

# **Report on the Learning Route in the Republic of Moldova**

## **Promoting agriculture, women empowerment, youth, knowledge management, and best practices through Learning Route**

### **October 11-17, 2021**



The Republic of Moldova, 2021



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**Project website:**

<https://mel.cgiar.org/projects/SKiM>



Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas

**Project portal:**

<https://knowledgemanagementportal.org>



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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

**CALM** – Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova

**CPIU-IFAD** - Consolidated Programme Implementation Unit of the International Fund for Agricultural Development

**ICARDA** - The International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas

**CSO** – Civil Society Organization

**IDIS “Viitorul”** - The Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) “Viitorul”

**IFAD** – International Fund for Agricultural Development

**KM** – Knowledge Management

**LAG** – Local Action Group

**NARS** - National Agricultural Research Systems

**ODIMM** – Organization for small and medium enterprises sector development

**PIU** - Project Implementation Unit

**RM** – Republic of Moldova

**SAUM** - State Agricultural University of Moldova

**SKiM** - Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia, and Europe

**UN Women** - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

## Keywords

Knowledge management, capacity development, innovation, case study, research and development, knowledge sharing, SKiM, best practices, learning route

## Introduction

This report was elaborated within the “Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM)” grant project led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project also collaborates with international partners, such as CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR, Virginia Tech as well as National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), governments, and agricultural extension services in Moldova, Morocco, and Sudan.

The project was initiated in June 2018 and facilitates and supports the growth of knowledge management (KM) and capacity development activities in the three selected countries (Moldova, Morocco, Sudan), providing practical examples of KM best practices for analysis and adoption by participating institutions.

The overall goal of the project is to develop effective and long-term knowledge management-related capacities in target countries. This will be undertaken through effective knowledge generation and sharing approaches that ensure improved knowledge management and results measurement for rural poverty reduction purposes.

The objectives of this work include:

- assessing capacity and enhancing knowledge management skills of key rural institutions and other stakeholders in Moldova, Morocco, and Sudan.
- fostering and promoting knowledge exchange for in-country and trans-national partners to foster knowledge uptake, transfer, and management.

For the year 2021, it was decided to elaborate a Learning route in the Republic of Moldova (September 11-17, 2021). The best practices from the Republic of Moldova related to agriculture, women empowerment, youth and knowledge management were published and disseminated through the [sourcebook](#) based on five case studies. This new approach was contributed towards raising awareness in the Republic of Moldova on the importance of knowledge management as an asset for rural development, through peer-learning, knowledge sharing, and cooperation.

Learning Routes were introduced as key knowledge management and learning methodology. Learning Routes are a means to exchange knowledge between different participants and countries. This learning route has promoted agriculture, women empowerment, youth, knowledge management, and best practices from the Republic of Moldova. We have used the Learning Route Methodology of the Procasur Corporation ([PROCASUR](#)) that has been recognized, replicated, scaled up, and institutionalized over the years.

## The objectives



1. Share and exchange of practices and innovative experiences from the Republic of Moldova to participants from Sudan and Morocco related to agriculture, women empowerment, youth and knowledge management
2. Consolidate the human resources and increasing the social capital of beneficiaries
3. Add value to the accumulated knowledge of the executing organisms, IFAD projects, and the beneficiaries' organizations.

## Beneficiaries

Participants were selected on the grounds of their potential to act as agents of change within their organizations / institutions.

- 8 participants from Sudan from the following institutions: Agricultural Research Cooperation, University of Khartoum, Ministry Animal Resources, Sudanese Knowledge Society, Ahfad University for Women, LMRP/ IFAD, General Directorate of Technology Transfer and Knowledge Management for ARC Wadmedni, Agricultural Extension Technology Transfer
- 8 participants from Morocco from the following institutions: ONCA, INRA, IAV Hassan II, ENA-Meknès
- 16 participants from the Republic of Moldova from the following institutions: IDIS Viitorul, UCIP IFAD, SAUM, ZEL Ungheni Business, Research Institute for Field Crops Selectia, "La Prisaca", the cattle farm from Ungheni, the LAG Cula sub region, High Performance Orchard Sorocea
- 2 participants from ICARDA, one from Uzbekistan and one from Italy



**Direct beneficiaries of the Learning** route were 34 persons: 15 women and 19 men from the 19 institutions. From Sudan: 3 women and 5 men, from Morocco 3 women and 5 men, 1 men from Uzbekistan, 1 men from Italy, from Republic of Moldova 9 women and 7 men (see Annex 1).

The persons involved within the Learning Route have the following functions: General Directorate of technology and Knowledge transfer, Associate Professor University of Khartoum, Faculty of Agriculture, Vetrinian, Sudanese Knowledge Society PhD, Assistant Professor, Director of Engineering at ONCA, Scientific and research development at the Scientific Division, Professor, Expert in beekeeping, Professor, Expert Geomatics Science and Surveying, Head of Programming, M&E, Professor, Expert in animal breeding, Professor, Expert water resources management, SKIM project member Agricultural Research Cooperation, Deputy Director, Expert in economic and social sciences, Communication specialist, Specialist / researcher, beekeeper, farmer.

**The indirect beneficiaries** are all people who have access to the videos, resource book, press releases, the news, the pictures from the Learning route and can take some examples, ideas, lessons learned and apply in their institutions / organizations etc.





## Structure of the Learning route – On the road

The learning route was structured through 5 case cases presented by 4 beneficiaries / institutions from the Republic of Moldova.

Please find below the case name, who presented the case and what domains were covered:

Case name	Who presents the case	Domain			
		Agri-culture	Youth	Women empowerment	Knowledge management
Women empowerment and share best practices - Anthology of female success stories/knowledge management	Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) Viitorul, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova			X	X
Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with smart café	State Agricultural University of Moldova, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova		X		X
Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems.	Selectia Research Institute of Field Crops, Balti, Republic of Moldova	X			
Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse	IFAD beneficiary. La Prisaca, Lalova, Rezina, Republic of Moldova			X	
Cattle farm	IFAD beneficiary, Ungheni, Untesti, Republic of Moldova			X	

Within the [source book](#) but also during the Learning route the participants had the opportunity to hear and see the answer to the following questions (for each case).

