

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC
Agenția Elvețiană pentru
Dezvoltare și Cooperare

Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation

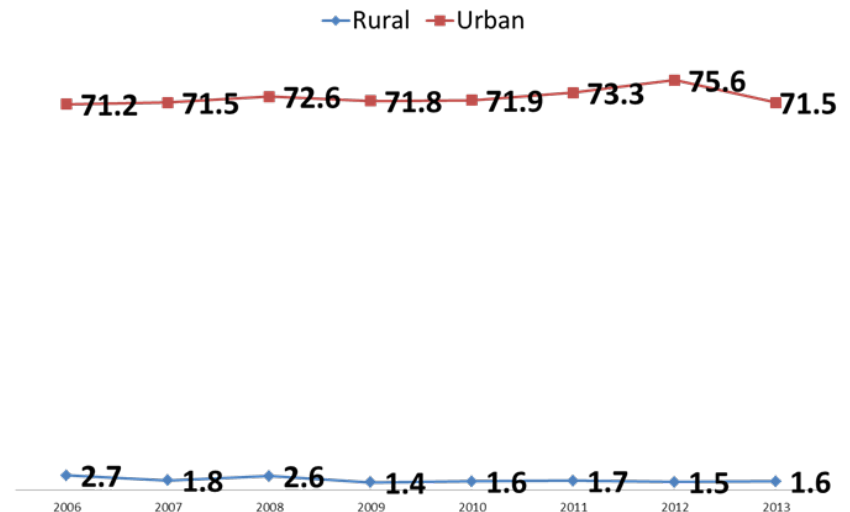
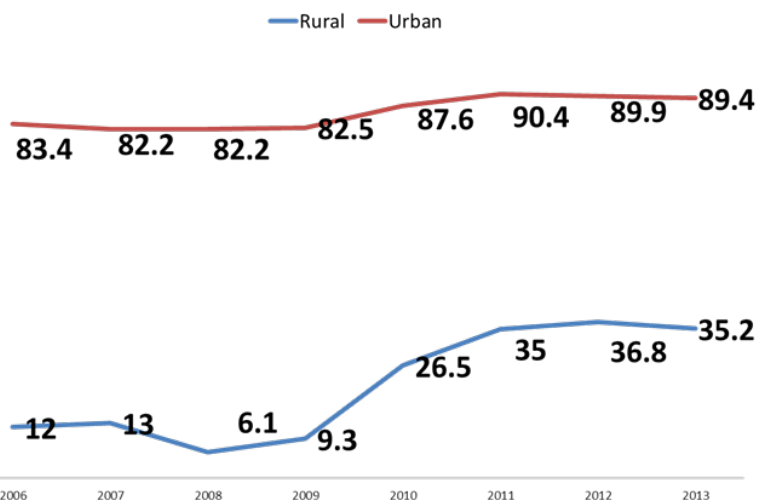
Self –assessment Score-Card

Republic of Moldova Country report

Why an equitable perspective?

Background Info: The equitable access perspective should be at the center of water and sanitation policies, that means understanding and taking in to account specific circumstances that create and lead to inequalities in terms of water and sanitation. Unfortunately, for the last decade public policies for water and sanitation have failed the poorest members of Moldovan society. Moldovan authorities should learn from past mistakes and use the opportunity of this new policy cycle to have a stronger consideration for the specific factors that lead to significant inequalities in access, find the best ways to empower the most vulnerable and marginalized as to ensure their rightful access to adequate water and sanitation.

