTender and deter collusive bidding.

3. **Enhanced compliance through CSO scrutiny:** *TI Moldova* observed enhanced procurement practices adopted by a CA in a procurement valued at over MDL37m (USD2.2m), indicating that monitoring activities directly result in CA's adhering to legal frameworks when under scrutiny, boding well for the other procurement activities monitored by project activities.
4. **Institutionalized CSO participation in decision-making.** Multiple CAs began inviting monitors into their procurement working groups; for example, the Cimișlia district Working Group formally included *AO Prospect*, making civil society oversight a standard procedure, not an ad-hoc exception.
5. **Additional transparency in form of routine disclosure practices.** Authorities started publishing key procurement data (plans, notices, decisions). For example, *Părinți Solidari* reviewed compliance of the *Ministry of Education and Research* (MEC) with legal requirements, thus inducing it to publish additional information and documents as required by law. Similarly, *Părinți Solidari* managed to obtain the publication related to SVP by education directorates of *Chișinău City Hall*.
6. **Better access to information through enforcement of applicable norms.** Monitors triggered sanctioning for breaches of access-to-information. For example, a municipal official was fined for lack of compliance with publication requirements. This led the municipality to publish its anti-corruption reports and the composition of its monitoring group, turning transparency from a promise into a documented routine.
7. **Professionalization of monitoring through capacitation and tools.** The monitoring guide (originally developed by IDIS but twice updated under this project) became a widely used standard, and *Părinți Solidari's* MTender data-extraction mechanism enabled large-scale pattern analysis in SVPs, raising the system's "watchdog bandwidth" and technical rigor.
8. **Operationalization of concepts of transparency through playbooks for line ministries.** Through formal notifications, monitors defined concrete steps for MEC web transparency, structuring pages, updating budget and procurement information, and establishing anti-corruption hotlines, thus providing authorities a ready-to-implement blueprint for openness.

Conclusion: Project activities have already improved the transparency and integrity of public procurement in Moldova. Additionally, 41 recommendations were accepted by the stakeholders. As they are being implemented after the project ends, they will boost this direct achievement of the project goal.

III. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Chapter III – Snapshot

Content: This chapter extracts lessons and applies them to Moldova and similar work elsewhere.

Structure: It is structured in two parts: lessons and recommendations.

Purpose: The reader learns what worked well (or not) and why, and what should happen in Moldova and elsewhere.

Rationale and project context

Future work on CSO monitoring can benefit from understanding success factors: *What has worked well (or not) in this project – and why?* This final chapter provides key lessons the team draws after almost five years of implementation and offers corresponding recommendations for continuing the work with CSO monitoring of public procurement in Moldova and elsewhere.

A. Looking Back: Lessons Learned

Good Practices

1. Capacity Building

The progressive approach with multiple components building on each other produced strong results.

The project established a solid basis by working with a group of committed and capable monitors that received initial training, followed by continued technical (hands-on) support in the Grants Program and further support by specific training sessions, based on the needs identified by monitors. This proved to be a successful layered, long-term approach, as the results show.

2. Monitoring: Grants Program

The iterative approach with two rounds of grants allowed enhancement of the process. The box below provides the key takeaways from the first round that were integrated into the second round.

Improvement by integrating Lessons Learned: key takeaways of round 1 incorporated in round 2

Small-Value Procurement (SVP) should be monitored by CSOs – one project focused on SVP in Round 2.

Explanation: (1) Monitors are likely to develop interesting findings. (2) SVP procurement volume is expected to grow significantly. (3) Lack of transparency makes SVP both challenging and interesting to monitor. (4) Skills for interaction with the CAs and concerned authorities are key – and will be strengthened by funding projects at the local level.

Local procurement should be monitored by CSOs. Four projects focused on monitoring LPA procurement.

Explanation: (1) LPAs are generally less trained and experienced and not accustomed to having their activities monitored. Thus, they are less likely to enforce rules and laws on transparency or to conduct themselves in an ethical way.

Implementation of the Grants Project can be improved – the Funding Guide was updated after the first round of grants to reflect lessons learned.