-  Introduction. Background. Situation analysis. Past experience in the field
-  What is your history?

- ✚ Who are your target group and beneficiaries?
- ✚ Essence of the case study. What activities and results/achievements have been made? What are the tools applied to reach the purposes?
- ✚ How do you ensure visibility, promotion, and knowledge management?
- ✚ What are the sources of funding?
- ✚ What is your successful experience?
- ✚ What factors have facilitated and posed obstacles for the experience? What are the main challenges?
- ✚ What lessons can we draw? What can we learn from your experience?

Apart from these 5 cases, participants have visited additional 3 case studies where they were able to see and learn useful and interesting things:

1. High-Performance Orchard / Visit to the refrigerator for keeping fruit & drying plums, Soroca
2. Free economic zone, Ungheni
3. Local Action Grup “CULA Sub-region” and “Plaiul fagului” (“The Land of beeches”) state natural reserve, Ungheni

Please see below the main points from Agenda for face to face Learning Route in the Republic of Moldova (October 11-17, 2021)

Ist day	Arrival of participants
IIInd day	Opening ceremony / Welcome speech Introduction of participants and expectations Induction workshop for the Learning Route Review of agenda, objectives, ground rules Presentation of the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) “Viitorul” The experts’ panel. Invitation of the expert covering the subject: agriculture, economic development Presentation: IFAD programme in Moldova Fieldwork. Case study. Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with Smart Caffee at the State Agricultural University of Moldova, Chisinau
IIIrd day	Fieldwork. Case study. Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems. Visit of the experimental fields of “Selectia” Research Institute of Field Crops (Balti) Case summary workshop
IVth day	Fieldwork. Case study. Case study: Women’s empowerment and best practices sharing; Anthology of female success stories / knowledge management practices Fieldwork. Case study. Women empowerment. IFAD beneficiary. “La Prisaca” – Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse The experts’ panel. High-Performance Orchard, Soroca Visit to the refrigerator for keeping fruit & drying plums
Vth day	Fieldwork. Case study. Women empowerment. IFAD beneficiary. The cattle farm at Untesti, Ungheni Free economic zone, Ungheni

	Experts from Local Action Grup “CULA Sub-region” and “Plaiul fagului” (“The Land of beeches”) state natural reserve
VIth	Visiting the “Orheiul Vechi” (the “Old Orhei”) – the cultural-natural reserve at Trebujeni, Butuceni Closing workshop Systematization and dissemination of the results of the Route
VIIth day	Departure of participants



## **Learning from the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) “Viitorul” the case How to empower women and share best practices**

Within this case study, the target group and beneficiaries were women leaders involved in the social - economic activities in the regions, local representatives of municipalities from the Republic of Moldova, including regional development structures, civil society representatives, and the population of the regions, especially women.



The aim of the case / project was to support regional development by encouraging women's social and economic activities and integrating gender equality in local communities of the Republic of Moldova.

The specific objectives of the project were to:

- I. Evaluate and promote at the regional level women's activity with the best performances in the social and economic areas.
- II. Create and develop a regional network with the participation of women leaders and local public administration
- III. Promote the results of women involved in regional development (social and economic)

The partners were: Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania to the Republic of Moldova, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, the network of Women in the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM), Chamber for Commerce and Industry, Organization for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises and donors community (ODIMM), United Nation Development Program (UNDP), UN Women, women, civil society organizations (CSO), mass media, etc.

The central activities were: organizing the national contest; organizing the open days; designing, developing, and promoting fact sheets / online posters; organizing the National Awarding Ceremony with 60 participants for the Section: Female Entrepreneurship and the Section: Community leadership

In just 10 days, 53 success stories were collected from women from all regions of the country. The best practices were selected based on the selection criteria (initiative, innovation, efficiency, relevance, partnership, efficient resource management, impact, and sustainability).

The examples of successful activities included organic farming, education and counseling, IT services, founder of the “Lefrucom” fruit and vegetable dryer, a company that patented dried pickles, production, recreation, the woman who created the “Ecolocal” Farmers Market in Moldova, community involvement and development projects, volunteering, social services, promoting local traditions, and the list goes on.

At the round table the participants spoke about the opportunities and constraints facing Moldovan women and proposed a series of policy recommendations for a fair society.

Through the project, we had an impact on the personal and professional development of women by helping them communicate with women from other regions, exchange their good and innovative practices, access finances, find partners inside and outside the country, etc.

For the women from all regions of Moldova, the participation in the project brought:

- recognition of women’s social and economic activities at local, regional, and national level;
- the opportunity to get feedback and recommendations on the achieved achievements;
- rewarding successes through recognition;
- exchange of experience with other active women in the Republic of Moldova.



Participants have learnt from this experience how to:

- empower women and to promote and encourage women in social, political and economic activities
- evaluate and promote at the regional level women’s activity with the best performances in the social and economic areas

- create and develop a regional network with the participation of women leaders and local public administration
- made known the remarkable experience and results of women, stimulated the motivation to produce innovations and changes in the community
- promote the results of women involved in regional development (social and economic)
- raise public awareness on gender balance in the political and business sectors
- support, empower and enable newly elected women
- enhance the capacities of women
- motivate women and minority ethnic groups to participate in social, economic and political life
- strengthen the skills of women leaders from underrepresented groups and to advocate and to promote gender equality
- to identify, appreciate, promote and disseminate the best practices
- inspire and to implement successful and performant models share knowledge, skills, and experience
- create innovations and bring changes in local and regional communities and healthy competition among women with remarkable successes.