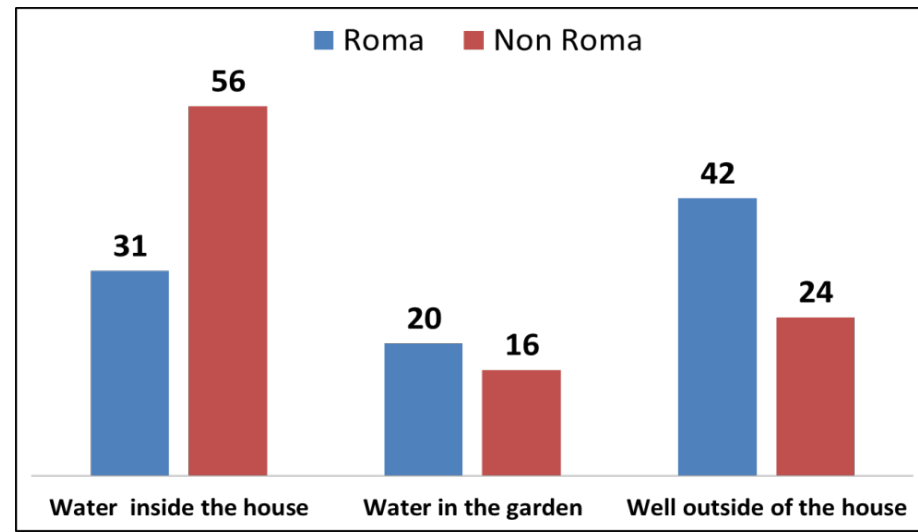
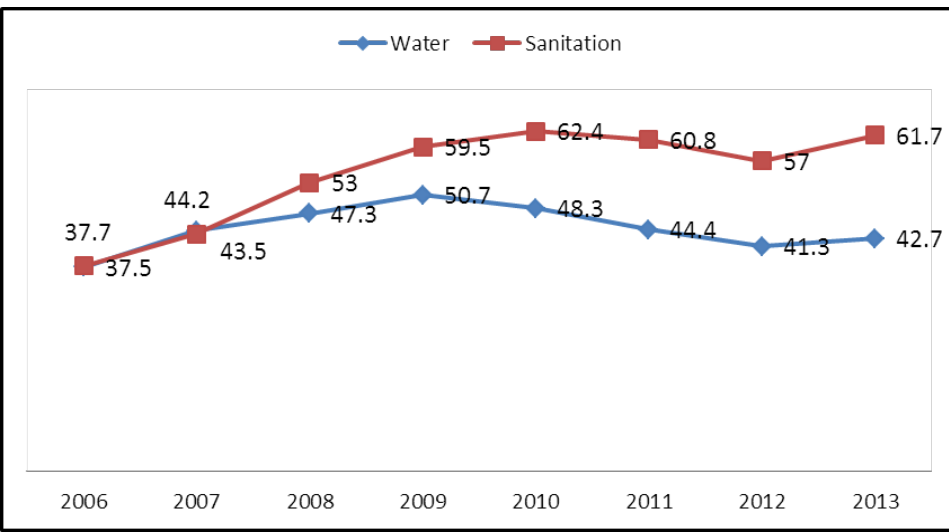
Initial Objective: To help decision makers to ensure full achievement of the Human right to Water and Sanitation for every citizen, whether rich or poor, living in rural or urban areas, disabled or belonging to a minority, men or women have W/S services that are accessible, safe, acceptable and affordable for all without any discrimination.



Why an equitable perspective?

Republic of Moldova committed through Global Millennium Developmental Goals to ensure access to safe drinking water to 59% of population in 2010 and to 65% in 2015 and Increasing the share of population with access to improved sewerage to 50,3% in 2010 and 65% in 2015. Despite the recent strides in making Water Supply and Sanitation more available within rural regions in Moldova (the households with access to WSS have doubled in South and Centre regions in 2010 as compared to 2007) that data suggests that the targets are unlikely to be achieved.

Access gap for water and sanitation between richest and poorest quintile: (1) was very significant to start with – 37, 7%, (2) the gap was not reduced at all (3) it actually increased significantly.



Process of applying the Score-card

Period of Implementation: 01 April- 31 December 2015

First Phase(May-August): Contraction of the National Expert/Data collection/First meeting development

Second Phase(September -November)): Extension of the stakeholders platform involved, data collection preliminary data consolidation/Second meeting of the expert group

Final phase(November-December): Final workshop development/Results presentation of the exercise piloted in Moldova, Control meeting conduct

Follow-up: Document review, translation, editing; distribution and information dissemination



Process of applying the Score-card

Participants: Representatives of Ministry of Environment of Moldova, Agency Apele Moldovei, Swiss Cooperation Office, Austrian Development Cooperation, ApaSan project in Moldova, National Centre for Public Health, Ministry of Regional Development and Constructions, Association Moldova Apa-Canal (AMAC), National Agency for Energy and Regulation (ANRE), Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova, UNDP/ART initiative (GWS), OECD project in Moldova, Eco-Tiras NGO, National Environmental Center NGO.
International Experts: Hanna Tsvietkova, Chantal Demilchamp and R.M. Hurtado.