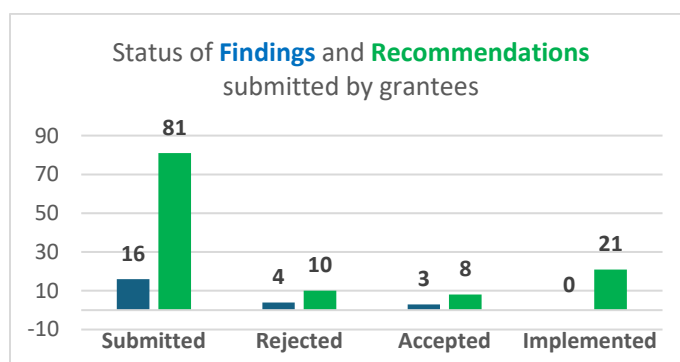
Explanation: (1) Project budgets should include items for legal support and project audit. (2) A comprehensive final report should be a mandatory requirement. (3) Submission of findings and recommendations to relevant authorities is mandatory. Investigative journalists were less willing to share details of their activities, accept guidance or to submit results and follow-up to ensure they lead to action.

Access to data and availability of analytical tools should be improved. This will be the focus of efforts identifying opportunities for follow-up projects.

Explanation: (1) MTender is not mandated for sectoral procurement or state-owned enterprises, contracts are not uploaded, its interface and search engine are of low quality. (2) A tool that integrates information from several sources, linking signed contracts with the MTender procedures, providing an intuitive and user-friendly interface would support effective monitoring.

The monitoring methodology applied appears more suitable for strengthening the system than for triggering corrective action.

Grantees submitted 143 results: 23 findings and 120 recommendations. The chart below illustrates that 1) Recommendations were the more frequent result and 2) They were more likely to trigger action: three findings (13%) were accepted while eight recommendations (7%) were accepted and 21 (18%) were implemented. In sum, findings elicited a positive result in 13% of the cases, recommendations in 25%.



Two things to note: 1) The 78 recommendations submitted through the NPPP are not included in the above table but are assessed separately below, as they are more likely to trigger action. 2) Case-based findings that included or already triggered a system improvement are counted as recommendations, which is the more important result. These additional points considered make the methodology applied even more valuable for system-strengthening than for fixing individual case-based issues through corrective action.

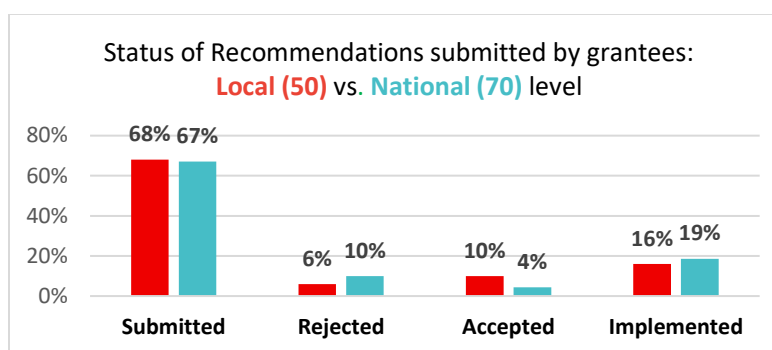
CSO monitoring worked at both the local and the national level – with similar chances of success.

Grantees submitted 143 results to concerned authorities on different levels as follows:

Level of Results produced by Grantees			
	Local	National	Total
Findings	12	11	23
Recommendations	50	70	120

Note: "local" includes Local Public Authorities (LPAs) levels 1 and 2

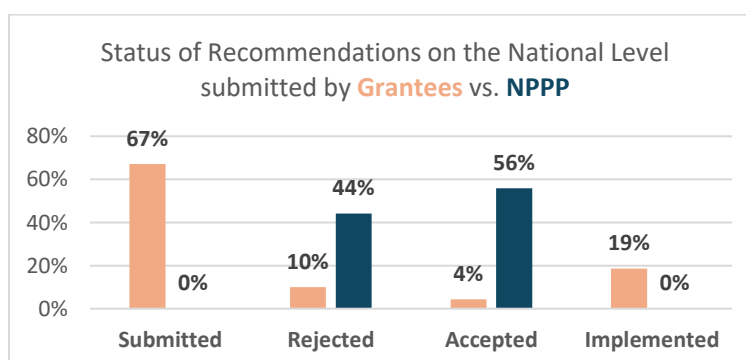
An analysis of the 120 recommendations submitted by grantees shows that chances of triggering action are similar at both levels, indicating that system strengthening works locally and nationally:



3. Coalition Building

The combination of the multi-stakeholder platform (NPPP) and the Coalition of Monitors was a game changer.