### **Learning from the State Agricultural University of Moldova about the specific of university and how their involve youth and knowledge management and how work the open innovations with smart café**

The project „Fostering University-Enterprise Cooperation and Entrepreneurship of Students via Smart Caffes” no. 585620-EPP-1- 2017-1-ELEPPKA2-CBHE-JP was implementing at the State Agrarian University of Moldova (SAUM) in the period November 2017 - October 2021. Project aimed to enhance innovativeness of companies, advance employment, self-employment potential of graduates from Eastern Partnership countries by fostering students’ entrepreneurship, creation of business start-ups at university settings and open innovation in collaboration between universities and enterprises.



The project's specific objectives were:

SO1: Increase the teaching and learning capacity the universities of the Republic of Moldova, including SAUM, Armenia and Georgia by means of the best practice of the Programme Countries on entrepreneurship, digital, communication and artistic/self-expression education;

SO2: Foster the infrastructure of co-creative hubs which support students who generate, develop, and market their own innovative ideas through entrepreneurship and open innovation in three Eastern Partnership countries;

SO3: Improve students' entrepreneurial behaviours, skills, as well as mind-sets of future start-ups and support recently incorporated companies in university settings;

SO4: Introduce and implement the new and innovative form of interconnection of university-enterprise systems through joint activities.

SO5: Increase the involvement of students who do not automatically come into contact with entrepreneurial studies and enhance problem-based learning, entrepreneurial skills, behaviors, and mind-sets through the interdisciplinary approach by revising of curricula and dissemination events.

Through this experience participants have learnt how to:

- improve the educational experience of students in general and prepare them for an active role in the labor market.
- develop of new products, services, or functions;
- adopt of new technologies and digital transformation;
- establish partnerships with innovative start-ups;
- talent search by testing professional expertise and soft skills of potential new employees in the real-life environment;
- boost own team's creativity;
- collect original ideas for the company's new marketing strategies and communication campaigns, etc.





### Learning from the Selecția Research Institute of Field Crops, Balti about agriculture

By visiting the Selecția participants have gained knowledge on:

- proper soil management
- knowledge of good agricultural practices that contributing to obtaining high yields while minimizing costs for external inputs and reducing environmental pollution
- the influence of different crop rotation, fertilization systems, soil tillage and irrigation on soil fertility and crop production
- knowledge in the field of organic agriculture
- finding alternative ways for involvement of forage crops in rotation, including perennial legumes and grasses, is important for sustainable development of agriculture
- crop rotations enrich deeper soil layers with organic matter and increase crops' resilience to droughts.
- the conservation agriculture cannot provide expected results without structural changes in the whole farming system etc.



Scientists from Sudan, Morocco, Italy, Uzbekistan and the Republic of Moldova visited the Research Institute Balti and were studied what measures should be taken so that, even in drought conditions, they can produce quantitatively and qualitatively, without damaging the soil.

For more than 60 years, the Research Institute of Field Crops "Selectia" from Balti, has been dealing with the creation and multiplication of new varieties of field crops, but also with the improvement of sustainable agricultural systems, and also ecologic. To ensure sustainable development, the scientists are also working to improve soil quality.

As regards the correct soil management, because the results they have obtained here was of great interest to them, they talk about irrigation impact, what is the influence of fertilization, soil cultivation, crop rotation, both on production and fertility levels.

Selectia has shared experience how to create conditions for produce qualitatively and quantitatively, how the new technologies could be adapted, so that practices can be used in arid countries as well.

The scientists concluded that in order to straighten the situation, joint efforts are needed to lead to a change in the way of doing agriculture, not only in the Republic of Moldova, but all over the world.



The guests were very interested in sustainable agricultural experiences. They are interested in the genetic material developed in our conditions. We, on the other hand, are interested in the genetic material from Africa, such as Morocco and Sudan. The grass in Sudan is very resistant to drought, which has been harming us more and more often in recent years. There is a global trend now to look for alternative ways to intensify agriculture and without joint efforts, we will not achieve the expected results.

To date, the Selectia Institute from Balti has created over 370 hybrid varieties for the field crops that are successfully grown in the Republic of Moldova, but also in other countries of the world.

At the same time, the institution has developed 14 new high-performance technologies for cultivating field crops, so that the arable lands in our country ensure a high level of production.



### **Learning from IFAD beneficiary, La Prisaca, Lalova, Rezina about beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse**

After about 15 years spent abroad and several more years at the helm of his hometown, Mihail Gotornicean a countryside music teacher, decided to make his passion for bees a way of living. Several years ago, he received as a gift from an old man from the village 3 bee families, which, over the years, he had multiplied. When the garden next to the house was no longer enough and in order not to endanger the neighbors, he decided together with his wife Ms. Ludmila Gotornicean to set up a farm on a leased land, to develop a business in agro-tourism.

Through the IFAD Program, they built a hall with a honey processing laboratory with a centrifuge and a space for the exhibition of products.

Also, within the project, 4 houses were built. The houses are not for rest, but for a special type of therapy, which uses the hum and energy of the bees. These are wooden houses with beds located right on the beehives. As the insects work producing honey, they transmit energy and vitality to patients without stinging.

Taking into account the fact that they needed a space for themselves, but also a place for presentation of bee products, they decided to expand. Thus, they built and arranged a traditional-style house with a room for accommodation of guests and a large terrace to serve tea made of medicinal plants grown on the territory.

The couple has also built a cellar, where they can preserve macerated foods, wine, and also canned special plums from Lalova that are registered in the National Register of Protected Geographical Indicators.



On the territory, several species of trees have been planted, as well as several species of medicinal plants and in 2021 they built a greenhouse where they grow their own decorative flowers and vegetables, and also a space for preparing dishes over an open fire.

The family business will not stop here. Gotornicean family is planning to increase the number of accommodation places and set up a campsite, build a swimming pool, a rainwater collection system, an irrigation system, and other.