Difficulties faced: New methodology and thematic for Moldova/Complexity of the Instrument/Time and financial pressure/Difficulty to overcome the already set mentality/Lack of time and resources of the entities addressed etc.

Equitable access score-card results based on each equitability area:

- Steering governance framework to deliver equitable access to safe W/S: 1,36
- Reducing Geographical disparities: 1,11
- Ensuring access for vulnerable and marginalized groups: 1,12
- Keeping Water and Sanitation affordable for all: 0,28

AVERAGE SCORE- 1

Main Findings

- **Current policy frameworks for W/S take equitable perspective into account to a little extent.** *Considering the access gaps for water and sanitation in Moldova, it can be safely assumed that unless there is a strong overhaul of the current policy and strong commitments on behalf of the authorities, the gaps will remain unchanged.*
- **Moldova needs a more effective water and sanitation strategy but it also needs to have a more equitable perspective.** However Strategy is handicapped by: (1) having a generic vision on how specific access gaps for most vulnerable groups will be closed or at least reduced, (2) having no specific time bound targets, (3) failing to clarify specific equitable access mandates for the involved institutions
- Most relevant access gaps are recognized, especially gaps related to poor/rich and rural/urban households, but the public policy approach is not human rights based, i.e. recognizing that there are systemic barriers that prevent most vulnerable people from having reliable access to water and sanitation, and that one needs to focus on empowerment in the policy mix.
- The issue of how affordability of water and sanitation will be ensured, is left to the Local Public Administration, water utilities and water users associations. Without a proper mix of incentives, these local stakeholders will fail to give the affordability the priority it deserves.

Main Findings

- Some relevant vulnerable groups are absent from the policy approach. This mainly refers to people with physical disabilities, the elderly, in particular the elderly women and Roma men and women. Access gaps for these groups are more significant and they face additional challenges in having reliable access to water and sanitation
- Moldovan legal and strategic framework on water and sanitation does not have a strong duty bearers/ rights holder's perspective. There is no clear accountability framework, no empowerment mechanism, and weak means for rights holders to claim their rights.
- The affordability section of the score-card is the one with the lowest score. Due to system inefficiencies and low mainstreaming, the policy makers chose to have a more market oriented approach to water and sanitation, according to which water and sanitation is a service to be paid for by everyone and every exceptions made can distort the prices and be abused. The newly adopted strategy proposed the so called 3T approach (Tariffs, Transfers and Taxes) but it does not state clearly how this approach will be used since there are no specific references to the action plan of the strategy.

Recommendations

Steering governance framework to deliver equitable access to safe water and sanitation.

Make sure that the equitable access perspective is mainstreamed into the Water and Sanitation Institutional Framework/Strategies/Action Plans

Develop a specific set of equitable access indicators(disaggregated targets) for water and sanitation sector to be collected and used by the main stakeholders on permanent basis.

Introduce better accountability for equitable access perspective. Ex: special annual reports or at least special chapters in progress reports n ensuring equitable access.

Pilot community based participation channels for most vulnerable men and women in the area of water and sanitation.

Reducing geographical disparities.

Prioritization of closing R/U gap. Develop master plans and clusters with clear delimitations on what type of water and sanitation systems will be most feasible. The investments should target the most vulnerable and marginalized communities and regions for water and sanitation.

Debate scorecard report at the sector donor's meeting. Decide on annual review of progress in terms of equitable access to water and sanitation. Develop a more sustained dialog with RM Authorities on equitable access to water and sanitation.

Ensuring access for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Make data collection based on different vulnerability criteria mandatory. Consult NGOs representing persons with disabilities on best ways to integrate the disability perspective into the water and sanitation policy. Pilot the most innovative technical solutions to ensure access for disabled persons.

Introduce better data and earmark specific funding for most vulnerable communities and schools.

Keeping water and sanitation affordable for all.

Collect more data on affordability. Identify the most vulnerable communities and regions. Introduce special measures.

Identification of sources of financing for Equitable Access/Elaboration of specific mechanisms (Solidarity Fund)

Assess the opportunity to introduce a onetime allowance for water and sanitation connection targeted to poor households.

- **Establishing mechanisms for Coordination/Monitoring for Equitable Access/Annual review of the Equitable Access**
- **Raise public education and awareness about the human right to water and sanitation from Equitable perspective. Empowerment and promotion of civil participation**



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Thank You for your attention!

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