



World Health Organization

EU-WHO Universal Health Coverage Partnership:
Supporting policy dialogue on national health policies, strategies
and plans and universal coverage

Year 1 Report
Oct. 2011 – Dec. 2012



EUROPEAN UNION

Abbreviations

AFRO/IST	World Health Organization Africa Regional Office/Inter-country Support Team
CHPP	Country Health Policy Process
CoIA	Commission on Information and Accountability
EU	European Union
HPG	Health Partnership Group
HQ	Headquarters
IHP+	International Health Partnership
Jahr	Joint Annual Health Review
JANS	Joint Assessment of National Strategies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoH	Ministry of Health
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
NHPSP	National Health Plan/Strategic Plan
NHSSP	National Health Sector Strategic Plan
NHSWPP	National Health and Social Welfare Policy and Plan
PHC	Primary Health Care
PND	Plan National du Développement Sanitaire
PNS	Politique Nationale Sanitaire
RO	Regional Office
SO	Specific Objective
TA	Technical Assistant
UC	Universal Coverage
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCO	World Health Organization Country Office
WHO	World Health Organization
WR	World Health Organization Representative

Country Report

Moldova

Year 1 Report

EU-WHO Policy Dialogue Programme

Date: April 2013	Prepared by: WHO CO/RO/HQ
Reporting Period:	
October 2011 – December 2012	
Main activities as planned in the Road Map.	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Health Forum2. Guideline & recommendations for effective policy dialogue3. Sub-national workshops on health policy roadmap 2012-2014 on service delivery and health financing4. Documentation: Implementation of health policy, strategies, and plans5. Policy dialogue on health financing and universal coverage (technical consultation, stakeholder involvements and knowledge transfer)6. Policy dialogue on medicines policy (technical consultation, stakeholder involvements and knowledge transfer)7. Policy Study (Integrating Maternal and Child Health services into Health Systems Strengthening programs)	
Main activities achieved and progress made:	
<p><i>Please estimate approximate percentage of achievement for each roadmap activity. Please note which activities were undertaken with the technical support of WCO (potentially in collaboration with existing initiatives of UN agencies, NGOs etc) Please describe expected outcomes, targets and specify partners What are some concrete and visible outputs of policy dialogue? (ex: annual review report, key policy changes that may be under way as a result of the processes described; has there been or will there be any likely improvement in service delivery outputs?) What are some concrete and visible outputs of other activities (linked to policy dialogue)?</i></p> <p>1. Health Forum – 100% implemented The first National Health Forum took place on 22-23 November 2012 as a unique and brand new initiative, bringing together 350 participants from various sectors in Moldova, including international partners such as WHO, European Observatory, EU, and World Bank. Key health sector topics were discussed, such as health system</p>	

performance, access to health services and financial protection, health in all policies and roles of other sectors, the role of local authorities and communities, primary health care development, optimization of the hospital sector addressing NCDs and communicable diseases, access to quality medicines, human resources for health etc.

The National Health Forum was a first milestone to overcome reluctance from many sides for introduction of health sector reforms and a culmination of earlier policy dialogues hosted by Ministry of Health and WHO to debate options for health system reforms. It was seen as successful in this objective and more such forums will be organized in the years to come. While different policy dialogues and workshops during the years have concentrated on many specific technical and strategic issues, the Forum brought most important issues together. The Forum was used also to launch the Health System in Transition review 2012 to provide outside view on health sector changes in last few years (the concept was to include number of reports as the policy studies and health system review to one meeting for dissemination where key stakeholders are convened). WHO CO technically and financially (with Policy Dialogue Programme funds) supported the organization of this Forum.

A visible output, besides the Forum event itself, is the final report on the Forum

2. [Guideline & recommendations for effective policy dialogue – 5% implemented](#)

Initial discussions were held on the scope and needs for guidelines in April 2012 and a proposal has been shared with WHO/HQ. Further follow up is necessary to take this task forward.

3. [Sub-national workshops on health policy roadmap 2012-2014 on service delivery and health financing – 0% implemented](#)

The workshops at sub-national level have been postponed due to local circumstances and the ongoing reform process. They will take place in 2013, beginning with a national-level policy dialogue on health service delivery, with an emphasis on primary health care (PHC) and access to services. A series of sub-national workshops will then follow.

4. [Documentation: Implementation of health policy, strategies, and plans – 70% implemented](#)

Regular write-ups were published on the WHO EURO web site on the various policy dialogue events. In addition, some of the events got local press coverage. Much of the documentation will be linked to the local (or sub-national) policy dialogue events which will take place in 2013.