Participants have learnt from this experience how to:

- set up a farm, lease land, and develop a business in agro-tourism
- develop rural tourism through apitherapy and other related activities, etc.
- satisfy a wide range of interests for all types of age, gender, and areas in one place
- access and implement IFAD-funded projects
- Participate and promote own products within national big events
- be motivated and like what you do
- motivate people to love nature, to love bees, rural tourism, to come to the countryside

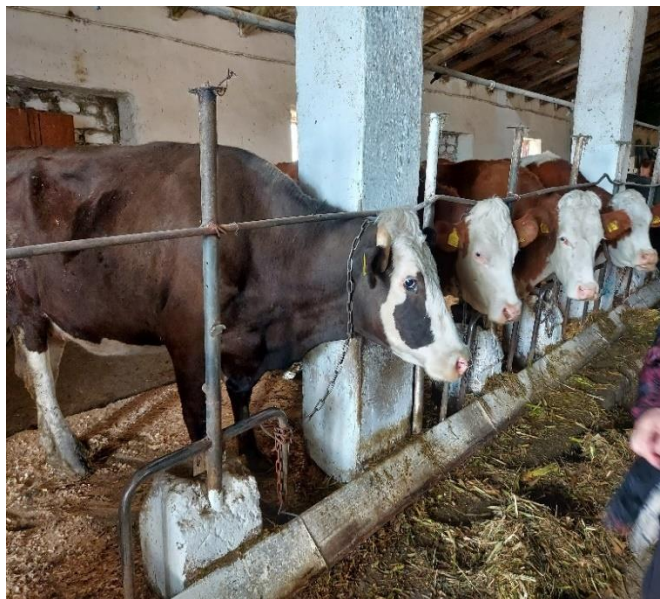
### **Learning from IFAD beneficiary, Ungheni, Untești, Republic of Moldova the case about the cattle farm**

Elena Cojocar and her husband are the people who grew up in the countryside and knew what it means to take care of animals.

In 2017 they decided to open a new business. They bought an old hall in the village, which several years ago was a cow farm and was the only one in the whole complex that was not destroyed.

They first bought a few cows from the people in the village, but they failed to get the results they expected. They started to get informed, to see which are the most suitable breeds for a business like this and so they ended up taking a loan to add to the received grant, in order to buy dairy cattle.

They bought Simmental and Holstein cows, which give 15-16 liters of milk by a single milking, but of course such outputs depend very much on the type of feeding. The cows are raised exclusively for milk, and to have quality milk they are fed with balanced fodder.



Ms. Elana Cojocar is both owning and renting land. There are about 60 hectares to produce the amount of necessary fodder, with increased quantities for the winter.

For their business to extend and reach the number of cows they currently have, they needed support and, first of all, financial resources (from projects, partnerships but also loans).

In order to grow, they decided to use the grant offered by IFAD, which they obtained at the beginning of 2018 - a grant in the amount of 280 thousand lei, from which they purchased some of the animals. Once the number of cows increased, they also needed more space to store the milk. Thus, they bought a refrigerator so that they could store and cool the milk they sell wholesale to a processing factory in the Calarasi district.

Subsequently, from the financial resources obtained from a Bank, they managed to procure a second-hand tractor so that they could process the land. They also bought a second-hand mill, to grind and obtain the fodder for their cattle.

Participants have learnt from this experience how to:

- open a new business
- get information, to see which are the most suitable breeds for a business
- take a loan to add to an existing grant from the bank
- increase the amount of necessary fodder
- solve the problem of storage and cool the milk
- discuss / negotiate with milk processing companies in order to procure the raw material (milk)
- use the grant offered by IFAD
- develop and move towards the business model they are envisaging
- be aware that no business evolves without difficulties, but difficulties make you stronger



### **Learning from additional 3 case studies**

The participants have visited additional 3 case studies where they were able to see and learn useful and interesting things:

#### **High-Performance Orchard / Visit to the refrigerator for keeping fruit & drying plums, Soroca**

On 14 October 2021, the delegations from Sudan and Morocco visited several objectives situated in the Soroca District. First of all, they were invited to visit an apple orchard focused on high-quality products for export markets. There, the participants in the program learned the methods in order to obtain a high yield of competitive quality. They have been shown the technologies employed at all stages of the production process and have learned what are the key moments at which the agricultures pay attention during these stages. They have also observed the types of machinery and installations used to cultivate the land, spray the trees against pests, and protect the plants against hailstones.

Next, the participants visited a storage facility equipped with refrigerators. There they learned about the conditions in which the harvest is stored, ie the levels of humidity and temperature, as well as the period in which the fruits can be properly stored without losing nutritional value.

After that, the delegation visited a factory specialized in drying plums, where they witnessed the working process during all stages and spoke with the workers who offered additional details on the standard procedures.



### Free economic zone, Ungheni

In 2002, in the industrial area of Ungheni City was founded the Free Economic Zone “Ungheni-Business”. The strategic geographical location of the economic zone favors the attraction of domestic and foreign investments. Being situated on the border with the EU, it increased the interest of the foreign investors, and the location in the northwest of the city of Ungheni with

access to railway, makes possible the connection between the north, center and the south of the Republic and also with other countries.

There are 36 active residents in the Free Zone with investments in various sectors, where the whole necessary infrastructure already exists for business development (access to local and international highways, track access to European and Russian type, water supply, sewage systems, telecommunications and heat charge, gas, electricity, warehouses).



The “Ungheni-Business” FEZ territory operates companies in various fields such as: electronic, clothing, automotive, textiles, services, foreign trade. Investments come from both the country and abroad, such as the Netherlands, Cyprus, Italy, France, Lebanon, Belgium, Canada, etc.



### Local Action Grup (LAG) “CULA Sub-region” and “Plaiul fagului” (“The Land of beeches”) state natural reserve, Ungheni

Local action group (LAG) - a non-profit organization that is created on the basis of a territorial partnership, established at local level between the public, civic and entrepreneurial sector, with the status of legal person, non-profit, in order to develop and implement strategies local development under the LEADER approach, and in which none of the three sectors can have more than 49% of the voting rights at decision-making level.

The implementation of the LEADER approach in the Republic of Moldova has started in 2016. Various organizations, which work for local development, have been carrying out the facilitating process of the LAGs creation.



