



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Project Inception Report

September – December 2023

Title of Project	Strengthening Border Police operational capacities for border security (SCOP 3.1)		
Budget	620.000 EUR		
Donor	Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic		
Implementer	International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)		
Project Start Date	01 September 2023	Project End Date	31 August 2024
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This project is implemented by:

International Centre for Migration
Policy Development (ICMPD)



In cooperation with:

Moldova's General Inspectorate of Border Police



Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMP	Aid Management Platform
EU	European Union
EUBAM	European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
IBM	Integrated Border Management
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IGM	Inspectorate-General for Migration
IGBP	Inspectorate-General of Border Police
MIA	Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Moldova
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RFO	Request for Offer
SCOP	Support to the Complex Improvement of Migration and Border Management in Moldova
SG	Steering Group
SO	Specific Objective
ToR	Terms of Reference
UAVs	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

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1. Introduction

1.1. Project Summary

The project “Support to the Complex Improvement of Migration and Border Management in Moldova (SCOP)” is based on the EU-Moldova strategic cooperation defined by the Mobility Partnership, Association Agreement¹ and Agenda, as well as the new cooperation framework emerged after obtaining the candidate status. The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) developed the project proposal in close cooperation with the various migration-related agencies, taking into account the priorities in the area of migration and border management.

The **overall objective** of the project is *to support Moldovan authorities in the consolidation of migration and border management system in line with EU Acquis.*

Based on the overall objective, the project has the following specific objectives:

SO1: Supported **reform of the Inspectorate General for Migration (IGM)** through consolidation of **human resource management** and digitalisation of services;

SO2: Increased **resilience and capacities of Moldovan agencies involved in migration and border management** to respond to **crisis situations in the area of migration and border management**, as well as implement **evidence-based policy** development, implementation and evaluation, while ensuring **balanced and transparent reporting to the public** on migration and border processes;

SO3: Improved **provision of state services to citizens and foreigners** within migration, border and consular procedures;

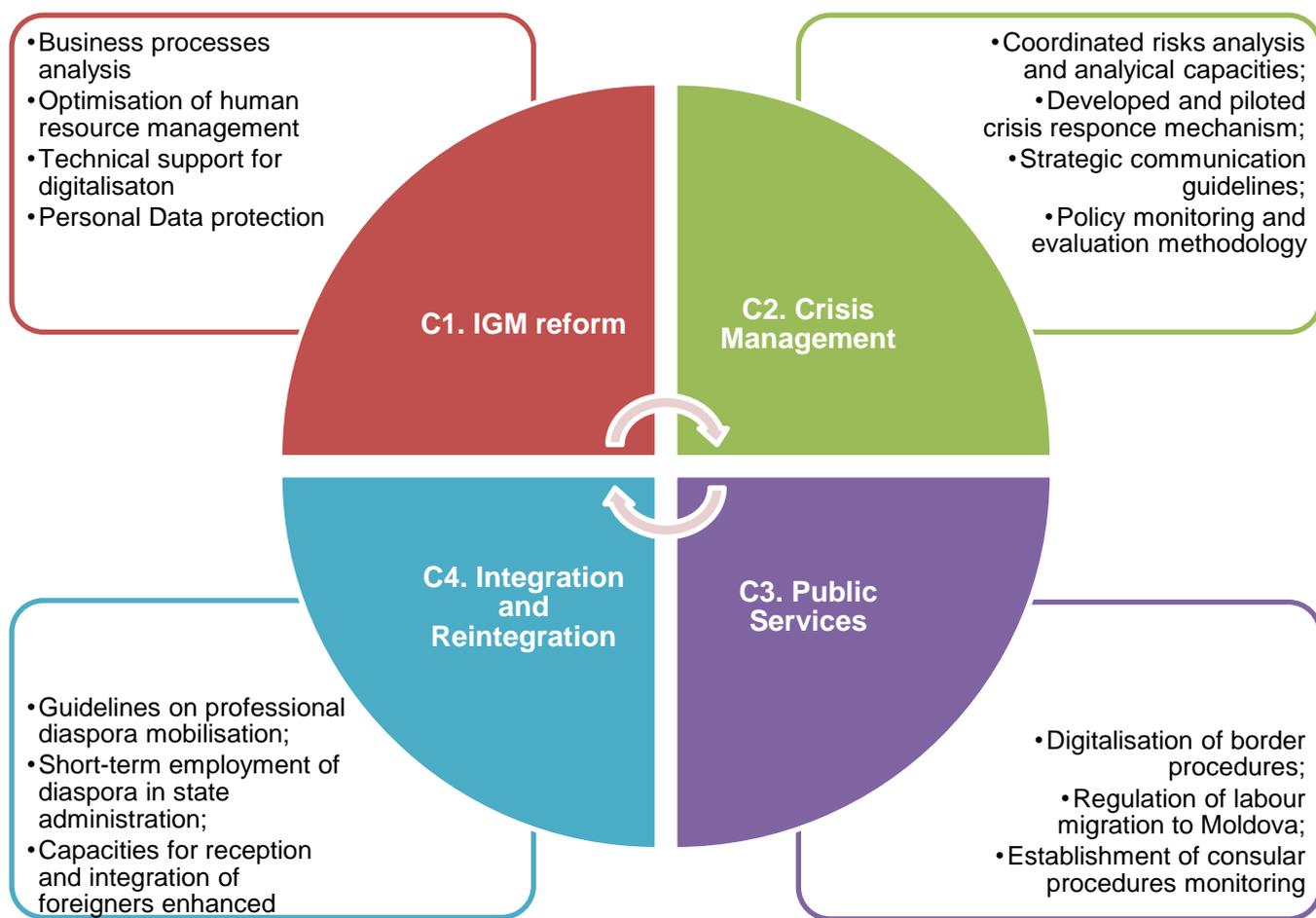
SO4: Supported **integration of arriving foreigners and reintegration of returning Moldovan skilled diaspora and migrants** to the labour market and public life.