78 recommendations were introduced to the system through the platforms established by the project, i.e., via the Coalition of Monitors to the NPPP. As noted above, the 19 recommendations of NPPP meetings 5 and 6 are not included in this table as there was not enough time remaining in the project to trigger action. To compare the chances of triggering action, these 59 NPPP-introduced recommendations are compared with the 70 recommendations submitted by grantees on the national level (see above). As the following chart shows, of 59 recommendations from the first four NPPP meetings, a total of 33 (56%) were accepted (partially) and 26 (44%) were rejected:



The response rate for recommendations submitted via the NPPP was 100% (i.e., no recommendation categorized as *Submitted*). This is a strong sign of a well-functioning dialogue and a direct line to the MoF and significantly better than the success rate of grantees submitting recommendations to CAs, with 67% of those submissions not eliciting any reaction. Additionally, several of the accepted NPPP-recommendations are expected to be implemented after project end.

The Coalition Building approach in two logical steps proved very effective.

Step 1: Bringing together Civil Society under the Coalition of Monitors, equipped with strong practical results from monitoring activities, supported by commissioned research.

Step 2: Bringing together key stakeholders under the proposition to effectively strengthen the system, based on solid recommendations that are supported by evidence, research, and lobbying by a group representing CSOs across the country engaged in the topic.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue was highly successful due to five key factors:

1. Leadership: Organizing it under the auspices of – and with representation from – the MoF conferred legitimacy and demonstrated the convening power of the most important player in public procurement. A complementary – equally important – component was the convening power of IDIS to bring together the stakeholders under the leadership of the MoF.

2. Inclusiveness: Seeking wide participation to ensure the efforts and results had broad-based support made acceptance of proposals more likely. This included exposure to public scrutiny through publicity that put pressure on stakeholders but also rewarded them with positive publicity.

3. Prioritization: Jointly identifying priority topics, based on challenges encountered by monitors and other stakeholders, ensured interest and buy-in from all of them.

4. Validity of Advocacy: Designing a process that integrates latest research, Moldovan experience, and international good practices was a strong inducement for stakeholders to participate.

5. Layered approach: The Coalition of Monitors (established under this project) allowed IDIS, in its function as Secretariat, to prepare the ground for a multi-stakeholder dialogue.

4. Project design

A long-term approach and flexibility were the basis for success.

Project components were designed and implemented consecutively, building on each other in a form that required long-term engagement. This would not have been possible through a series of separate consecutive projects. Growing momentum and organically developing an ecosystem required time and effort. This almost five-year-long project allowed for such development.

Flexibility to adapt based on results and experience along the way is the second key component. The approach for the multi-stakeholder dialogue changed considerably from its original concept – resulting in the most important achievement of the project: an institutionalized ecosystem of monitoring CSOs:

Building Coalitions – a Work in Progress

The original plan to strengthen public procurement in Moldova via a multistakeholder dialogue included two components: 1) To build consensus for – and potentially prepare the implementation of – an Integrity Pact, a tool developed by Transparency International and implemented successfully around the world to safeguard large public projects from corruption. 2) A one-time multistakeholder dialogue to be conducted towards the end of the project. With the extension of this project from its original end date of December 2022 to June 2025, there was an opportunity to consider something more long term. Based on an initiative from IDIS, the project team made significant changes to the initial plans, shifting to a much more ambitious target, i.e., the creation of a formal platform for continuous dialogue among key stakeholders, the NPPP. And the success in bringing the MoF and other key stakeholders on board, allowed it to foster a climate of trust and practice of cooperation in the form of an institutionalized multistakeholder dialogue – a much stronger result than originally envisaged. Meaningful consultation and cooperation are key to bringing change/reform in procurement. This is all part of the change-management component of a reform, and it should not be underestimated.

Likewise, the ability to develop and take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves requires such an approach. It was not until year 4 that the opportunity for the project to contribute to four of the deliverables of the National Reform Program appeared. Being willing and able to adapt plans and take advantage of the government’s initiative resulted in one of the most significant achievements. Lastly, the chance of implementing a Grants Program in subsequent rounds allowed the identification and implementation of lessons learned to strengthen the approach.

Challenges

External factors constituted a significant challenge.

With the global pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine living up to the worst-case scenarios of the risk analysis and beyond, the project’s survival was hanging by a thread throughout its duration. Conducting activities virtually allowed work to continue without major restrictions or limitations. Fortunately, the pandemic abated, and the political situation remained relatively stable.

The uncertainty around the Moldovan e-procurement system MTender was a second external challenge, because it critically impacts potential and methods of CSOs’ procurement monitoring. As with the pandemic, the decision to proceed without major changes, even under the uncertainty around this key

component, proved to be the right one. Despite numerous announcements of plans to revamp or replace MTender, no major changes were made to the e-procurement platform during the project duration.