The innovative character of LEADER can be seen as a way to promote the development of new solutions for organizing local/rural societies. This innovation is to (re)discover local resources by the community and fructify them with new knowledge and technologies. It is fostering change-making to reinvent local prosperity. The extended local impetus of change, the rethought community actions by newly created partnerships and newly added value to local products and services mean that the local community responds more effectively than was previously possible to old and new development opportunities and constraints.



Also, the participants had the opportunity to get acquainted with the socio-economic situation, to know the history, traditions, and culture but also to see picturesque landscapes in the Republic of Moldova, for example:

- Chisinau is the capital and largest city of the Republic of Moldova
- Soroca Fortress
- The cultural, natural and landscape reserve "Old Orhei" includes a series of historical and cultural monuments and natural landscapes in the gorge of Raut River.
- The Trebujeni landscape reservation
- The wine cellars of S. „Pivnitele Branesti”
- The “Stone Age” tourist complex
- “Plaiul fagului” state natural reserve



## Participants' feedback

The Learning Route was organized around successful experiences, cases, and practices of the project partners (IDIS, SUAM, Selectia and IFAD), in which the local users and operators become facilitators. By organizing discussions, meeting workshops, conversations, and field activities, the route creates a space of individual and group learning for the visitors from Sudan and Morocco. Therefore, the impact of the Learning Routes is evaluated by its contribution to multiply and facilitate the adoption of the best solutions that expand the access of new and improved development services for the population.

Please find below the participants feedback at the final workshop and also from different messages:

*“I came from Sudan to Moldova. I saw that at this institute (Selectia) people work hard to get results and performance in agriculture, which is what we do as well in the country where I am coming from. We are scientists in the field of agriculture. We want to take the practice from here, it is a very good one. The methodology developed by Moldovan scientists is meant to reduce climate risks.”*

*“It is a pleasure to visit the Republic of Moldova. I'm here for the first time, on a study visit. We have the opportunity to learn good practices, including those related to crop rotation and soil protection. I saw that a lot of research work is being done here. It is important to protect our soil, as the earth in a teaspoon contains more microorganisms than there are people on the globe.”*

*“Beside the opportunity to visit Moldova and meet representatives from the various national and local stakeholders, we have really acquired valuable knowledge, experience and best practices in the fields of Agriculture, Forestry, business development and women empowerment. We were lucky to have the Moroccan group as part of this significant event enriching the process with their experiences and joy. We appreciate the role played by IDIS team and we are so thankful for the warm welcome and the generous hospitality we have had throughout our stay in Moldova and looking forward for future collaboration and networking in the related fields of development”.*

*“I thank you very much for organizing the learning route in your beautiful country Moldova. It was both rich and fun. The complementary diversity of the different axes that we explored during the program is for me the first richness of the workshop. A second interest consists in knowing your experience in promoting the agricultural sector through the involvement of your institution IDIS and the establishment of a support program, such as the IFAD program. A third richness is the meeting of a multidisciplinary team from several countries which is interested in promoting and enhancing the agricultural sector.*

*We can only be grateful to you and all directors, researchers, experts and farmers who have honored us with their very interesting presentations. I would like to thank Akmal, Sanaa,*

*ICARDA, IDIS and SKIM project for allowing us to engage in this workshop. I also thank Valerio, Maria and Mickael for their participation and their logistical support. And finally I thank my dear colleagues from Morocco and Sudan. Of course we had a good scientific exchange but we had a great and funny time”.*

*“On the behalf of Sudan Skim Program me I would like to share with you some of the photos and our highly impressive opinion about the Learning route of the Republic of Moldova and we gained and shared a lot from it especially that we were with our partners’ project country from Morocco. We spent a very interesting period we are going to reflect on that experience when we return back to Sudan. We will be glad to share our learnt experience in a soon to be event in Khartoum.”*

*“This event led to a strong network and provided venue for all members to share information and knowledge.”*

*“I would like to have this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to you Carolina, Dr. Akmal, IDIS, ICARDA, IFAD and the Authority of the Republic of Moldova for your generous hospitality, well organization of the programs and for your excellent cooperation with the different institutions that we visited which lead to the successful of the Learning-Route.”*

*“We really learned a lot. We hope to convey what we have learned to our community”.*

*“It has been a wonderful experience seeing so much of Moldova context while having the participants face the protagonists of the country development. The atmosphere has been positive and proactive, internal exchanges among the participants have been consistent and genuine.”*

*“I like the idea of the smart coffee, how to make to the networking. I like the idea to have the production like the small thing is done for the small room we can get through this, too as a therapy. I really like this idea because the foreigners are people, they have the small projects that they need to take advantage of every small products he has there. The visit of the Selectia when he spoke about conservation agriculture. I feel that he was really speaking from the bottom of his heart because he loves what he's doing. And the perseverance to arrive to something is needed also in our country when we feel this, when he made this experimentation, and he's sure about the razor pennies just to show this to farmer and he says that it's not very easy to change the mind of the farmer, if you have some bad attitude, and so on, but it needs time. For the upper tree, it was pretty impressive about the high quality of his production, about all the practices, we do have you work with the same thing like this kind of production, like we have also some small farmers who use the old practices, but we don't have also the same so it was pretty impressive.”*

*“I'll be getting your LAG idea and we will incorporate in our papers for the students and we will promote and share this experience”.*

“Thank you very much. Actually, I must say that this learning route succeeded really. We thank you for having given us an opportunity, really, to know, to see these types of practices and experiences. I got some inferences, some lessons from your experience, like: conservation, forestry, ecotourism, how to protect for the purpose of environment and of tourism and of conservation in the meantime, and the involvement of different stakeholders in order to sustain the protection. Also was interesting the idea of the role and empowerment of women. The reflection on this aspect is very important, as we also were involved in working for the empowerment of women and giving them the capacities. I think to some important lessons that can be discussed with my colleagues back at home, and even especially the motivation, involvement of youth and women and the issue of the contest in order to bring the best success stories and best practices. And also a really benefits from the visit is conservation on farming practices. The soil, the organic aspects is very important. In Sudan also despite the big areas we haven't, despite the amount of support that we have, we use fertilization. So, this is a point that I also took that I can discuss. Thank you very much. I appreciate this”.