The target groups of the project are Moldovan state institutions working on migration and border management as well as Moldovan civil society organisations, Moldovan diaspora organisations abroad and private business associations.

Final beneficiaries of the project: Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova and its agencies; Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Moldova; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; Diaspora Relations Bureau under the State Chancellery, other state institutions, academic institutions, civil society, diaspora organisations, private sector and the general public.

The activities of the project are divided into four inter-related Components, to be implemented subsequently. While some of the activities are planned to be carried out on a horizontal level, some of the Components are dedicated to the specific institution, as indicated in the figure below.

¹ Signed in 2014, https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/moldova/pdf/eu-md_aa-dcfta_en.pdf



This report covers activities envisaged by **Component 3.1 of the SCOP project and directly resonates with the SO3 envisaging provision of support to the General Inspectorate of Border Police.**

Component 3.1 builds upon earlier efforts in the SCOP project, namely Component 1 dedicated to the Inspectorate General for Migration, funded by the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees for 9 months between October 2022 - June 2023. Component 3.1. of the SCOP, funded by the Czech Ministry of Interior for 12 months between September 2023 – August 2024, continues strengthening the technical and human capacities of Moldovan migration-related authorities, particularly the Inspectorate-General of Border Police as a front-line response agency.

Thus, the **specific objective** of Component 3.1. of the SCOP project is contributing to the resilience and capacities of the Moldovan Border Police. This includes effective management of the state border and timely and adequate response to crisis situations, achieved through acquiring selected equipment and carrying out capacity-building activities.

In brief, **Component 3.1** establishes the following activities, as described in the project description and agreed upon with the donor and main beneficiary – the General Inspectorate of Border Police:

Activity type 1: Procurement of Equipment

- Off-road vehicles
- Mini-UAVs (drones)
- Handled thermal night vision cameras

- Detection and Alert devices

Activity type 2: Capacity Building

- Assessment of development needs
- Training and workshops

At the moment of drafting this Inception report, both procurement of equipment (activity type 1) and capacity-building activities (activity type 2) were initiated.