Cooperation from key stakeholders – most of all the MoF – is a third factor outside the project's sphere of influence. Fortunately, the persistence throughout the project duration – and with high intensity over a period of six months – to get the MoF on board worked (see section I.D.3). In the absence of their willingness to cooperate, there would be no action taken on recommendations. Initial and continued success critically depend on a supportive government. The fact that Moldova is a candidate for EU membership and thus must align its laws with those of the EU has been an important factor in gaining support from the MoF.

Ensuring monitoring activities produced measurable results that lead to action presented a challenge.

While strengthening the capacity and implementing monitoring projects worked well, the gap between submitting a result and achieving change proved a key challenge, even working with a group of highly motivated and well-qualified grantees. The strengthening of the approach after Round 1 (see section I.D.2) certainly helped. However, driving change based on issues identified by grantees has its challenges. Part of the reason why the Coalition Building is considered a “game changer” is that its structure ensures that issues submitted are taken into consideration – so far at 100%.

Grantees reported three major obstacles in conducting monitoring activities and triggering change.

The main difficulties reported included 1) Access to and cooperation from CAs. 2) Program and platform inefficiencies with MTender's interface and data inconsistencies creating additional workload. 3) Resistance to change, as authorities were often unwilling to acknowledge findings or take corrective action. For more information, see Grants Project Report. Despite these difficulties, the project approach applied by grantees has proven quite successful in driving change.

Integrating Investigative Journalism with CSO Monitoring was difficult.

The project partners traditionally pursued a non-confrontational approach of CSO engagement that focused on identification of potential for improvement and cooperation rather than a rights-based approach designed to ensure citizens get what they are entitled to. Public procurement monitoring is inherently based on CSOs flagging issues and deficiencies, containing potential for conflict. The definition of corrective action and policy reform focused on non-confrontational engagement to the extent possible. Investigative journalism is, by its nature, a more confrontational concept that tries to publicly expose wrongdoing and shortcomings. Even though means and objectives are similar to CSO monitoring, actual experience highlighted two major shortcomings that made its integration into the project approach

challenging: 1) Grants to investigative journalists to monitor projects did not produce many actionable results. Also, this category of grantees was reluctant to share details about their monitoring activities and expressed little interest in receiving mentoring and guidance. 2) The confrontational nature of their results led to unwillingness on the part of those exposed to cooperate. Combining investigative journalism and CSO monitoring in a program should be considered with this challenge in mind. Separate projects for CSOs and investigative journalists might be a preferable approach.

The integration of technology into the project required significant time and effort.

Technology that supports monitors in identifying, retrieving, analyzing, and visualizing data can have significant impact on the timeliness and quality of results they can achieve – and a focus on what efforts and skill sets are required. Getting this component right requires a thorough understanding of the availability and quality of public procurement data as well as the capacity of monitors. In this project, the definition of a suitable solution took a significant amount of time (Feb. 2023 until June 2024). Main factors were, in order of descending priority: 1) The constant uncertainty of the future of MTender and thus the situation of procurement data as well as integrated Business Intelligence (BI) module with similar functionality. 2) Lack of clarity on the most suitable functionality – which had to be determined based on an understanding of the needs and capacity of CSO monitors. 3) A developing landscape of alternative tools available (MTender pilot Business Intelligence tool, [OpenMoney](#), [Revizia](#)) or those being developed in concurrent projects ([USAID](#)). 4) Difficulties in identifying a suitable contractor for developing the digital platform (even with extended deadline (none of the received bids was responsive), resulting in cancellation of the tender followed by direct contracting). The assessment of the solution developed indicates that the chosen basic version is suitable for the current needs of CSO monitors in Moldova (see section II.B). Going forward, it should serve as a basis for integrating additional functionalities, and in future projects, the effort and time required for developing such tools should be considered.

B. Looking Forward: Recommendations

Moldova – ensuring Sustainability and Following-up

Ensure the continued functioning of institutionalized structures to maintain momentum – which will require funding.

Continued financial support is required to maintain the Coalition Building components, as they are not expected to be self-sustaining. Their functioning is contingent on support for the secretariat functions of both platforms as well as for input (monitoring results and commissioned research). Compared with the efforts required to establish this ecosystem, supporting their continuity will require a much lower budget, and minimal technical support. However, without external funding, it is questionable whether these efforts can continue at their current level of quality – if at all.

Additional efforts are important as they are expected to lead to strong results.

The fact that IDIS as a CSO has taken the initiative to establish the NPPP and has been given the mandate by other stakeholders, including the MoF, to run the secretariat is a strong indication of the prominent role civil society plays under the current Moldovan government. Further donor support for civil society is therefore likely to have significant pay-off.