“Thank you. The most important things we have learned here is from the presentation about women empowerment, how to involve within the community women, the role of women in the decision-making process, in the government, and how they can take decision according to the welfare of the community and to promote equality. I think some factors have been behind the moment for democracy, in which you women are the main factors, for example, is it a matter of education within cultural society or other factors should be considered when you would like to empowerment (women in Sudan, Morocco, Moldova). So, there is vertical integration, even those who believe that milk cattle they grow, they don't buy forage. There is vertical integration. This is very important. Thank you.”

“What I liked so much about this learning route, in the local action group. In Sudan, we have the development committees, we have a community-based organization, we have the so-called farmer association and a farmer and pastoralist production groups, professionals etc. But this is the first time that I have learnt about action groups, is very important, and it will lay the groundwork for exchanging benefits of goodwill from programs that are what I understood really, and that what we need really, in this rural area which need to integrate among themselves. I think it's a good idea.”

“I would like also to thank you for the organization. It was very well organized and we thank you very much for the care you provided to us. It's really impressed for all the efforts we did, and concerning the learning route even the word learning route is important for us, especially for us as involved in extension or teaching or things like that, even we can apply this example for me as a professor in the Institute. It is need for our students to do some knowledge transfer and learning route and we can look something like that: going from one ecosystem to another and show to student's different cases, for example, for animal production, poultry, dairy, beef and so on. So, they can have broad any knowledge and vision about the different production systems and they can exchange with the farm. So even this is a good idea for teaching. Our ecosystem reservation is an important component here, and we can see all over the country, but specially in the site we visited and do some integration between ecosystem integration and some production. For

example, like beekeeping for ecosystem, which is a good idea. And also, the other keyword is diversification. And for example, for the beekeeping, for example, apitherapy which is a nice idea and easy to apply and implement. That's the second and also for some technical aspects really specific to specialize. For example, for me, it was an opportunity to know about segmental bread. So, it's some ideas you can think about in the future and other things like, for example conservation, because in our head it's always nitrogen, phosphor and potassium. And the person who talks about soil, he insisted on carbon, a very important component for the soil, no ceiling and things like that, which is very important for us. And I think that about we discussed with our colleagues back home in the future.”

“For me, I practice four pillar of knowledge. First of all, to creation knowledge by education, training, tacit or exhibit knowledge. So, what we get this by learning by doing the main practice of this when we visit pharma, in soil. I say in party. The second pillar is secularization this knowledge. The third one is transfer. The last one is innovation system. So, all this pillar we have got from this learning route. Thank you very much. Thank you for Republic of Moldova”.

“I am happy that I have the opportunity to travel to different countries, where each thing is new experience.”

“I would like to thank you, was very interesting learning route, different activities, different aspects and various good practices, also. Was interesting to learn about the national program to improve the diversity system”

“Regarding the approach, it's the first time for me to experience this learning route. I think I will take deepen my knowledge in this approach. I think it's something to scale up in my country also. Regarding the topics, nothing was new for me. I am in touch with all the topics but the perspective was different, it's something refreshing and it's invited to think differently, how to approach all those topics of rural development for agricultural developments.”

“I learned a lot from this short time. From knowledge management point of view, I think this is a very, very, very nice and very valuable chance to have an idea about the Moldavian experience.”

“First of all, I would like to thank you for the schedule with a lot of activities in Moldova. As I work between reason and development, I think it's a good opportunity to cooperate with advanced knowledge. I appreciate, also, the integration of psychological assistance for women employment, because in our projects we focus only on technical assistance. But I think the most important thing, especially in our society, is to give confidence to woman.”

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Learning route, the participants were given evaluation questionnaires (also for qualitative assessment) and participants shared their opinion related to information and case studies.

In this context, the participants had the opportunity to provide their feedback on the learning route. A great majority of the participants evaluated the learning route very positively.

### **Opinion of the participants related to the things of the Learning Route from Moldova that they found most useful and interesting**

- Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women by the encouragement of women to participate directly or indirectly in social, political and economic activities.
- The development of rural tourism through apitherapy and other related activities (accommodation / reception of guests, tea made of medicinal plants, built a cellar, where they can taste macerated preserved foods, wine, honey processing laboratory and a space for the exhibition of products, etc.).
- The will and perseverance of a small rural family made it possible to create a cattle farm business while seeking to develop it more and more.
- The study case 2 of our learning route titled “Youth and knowledge management. Open innovations with Smart Caffe”
- The study case 3 of our learning route titled “Agriculture. Developing new field crop varieties, producing foundation seed, developing environmentally-friendly technologies, developing new, sustainable agricultural systems”
- The study case 4 titled “development of rural tourism through apitherapy and other related activities (beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, centrifugal honey extraction, greenhouse, etc.)”
- On-job meeting with country developers, workers and entrepreneurs.
- Clockwork organization adapting to participants needs.
- Cross-sector perspective, from agricultural to industrial and financial.
- Farm management for community investment and women empowerment; - Enhancing the role of stakeholders, to promote development; - Networking and knowledgesharing with IDIS and Morocco;
- Smart Caffe; - Apitherapy and beekeeping; - Women empowerment;
- La prisaca – honey collection and processing; - Cattle farm; - Natural reservation of animal and tree;
- La prisaca – Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey; - Apple farm; - Natural reservation of animal and tree;
- Smart caffe; - The beekeeping project; - The field farm school;
- Women empowerment project; - Smart caffe; - Apiculture project;
- Implication / pressure of civil society; - The gender approach and economic empowerment of women; - Integrated project / honey production and ecotourism;
- Diversity of knowledge Actors & Sources; - (Diversity of) Plane of the women on the knowledge system; - Richness of cultural of Moldova;
- Local action group & natural reservation in Ungheni, Radenii Vechi; - Youth & knowledge management (smart caffe); - Cattle farm;
- Women empowerment; - The case of honey production; - The women financed by IFAD for cattle farm;
- New type of learning; - More experience;
- Bee caring and honey production; - Intensification of apple production; - Institute of Field Crops Research;
- The action groups; - The reservation area; - Women entrepreneurship.