5. [Policy dialogue on health financing and universal coverage \(technical consultation, stakeholder involvements and knowledge transfer\) – 100% implemented](#)

A policy dialogue on health financing and universal coverage took place from 11-12 June 2012, with 60 participants, including key decision-makers and stakeholders from the Ministry of Health, representatives from other ministries, medical professionals, other professional stakeholders and academics, as well as NGOs. In addition, WHO, EU, European Observatory, London School of Economics, and the World Bank were present.

Key topics discussed included trends in health financing policies, revenue raising, defining optimal benefit packages, strategic purchasing, performance based payments, and how to address informal payments. The policy dialogue was used as platform to discuss the recent policy study by WHO on health financing, the current trends and reforms in health financing in Europe and the ongoing changes in Moldova.

6. Policy dialogue on medicines policy (technical consultation, stakeholder involvements and knowledge transfer) – 100% implemented

A policy dialogue on medicines was held from 20-21 September 2012, with 70 participants. Presenters included WHO, the London School of Economics, and the Moldova Medicines Agency. Key topics discussed were availability and affordability of medicines, national procurement mechanisms, price regulation, prescription policies and rational use of medicines. The policy dialogue was used as a platform to discuss recent policy study on medicines (Availability and affordability of medicines and assessment of quality systems for prescription of medicines) and necessary institutional and policy issues (including group discussions) to strengthen the system.

7. Policy Study (Integrating Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services into Health Systems Strengthening programs) – 100% implemented

This policy study was drafted, consulted and edited and is now available in English and Romanian. Policy workshops including other non-health sector in addition to the health sector were held on 18 and 20 September to share and consult on the main conclusions and recommendations.

All of the above-mentioned policy dialogues as well as the policy study were undertaken with heavy technical support from WHO CO. The expected outcomes and targets varied according to the specific topic.

Besides the fact that the policy dialogue events themselves are visible outputs of these activities, press articles can be found on the WHO EURO web site

(http://www.euro.who.int/en/where-we-work/member-states/republic-of-moldova/news/news/news?root_node_selection=75435).

Please explain any changes in circumstances or programme implementation challenges encountered affecting the original plan:

Please provide information on activities eliminated, changed, added or postponed. Please list them and provide the reasons for each of them (obstacles encountered, remedial measures taken,...).

1. The package of sub-national workshops was proposed in summer 2012 to Ministry of health and activity postponed after consultation as there was limited time available by leaders at national level however the initiative was in general supported. Active follow-up is provided and could be considered for 2013 but on hold since March 2013 due to “political instability”.

2. The documentation and analysis of policy dialogue mechanisms set up (under current initiative and beyond since 2011) is progressing slowly and new action-plan should be developed to have preliminary results by mid-2013.
3. To complement other initiatives and respond to emerging needs, the policy workshops on MCH were organized as an additional activity in September 2012. The objective was to launch the report but also to have discussions with multiple stakeholders on how to take the recommendations further to culminate in the development of a national child and adolescence health strategy in the coming years. Further the visits by consultants and experts were held during the summer of 2012. The local working group formulated a draft of the study methodology in a participatory way.
4. This Programme has been aligned with other WHO initiatives at country level and particularly the EU funded technical assistance to direct budgetary support (TABS) but also to the broader WHO work plan in Moldova, including WHO's overall function of health sector coordination. This includes the discussion on WHO's work plan in country to improve coordination (meetings held with MoH and national counterparts in January 2012 to set objectives for 2012/13 and in July 2012/January 2013 to review achievements in WHO's work plan). At products/activity level for example the detailed policy studies on health financing and access to medicines have been prepared in period 2011-12 under WHO collaborative agreement with Member State and funded by TABS, and discussed under the WHO/EU policy dialogue initiative.
5. The guideline and recommendations for effective policy dialogue were initially discussed as to its needs in April 2012 and a proposal has been given to WHO/HQ. Further follow-up is needed to take this task forward and thus the activity was not completed during the first year of programme implementation.

Proposed modifications to Programme Road Map resulting from changes above:

If the changes above have implications for future work, please attach the new roadmap to this report and confirm that the changes have been discussed with the MoH and EU delegation.

No major changes proposed to roadmap and activities. The dialogue has started with experts and national partners on potential studies and policy dialogues for period 2013-14 to be initiated in early 2013. The principle of complementarity with TABS and other initiatives will be applied. To foster local level dialogues the technical assistance on developing local health profiles approach in 2013 has been added compared to original plans in late 2011.