1.2. Project Management Activities

Background

Throughout Spring-Summer 2023, ICMPD carried out a series of consultations on current needs with the Moldovan counterparts, especially the Border Police, including through site visits and in-person meetings. In the course of these exchanges, it became apparent that due to continued Russian aggression against neighbouring Ukraine, Moldovan border control authorities are under continuous pressure to ensure efficient and secure border crossing, considering the growing threats with regard to trafficking and smuggling in people, weapons and goods. All of this required urgent support in institutional and technical capacities building of the Moldovan Inspectorate-General of Border Police.

At the same time, the acquiring of EU candidate status by Moldova in June 2022 increased expectations for country's performance along the established principles of Integrated Border Management (IBM). In November 2022, the Moldovan Government approved a new IBM Programme covering the upcoming period until 2025. The new Programme prioritised increasing the degree of coverage of the state border with qualified staff, as well as progressively equipping with modern state border control technologies, among others. Thus, the consultations also revolved around these priorities as outlined in the new national IBM programme.

Based on these consultations, ICMPD signed with the Czech Ministry of the Interior a Grant Agreement on implementing Component 3.1 of the SCOP project on 8 August 2023.

Activities

After signing the Grant Agreement with the Czech Ministry of the Interior, ICMPD proceeded with assembling the project implementation team in early September 2023. The team is composed partly of staff based in Vienna HQ (Portfolio Manager, Procurement Manager, Project Associate, Certifying Officer, Border Advisor) and partly of the Chisinau Field Office (Project Manager).

On 27 September, ICMPD held an event in Chisinau, kicking off the new action. The purpose was to present the SCOP 3.1 to a wider audience of stakeholders. Thus, the event gathered management-level representatives of national authorities, the donor community, and partner NGOs. The Project Manager presented the Team, the first steps in the project implementation, as well as agreed with the stakeholders and the beneficiary on the preliminary workplan. Attendees welcomed the newly launched Component 3.1. of the SCOP project and expressed commitment to join efforts to effectively fight transnational crime, uphold the safe movement across borders, and improve the quality of services provided by migration and border authorities.

In parallel, the project team registered the project into the in-house management systems, as well as with the Moldovan national authorities through the Aid Management Platform. The latter

lists the project as tax exempted, including from customs fees and VAT, allowing to make most of the available funds for project ends.

For visibility and cooperation activities, see below sections 4 and 5, respectively.

2. Activities carried out during the reporting period

Activity type 1: Procurement of Equipment

During the reporting period, the Project Team re-confirmed with the beneficiary the procurement needs. It also already launched the procurement case for off-road vehicles.

Upon consultation with the beneficiary and donor, it has been concluded that the best choice for the off-road vehicles at the Border Police is one of the Škoda brand options. Currently, the Moldovan Border Police has a number of Škoda Kodiaq on its fleet. According to Border Police (the beneficiary), these vehicles are known for their high cross-country capability and long-term maintenance reliability. The spacious closed-type trunk facilitates the optimal storage and transportation of mobile surveillance equipment, UAVs, and other tools essential for daily border surveillance. Other Škoda options for off-road vehicles would also be acceptable. For example, Škoda Karoq is commonly used across the wider internal affairs system. Therefore, acquiring the same brand would build upon current Moldovan capacities in terms of maintenance and staff trained. Škoda Karoq is also cheaper which would possibly allow for increasing the quantity of vehicles from the minimum 5 promised to the donor, provided a favourable offer is obtainable. Either way, the market research revealed a balanced price-quality ratio for all off-road vehicles in the Škoda family category. It has also been ascertained that Škoda official supplier in Moldova, would be able to deliver the vehicles in up to six months.

In light of the above, the procurement method of direct contracting has been decided, and the Request for Offer (RFO) has been sent on 11 December to the potentially selected company and the offer is expected by 15 January 2024.

As for the remaining equipment – namely the mini-UAVs (drones), thermal night vision cameras, and detection & alert devices, the technical specifications have been developed. At the moment of drafting this report the market research is still ongoing and thus the decision on the procurement method is pending. It is envisaged to have the respective procurement cases launched in early 2024.