## **Opinion of the participants related to the knowledge have they gained from the Learning Route in Moldova**

- How to design and provide training, coaching, and support for women to create or improve her own company (or association) especially in rural area. How to work on the sustainability of monitoring the women's businesses evolution.
- How you can motivate people to love nature, to love bees, rural tourism, to come to the countryside by simple and original ways
- How to open a new business of cattle farm despite of the financial difficulties and how to use correctly the grant offered by CPIU IFAD
- How to adopt of new technologies and digital transformation to promote the open innovation, start-ups and creativity products or tools
- How to preserve a good agricultural practice that contributing to obtaining high yields while minimizing costs for external inputs and reducing environmental pollution;
- How to promote rural tourism by an attractive and cheap action (such as apitherapy) that can provide more income to the farmer through a good sale of these products
- Development conditions need to be met/provided systematically.
- Development actors are willing to undergo risks if backed up long term.
- Development plans are meant to balance possibilities and conditions horizontally for developers to create a living network
- Private sector role in development; How to open a new business; - Good agricultural practices for yield increase; - Women empowerment / enhancing women capacities;
- We learned that it is possible to integrate “production issues” (here beekeeping) in ecological system; - The concept of learning route itself is interesting to implement in domains such as academics, for students in agronomic institute;
- Processing of honey; - Storage of milk; - Sleeping with bee;
- Irrigation systems; - Processing of honey;
- The enhancement of the production (case study of beekeeping); - The perseverance to success; - The importance to diversify customers;
- Diversification of activities in apiculture (apitherapy, aromatic and medicinal plants ...); - The history of economy of Moldova;
- Mechanisms that allowed grant and loan to farmers based on criteria that promote sustainable development; - Learning route as approach + sharing experiences;
- Ecotourism as most important tool of rural development; - Integrate project & Familial; - Importance of sustainable approach;
- Sharing & building capacities of money: – Local action group is an impressing and learning experience that we could replicate in the different rural areas of Sudan and students could be trained in local cooperative, they will promote for the idea in their places;
- The process of IDIS to involve the beneficiaries in decision making to enforce authorities in planning for population wellbeing; - How we can begin small and grow bigger; - One can try an entrepreneurship; fail, then fail then an success;
- Tacit learning; - Learning by doing;
- Agriculture in Moldova; - Free business areas, e.g. Carpets factory; - Agricultural research;
- Other function: bee namely as a cure for nervous people; - Avoid application of chemical fertilizers.

### **Opinion of the participants related to the best practices within the Learning Route that can be taken over and implemented in Sudan / Morocco**

- Promoting the Farm field school especially for women in rural area
- Developing rural tourism through apitherapy
- Understanding the good practices to improve cow's milk production
- Develop the digital tools for the promotion of research work and innovative actions such as SMART Caffé concept.
- keep in direct contact with the Research Institute of Field Crops was founded in Balti to elaborate a crop protection workflow,
- Promoting the rural tourism by several practical ideas which can provide others revenues to farmer.
- I suppose that an organism like IDIS, capable of bridging civil society, government, research and economy could be nested in Sudan – networking and assessing for reality-based recommendations is surely a best practice.
- The FEZ takeaway for me is that development needs pressure relief – I would probably apply this to Community and Networking strengthening by providing purpose instead of objectives.
- The financial backing measures we have come to know have much in common with SKiM country KM strategy – I think SKiM partners should keep receiving support for their autonomous initiatives in KM, with the opportunity to link with other practitioners' cross-context.
- Nature conservation, managing reserves for ecotourism, beehives; - Conservation Agriculture, Organic farming, Soil improvement, Crops rotation; - Enhancing the role of women and youth best practices / success stories;
- Another beekeeping activity may be of interest for Morocco: Apitherapy; - The Simmental breed of cattle is not used in Morocco. It is according to the cattle farm owner, resistant to harsh conditions, which are prevalent in Morocco; - Soil conservation techniques are very relevant and need to be implemented in Morocco;
- Method of collection milk and storage;
- Irrigation systems of apple;
- No tillage practice; - Bee therapy; - Produce juice from fallen apples;
- Psychology assistance for women empowerment; - Proposal for projects for rural population that can be funded; - Take advantage of student who succeed their career for the benefit of student;
- Gender approach (funding); - Participatory approach (Bottom/Up); - Natural reserve preservation;
- Participative approach; - Gender approach; - Diversity of knowledge platforms;
- Local action group;
- The case of honey production; - The case of cattle milk raising; - The case of the virtual library;
- Learning by doing; - Exhibit learning has been gained; - How manage projects;
- Carpet manufacturing; - Fruits storage system; - Women empowerment projects;
- Formation of action groups; - Conservation of natural resources.