The NPPP has just started to unfold its potential: recommendations submitted to the MoF and other stakeholders have been acknowledged and mostly accepted but not yet implemented. Strong and persistent follow-up is required to ensure the recommendations lead to a strengthening of the system. And there is already a pipeline of more recommendations that require the same attention.

Likewise, several achievements are not sustainable results. Neither the momentum created through the Grants Program nor the enhanced monitoring capacity are expected to last. Monitoring and capacity building are constant tasks. Maintaining the achievements made in the project (i.e., that procurement is effectively monitored by qualified monitors) requires continued efforts and funding.

Future projects in Moldova should build on the foundations established in this project.

To corroborate the results of this report, an external ex-post evaluation is recommended as a first step in identifying and defining a follow-up project. That exercise will confirm whether currently considered ideas for follow-up projects building on the established results are suitable. These include developing monitoring technology that allows analysis of Moldovan procurement data (contingent on the current reform of the e-procurement system), a replication of the project with focus on a specific sector, or extending monitoring to the contract implementation phase – given availability of timely data in a quality that allows effective monitoring, which is currently not yet the case.

A follow-up project “Supporting Moldova’s public procurement reform in the EU accession context” funded by the EU Delegation to Moldova is being implemented by IDIS. Its activities will run between September 2025 and August 2026 and have a budget of EUR60,000.

Its overall objective is to contribute to a transparent, efficient and EU-aligned national public procurement system that supports good governance, strengthens public accountability and advances the country’s EU accession process. Specific objectives are to:

- I. Support the development of secondary legislation and the implementation of the National Program and the reform agenda related to the Growth Plan (GD 260/2025).
- II. Support and facilitate inclusive and evidence-based policy dialogue on public procurement reforms
- III. Raise public awareness and improve citizens’ access to information on public procurement reform in the context of Moldova’s accession to the EU.

Activities include, among other things, the continued operation of the eco-system established by the project covered by this report, supporting the Coalition of Monitors (four meetings), NPPP (four meetings), providing assistance to as well as monitoring of the MoF, and also the continued issuing of four editions of the quarterly newsletter. For current information, see www.pulsachizitii.md.

Internationally – CSO Monitoring of Public Procurement (follow-up)

CSO Monitoring of Public Procurement can produce strong results. It should be supported in other countries with a suitable setting.

Key requirements – in line with [previous experience by PTF](#) – are 1) a strong local organization with up-to-date technical knowledge as well as a comprehensive network and convening power. 2) An empowering legal and institutional framework for CSOs and a supportive government, providing sufficient space for engagement by civil society that is met by stakeholder receptivity to constructive dialogue. 3) A cadre of skilled, committed and willing local CSOs, journalists, and/or other citizens to implement the project. The quality of these dimensions defines what a similarly designed project can achieve, given the country context – and how ambitious but realistic its objectives and logical framework could be.

Building on the experience of this project can help design suitable projects with similar objectives.

Key factors for a successful design are 1) A strong local implementing organization. 2) A long-term, flexible approach. 3) Access to capacity building actions/programs. 4) A project logical framework suitable for the local circumstances and the potential that CSO monitoring (and investigative journalism) can unfold. Not all countries will be receptive for a structure as developed in Moldova.

Future projects internationally will benefit from the experience of this project as an important source guiding work on CSO engagement beyond monitoring procurement.

The tools and approaches used to monitor procurement are, with some modifications, applicable to monitoring by civil society of other entities and types of activities, e.g., monitoring of State-owned-enterprises (SOEs), development aid and reconstruction projects. They can also be applied to parts of the project cycles other than procurement, i.e., project design and budgeting, project implementation and delivery of services following implementation.

This project has benefitted from – and eventually significantly complemented – an extensive set of tools developed by both organizations over a period of 25 years of empowering civil society to hold governments accountable. This includes broad international experience of training CSOs and monitoring service delivery. These tools and experience serve as foundation for various types of CSO monitoring projects worldwide.

The partners in this project, IDIS and PTF, are committed building on the rich experience from the project described in this report, IDIS in Moldova and PTF on a global basis. The organizations will continue working – together and separately – on deploying and further developing tools to expand the scope of CSO monitoring.

Working with capable and committed local CSO partners in countries with receptive political, institutional and legal environments, PTF can and will, upon request, help such CSOs develop proposals for CSO training and monitoring to be submitted to interested donors for funding. PTF is also available to support CSOs implementing projects for which funding has been secured. This way we hope that the project just successfully completed can be replicated and further developed in many more countries.