

# **Raising public awareness of freedom of expression and access to local media (the southern region of the Republic of Moldova)**

**Timespan:** April 2018 - November 2018

## **Purpose & objectives;**

Project goal: raising public awareness of freedom of expression and non-discrimination of social groups in local media.

Project objectives:

- a) increase the coverage of women in local media (TV news) by 3-5% compared to the level set in 2016 according to the Study<sup>1</sup> (TV-radio-27.8%), newspaper-27.3%, web-18.3 %), by raising the awareness of the local media, the Local Authorities and the Civil Society;
- b) b) raising awareness of the local media on the language of broadcasting according to ethnicity, according to the 2014 Census<sup>2</sup>
- c) raising awareness of local TV stations regarding the access of people with hearing deficiencies and seeing audio-visual services by monitoring them (according to BCC decision<sup>3</sup>);
- d) raising public awareness and local media on the preference and credibility of local media as compared to the national index of 2017<sup>4</sup>.

## **Description of the matter to be covered and / or addressed;**

According to UN Women's Study 2016<sup>5</sup>, the share of women's coverage in TV and radio news is 27.8%, in newspapers - 27.3% and online - 18.3%. These figures do not reflect the representation of women in society - 52% of the Moldovan population according to the 2014 Census.

Linguistic pluralism in local media is reduced to broadcasting in Romanian and Russian without taking into account the other languages spoken in the territory. Thus, in Taraclia, the spoken Bulgarian language represents about 50% and the spoken Russian language - about 40%, despite these realities, the local television broadcasts the news only in Russian. A similar situation is also in ATU Gagauzia<sup>6</sup>.

At present, people with hearing and vision impairments do not have free access to the audio-visual services in the territory. According to the decision no. 16/101 of July 21, 2017 of the BCC<sup>7</sup>, broadcasters are obliged to develop program services that are accessible to people with hearing and vision deficiencies.

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<sup>1</sup> „Media institutions gender self-assessment” (September 2015 – April 2016);

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=479&>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cca.md/files/D.16->

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<sup>4</sup> <http://media-azi.md/ro/publicatii/rezultatele-sondajului-sociologic-%E2%80%99Eaudien%C8%9Ba-mass-mediei-%C3%AEn-republica-moldova%E2%80%99D;>

<sup>5</sup> UN Programme „Women in Politics” , „Media institutions gender self-assessment” (September 2015 – April 2016)

p 8.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=479&>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cca.md/files/D.16->

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According to the results of the sociological survey "Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova"<sup>8</sup> it was found that the citizens prefer 42,8% - Television, 18,8% - Web-site, 7,4% - Radio, 2,7% - newspapers. Through questionnaires we will find out the preferences of the population in the region at the local level, it will be the first analysis of the preferences of the mass media population in the South region.

### **Target audience of programmatic and advocacy intervention**

- a) Media consumers from the districts Cimislia, Basarabeasca, Taraclia and ATU Gagauzia (Comrat) - about 200 thousand persons;
- b) Local producers and broadcasters of media products - radio, TV, newspapers;
- c) Level 1 and 2 of Local Authorities in the region.

#### **1. How is the project relevant to addressing one of the following areas of concern:**

- Raising awareness of freedom of expression / free press among Moldovan public.

Over 1200 respondents on freedom of expression in the South region will be interviewed in the project. There will be 4 TV shows - at local media. The broadcasts will be retransmitted to local stations in the South region (200 thousand viewers).

- Encourage the active engagement of citizens with the media in Moldova;

TV and radio broadcasting debates will be broadcasted live with the possibility of questioning by spectators. The questionnaire will analyse the possibility for citizens to participate directly in TV-Radio broadcasts in the territory.

### **Activities**

- a) Conduct a study on the coverage of certain categories of citizens in the local media (news, articles) - the share of in news of women and men, spoken languages, free access to information for people with hearing and vision deficiencies etc. The study will be held in 4 districts of the Southern Region (Cimislia, Basarabeasca, Taraclia and ATU Gagauzia - Comrat) and will target the local media - TV, Radio, newspaper, website. Draft of the database - Annex 3.
- b) Conducting an opinion poll in the territory on access to local media, freedom of expression, credibility of media sources of information, consumer preferences, etc. There will be 300 questionnaires in each district, including a random fixed phone, Google Forms, direct contact of volunteers with citizens. In total, over 1,200 questionnaires will be applied.
- c) Analysing the degree of transparency of the Local Authorities through the local mass media (budgets for transparency, their realization).
- d) Conducting 4 TV shows Public Debate Radio (45 min) on the results (preliminary and final) of the studies and surveys in the project with the redistribution at the TV and Radio stations in the region.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://media-azi.md/ro/publicatii/rezultatele-sondajului-sociologic-%E2%80%99Eaudien%C8%9Ba-mass-mediei-%C3%AEn-republica-moldova%E2%80%99D>

- e) Organizing and conducting 4 roundtables (in each district) with the participation of representatives of Local Authorities, NGOs, local media (about 30 people) on the preliminary results of the project (once every 2 months) and providing the respective recommendations.
- f) Develop a Final Report of the Project and Recommendations for Local Media, Local Authorities and NGOs in the Territory to improve the freedom of expression, access to information, credibility and respect for citizens' rights to information.
- g) Conducting the Project Summation Conference and awarding the participants to different categories.

### **Partners**

- NGO Local Democracy Agency in Moldova (LDA Moldova);
- Level 1 and 2 of Local Authorities from Cimislia, Basarabasca, Taraclia, Comrat.
- South Development Agency;
- TV / radio stations - Media TV, Radio Media (Cimislia), Bas TV, Bas FM (Basarabasca), NTS, Radio Albena (Taraclia), ATV, Bugeac FM (Comrat);
- Newspapers and web - „Gazeta de Sud” / South Gazette (Cimislia, Basarabasca), „Vesti Gagauzii” (Comrat), „Slava” (Taraclia);