### Opinion and recommendation of participants for improvement the next learning route

- “Maybe in the future, to include at least one known investor to be part of the program in order to have connection with entrepreneurs, agricultural research institutes, academic”
- “I have three suggestions. I think that first of all there are need an introduction about Moldova itself, but about geography, economy, social income, population number and so forth, and the political system. The second thing is about knowledge sharing. The second thing is that we emphasize much on scientific knowledge. I think it is very important because scientific knowledge, as well as others, are needed for development. It is very, very important exchange of knowledge between Sudan, Morocco and from Moldova. The third thing, I think it be better to adopt the innovation platforms, which will bring all people together. And this means that you should adopt the value chain. I think that will enhance their economic position and make them earn a lot of money instead of just produce raw material and sell it directly to others. I think it's better to learn how to process how to market and these kinds of things.”
- “Maybe in the future, in the next learning route will be appropriate to invite the investors. For example we were on our free economic zone and matching get in touch with the other investor or something like that, just for investments purposes. And the other things for example, get in touch with the ministry or some institutions, maybe we can share some presentations about agricultural policy of each country. Each country presents his political program for agriculture, about development and also for Knowledge Management. How do the knowledge and how the support of the government is to say?”
- More time for discussion. For example for my part there is need more time to discuss with Mr. Veaceslav Ionita, So, there are different important questions that we need to discuss with him, especially related to cooperative association and their impact on the farmer situation and about brokers in the Moldova society and what are the impact on the economy.
- Something that is missing, mainly, maybe here in Moldova, in agriculture, and also for the carpet factory. What is needed is to get more customers, and to make a very good business plan, and to search for potential customers in all over the word. Because when you lose a customer and you don't have another one, you don't have production, like for the wine, they said there is a problem we just sent to China, why not do for others of us other customers. So that is needed. Also, for the carpet, they say we work just now for Japan production we have just an order from Japan. I've just sent a picture to my brother, he is an engineers, and he said, wow, I'd like to make collaboration, sensitive prices glued and so on, he said we don't know this, because it always traveled to China to import products.

## **Social Media Outreach**

<http://www.viitorul.org/ro/content/o-delega%C8%9Bie-din-maroc-%C8%99i-sudan-se-afl%C4%83-%C3%AEEn-republica-moldova-pentru-acumula-experien%C8%9B%C4%83-%C8%99i>

<http://www.ucipifad.md/noutati/o-delegatie-din-maroc-si-sudan-se-afla-in-republica-moldova-pentru-a-acumula-experienta-si-a-studia-cele-mai-bune-practici-prin-intermediul-unui-instrument-nou-de-invatare/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/133217178420/posts/10159618408358421/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/133217178420/posts/10159632557653421/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/UASMOficial/>

<https://www.uasm.md/ru/noutati/delegatia-din-maroc-si-sudan-in-vizita-la-uasm>

<http://www.freezone-ungheni.md/ro/news>

[https://m.facebook.com/zelunghenibusiness?locale=ru\\_RU](https://m.facebook.com/zelunghenibusiness?locale=ru_RU)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkIf7IhbbK0> 429 views

Also, 5 short videos were created about 5 case studies

## Annex 1 List of participants

### LEARNING ROUTE (LIST OF PARTICIPANTS - face to face Learning Route) Republic of Moldova: October 11-17, 2021

Nr	Name / Surname	Country	Institution	Function
1	Akmal Akramkhanov	Uzbekistan	ICARDA	Project lead
2	Valerio Graziano	Italy	ICARDA	Knowledge manager
3	Ibrahim Rahamtalla	Sudan	LMRP/ IFAD	Natural resource
4	Amir Abdullahi Yousif Malik	Sudan	Deputy Director, General Directorate of Technology Transfer and Knowledge Management for ARC Wadmedni	SKIM project member Agricultural Research Cooperation
5	Ekhlas Ibrahim Ahmed	Sudan	Agricultural Extension Technology Transfer	General Directorate of technology and Knowledge transfer
6	Mahmoud Awad Mekki Ahmed	Sudan	Agricultural Research Cooperation	Associate Professor
7	ElWasila Mukhtar Mohamed ElWasila	Sudan	University of Khartoum	Associate Professor Unversty of Khartoum, Faculty of Agriculture
8	Merfat Ali Ahmed Khalid	Sudan	Ministry Animal Resources	Vetrinian
9	Sahl Ibrahim Bakhit Yasin	Sudan	Sudanese Knowledge Society	Sudanese Knowledge Society PhD
10	Sarra Rasheid Ahmed AbdelWahab	Sudan	Ahfad University for Women	Assistant Professor
11	Salaheddine BAKKALI YAKHLEF	Morocco	ONCA	Director of Engineering at ONCA
12	Hamida HILALI	Morocco	INRA	Scientific and research development at the Scientific Division
13	El Hassania MOHSSINE	Morocco	IAV Hassan II	Professor, Expert in beekeeping
14	Kenza AIT EL KADI	Morocco	IAV Hassan II	Professor, Expert Geomatic Science and Surveying
15	Abdelali MOUAAID	Morocco	INRA	Head of Programming, M&E
16	Abdelilah ARABA	Morocco	IAV Hassan II	Professor, Expert in animal breeding
17	Aziz	Morocco	ENA-Meknès	Professor, Expert water

	ABOUABDILLA H			resources management
18	Taha LAHRECH	Morocco	IAV Hassan II	Professor, Expert in economic and social sciences
19	Ungureanu Carolina	Republic of Moldova	IDIS Viitorul	Deputy Director
20	Mihai Turcan	Republic of Moldova	IDIS Viitorul	Project coordinator
21	Maria Procopciuc	Republic of Moldova	IDIS Viitorul	PR Manager
22	Cojocaru Mihaela	Republic of Moldova	UCIP IFAD	Communication specialist
23	Irina Blindu	Republic of Moldova	SAUM	IR specialist
24	Cercel Ilie	Republic of Moldova	UASM	Prorector
25	Caisin Larisa	Republic of Moldova	UASM	Head of Department
26	Lupu Viorica	Republic of Moldova	UASM	librarian
27	Anitanu Acu	Republic of Moldova	UASM	Conf univers
28	Iepuras Natalia	Republic of Moldova	ZEL Ungheni Business	Administrator central
29	Veaceslav Ionita	Republic of Moldova	IDIS Viitorul	Expert
30	Ivasi Boris	Republic of Moldova	Soroca	specialist
31	Boris Boincean	Republic of Moldova	Research Institute for Field Crops Selectia	Director
32	Dorin Cebanu	Republic of Moldova	Research Institute for Field Crops Selectia	Specialist / researcher
33	Mihail Gotornicean	Republic of Moldova	“La Prisaca” – Beekeeping hut, apitherapy, honey collection and processing hall, honey extraction centrifuge, greenhouse	beekeeper
34	Cojocaru Elena	Republic of Moldova	The cattle farm at Untesti, Ungheni	farmer