Activity type 2: Capacity Building

The capacity building component is meant to accompany the equipment component and envisages a development needs assessment – in the first phase during February-March 2024. The assessment exercise would be carried out along IBM key areas of intervention, targeting training needs, but also infrastructure and equipment. It would also yield a Training Plan, to be executed through a series minimum of four workshops – in a second phase during May-June 2024.

Throughout the reporting period, the Terms of Reference for the first phase of the assignment – Needs Assessment – has been drafted in close coordination with the beneficiary, and an expert is being identified at the point of drafting this report.

3. Activities envisaged during the next reporting period

During the next reporting period, the following work will be carried out:

Activity type 1: Procurement of Equipment

As mentioned, the RFO for the off-road vehicles has been sent out with the deadline of 15 January 2024. Based on the offer, the supplier will be contracted with the view to have the vehicles delivered by June. Until then, the project team will proactively administer the contract to ensure satisfactory performance and timely handover.

As for the remaining equipment – namely the mini-UAVs (drones), thermal night vision cameras, and detection & alert devices, it is envisaged to have the procurement cases launched in early 2024. This will follow the decision on the most optimal procurement method by the end of December, which is in turn to be informed by the market research.

Activity type 2: Capacity Building:

For the capacity-building sub-component, a two-pronged approach is taken: the Needs Assessment will be carried out once an expert is identified in early 2024. Based on the needs assessment and accompanying training plan, a series of four workshops and/or training activities will be implemented in a second phase. The ToRs for the training assignment will be drafted sometime in early Spring, after the exact training content and expert qualifications required are known. At that point, the project team will proceed with identifying experts and with pertaining event management logistics.

Project Management Activities

In addition to regular communication, financial management, quality assurance, procurement and contract administration work, the project team plans to hold a Steering Group (SG) meeting, preliminary set for 26 January. The meeting will bring together the key stakeholders, including the donor and the beneficiary, with the view to take stock of project progress, possible challenges, and the way forward. The meeting is proposed to take place online given the scattered location of various offices involved.

Similarly, the project team will prepare an interim narrative report covering the first six months of the project implementation and will submit it to the donor no later than the end of April, as per Grant Agreement. At that point, another Steering Group meeting is envisaged.

The last Steering Group meeting is to be held during the project closing event in August. On this occasion the equipment purchased in the project would be officially handed over to the beneficiary. The final project report is due in December 2024, and the team will proceed with its drafting upon project completion.

In the process of all the activities above, the project team will ensure proper visibility of the project through website news and project page, and acknowledge the donor contribution.

4. Cooperation

ICMPD has been present in Moldova since 2000 supporting actions in the sector on various aspects of migration and border management, and has been acting as both a grant provider and project implementer. Ever since, it has developed good professional relations and excellent cooperation with a variety of stakeholders on the ground – governmental, non-governmental and international.

The project implementation team benefitted from smooth cooperation with the national authorities, which built upon earlier working relations established especially during the pre-ceding Component 1 of the SCOP project. The contact with the Czech Embassy in Chisinau is well established, and the project team

is also constantly exchanging with other actors active in the sector such as EUBAM, Frontex, OSCE, etc, to avoid duplications and ensure synergies.

The project team gratefully acknowledges the fruitful cooperation, support and active involvement of the key beneficiary – the Border Police and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova.

5. Visibility

The following visibility measures were implemented during the reporting period:

- The project page on the ICMPD website has been created and essential information, including the summary description and workplan has been uploaded. The donor contribution is acknowledged. The page will continuously be populated with project proceedings as it progresses. Stakeholders are constantly being referred to the webpage for project information and updates.
- The news about the project kick-off event has been published on the ICMPD website and re-posted on social media. Reference to the donor contribution has been made. The news has been shared with the stakeholders – including the donor and beneficiary, for their own external communication purposes.
- Donor logo and project information is customarily included in project materials such as project summary description, presentations, agendas, terms of reference, technical specifications, requests for offer, etc.

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