Lessons learned:

Please describe the principal lessons learned during the first year of implementation of the Policy Dialogue Programme:

1. Modest resources can bring change if well targeted and synchronized with other initiatives under a whole package and coordinated with strategic partners (especially in scaling up the policy dialogues components when the evidence is generated by other WHO initiatives available in country at the same time)

2. Policy dialogues are effective when organized at the right time, in the right place and involving the right stakeholders as well under clear MoH leadership with WHO and EU support
3. Policy dialogues are more productive when built around generated evidence
4. A series of events around on-going reforms are more effective than a single one
5. Availability of high level external expertise is very important for credibility and to convene important national stakeholders
6. Close follow up after the policy event is crucial in accelerating the expected changes
7. National ownership, high level attendance and continuous close dialogue with EU are key to success
8. Expanding policy dialogues to sub-national level might bring additional value

Road Map and timeline for 2013 (Refer to annex):

Please list here the work plan activities as well as the time frame for those activities for the calendar year 2013

1. Potential policy study: Health and economics (to facilitate the 2013 inter-sectorial debate)
2. Potential policy study: HSS and NCD (dependent on other initiatives could be individual study or related to other EU funded initiative by WHO)
3. Potential policy dialogue: PHC and improving access to care (March 2013)
4. Potential policy dialogue: TB and HSS (II or III quarter 2013)
5. Potential policy dialogue: Local policy dialogues on Roadmap and key reforms (depending on policy/political situation)
6. Potential technical assistance on Health Profiles (the methodology to be prepared and tested in 2-5 sites) and dialogue on health sector and inter-sectorial actions (II quarter 2013)
7. National Health Forum, second edition (autumn/winter 2013)

Visibility and communication

Please give a short overview of visibility and communication events that took place and attach evidence (scanned newspapers, pictures, brochure,...). Please describe how communication of programme results to the public has been ensured

1. Project launch (by Minister of Health, EU Ambassador, WHO Representative) news item: http://www.ms.gov.md/ministry/press_service/18613
2. Policy dialogues on health financing and medicines news items
3. Policy workshop on MCH news item
4. National Health Forum news item
5. UN/EU publication on collaboration
6. Communication to the public has been ensured through media releases on the EURO website as follows: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/Health-systems/primary-health-care/news/news/2013/03/policy-dialogue-on-health-service-delivery-in-the-republic-of-moldova-from-evidence-to-practice>

Preliminary impact assessment:

Please explain to which extent country level activities have already contributed towards achieving the overall programme objectives. Please demonstrate how WHO strengthened its role as facilitator/ convener of policy dialogue and contributed, through its sector expertise, to improved UHC (in its three dimensions) at country level. Where possible, please use short stories /field voices box / quotes (MoH, district level officials, health workers etc) / press releases to illustrate the impact and added value of the programme and WHO action in the policy dialogue process.

1. The policy dialogues and the National Health Forum raised commitment for short-term actions as part of longer-term priorities in the health sector and outside it, and increased support to health reforms at higher political level. Further the selected topics (health financing, service delivery and medicines) constitute the core set of reforms highlighted in the national health policy roadmap 2012-2014 and policy dialogues series has ensured continuous discussion on the key reforms.
2. The policy dialogue and evidence presented during them have led to initiations of fundamental structural reorganizations in key national institutions (National Health Insurance Company, National Medicines and Medical Devices Agency) and revision of their functions and processes.
3. All activities have significantly strengthened national capacities through direct involvement of national partners in planning, implementation and follow up. The capacity building has been possible due to high level speakers and contributors organized and facilitated by WHO.
4. The initiative has increased visibility of WHO and EU at country level as key partners for the health sector as well enabled the convening of key international partners in the health sector (WHO, EU, WB, SDC etc.) to discuss selected topics with national authorities.

“The health sector is facing currently a series of complex challenges and we need an integrated approach in addressing them. The role of other sectors and local public authorities will be crucial in achieving an equitable and universal access to health care and public health services” - Dr. Andrei Usatii, Minister of Health, at the first National health Forum

At the policy dialogue event on health financing, the Minister noted : "In Moldova, allocations to health have continuously increased in the last decades; but unfortunately this has not been accompanied by increased satisfaction of the population with the provided services. It is time now to move towards real universal coverage with quality services and effective financial protection through further strengthening of our financing policies. We are thankful to WHO for assisting us in mobilizing top experts from Europe to share best practices with us in this regard."