

## FACT SHEET

### **Education for All - Fast Track Initiative and the Early Childhood Development Program in Moldova**

#### **Moldova Early Childhood Development Program**

- The Moldova Education Sector Program was endorsed in 2005 by the Education for All - Fast Track Initiative (EFA FTI), a global partnership to ensure that all children receive quality basic education. A US\$ 8.8 million grant was allocated in 2006 to support an Early Childhood Development program (ECD). The grant is implemented by the Ministry of Education and the Moldova Social Investment Fund in cooperation with UNICEF and the World Bank. It aims to provide children in Moldova better access to quality ECD programs.
- The grant supported the renovation of 65 preschool institutions throughout the country and the supply of various teaching materials to about 600 preschool institutions, including two centers for children with special needs. It also supported the training of 6,000 managers and teaching staff (57 percent of total).
- Overall access of children to ECD programs has increased from a gross enrollment rate (GER) Access of children to ECD programs has increased from 61 percent in 2003 to 75 percent in 2009, and in rural areas, from 51 percent in 2003 to 66 percent in 2009\*. In total, 20,000 more children enrolled in pre-primary education from 2003 to 2009. Children left out of preschool education are often from the most vulnerable groups: the poor, those living in rural areas, ethnic and linguistic minorities, children with disabilities, and those with migrant parents. Therefore, the government – in collaboration with the World Bank and UNICEF – developed new ECD policies including a new child-centered curriculum, professional standards for educators, and didactic materials that are inclusive of vulnerable groups. All preschools in the country are in the process of applying these new policy instruments.
- In May 2009, Moldova was elected as a member of the EFA FTI Board of Directors. The position is held by the Minister of Education.

#### **Cucuruzeni Village Kindergarten Rehabilitation** *(site of the visit of World Bank President Zoellick on August 11, 2010)*

- There are currently 123 children of pre-school age in Cucuruzeni, with every 4<sup>th</sup> child coming from a vulnerable family. About 73 children aged 4 to 7 need access to pre-school education according to the data provided by the Ministry of

Education. The existing kindergarten built in 1976 was operational until 1991 when floods substantially damaged the building. After some repairs, the kindergarten was re-opened and partially continued to provide services for another 3-4 years. It was closed afterwards due to lack of funds for its reconstruction.

- The kindergarten rehabilitations will allow 68 children aged 3-7 to benefit from pre-school education, while fifty younger children (up to 3-years old) will get access to early childhood education services.
- The project (approximately US\$ 100,000) is a joint effort, and includes contributions from local communities, the public administration through the Moldova Social Investment Fund, and funding from EFA – FTI.
- Besides a place for young children to learn, the ECD project will bring new employment to the town of Cucuruzeni – 25 temporary full-time jobs during reconstruction works and 14 kindergarten full-time jobs. About 820 households with children in the village will benefit directly and indirectly from the project, and a public association will be established to oversee development and maintenance of the facilities.

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