

FINAL REPORT

ANALYSIS OF TENDENCIES, CAUSES, RISKS, VULNERABILITIES AND CAPABILITIES REGARDING WOMEN MIGRATING FOR WORK.



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CONTENTS:

SUMMARY	6
REMITTANCES	6
LEGISLATION	7
INTRODUCTION	10
I.1 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND ALL ITS COMPONENTS	10
I.2 APPLIED METHODOLOGY	10
I.2.1 THE SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTING	11
I.3 LIMITS AND BARRIERS OF THE RESEARCH. LESSONS LEARNED	11
CHAPTER I: A GENDER BASED PROFILE OF MIGRATION PHENOMENON IN MOLDOVA	12
1.1 TRENDS	12
1.2 INTERNATIONAL TREATY FRAMEWORK ON MIGRATION RELEVANT TO WOMEN	15
CHAPTER II: LOOKING AT REMMITANCES FLOW FROM GENDER PERSPECTIVE	17
CHAPTER III: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS RESULTS	21
3.1 SEGMENT OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES	21
3.2 RECRUITING AGENCIES	22
3.3 REMITTANCE MEDIATORS	23
3.4 NGO REPRESENTATIVES	24
CHAPTER IV: SURVEY RESULTS	27
4.1 HISTORY OF WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS'	27
4.2 EXPERIENCE AT THE WORKPLACE	28
4.3 RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY	31
4.4 SENDING REMITTANCES AND GOODS	34
CONCLUSIONS	37
BIBLIOGRAPHY	38
FIGURES:	
Figure i.2: Sample, N= 109, %	11
Figure 1: Structure of migrant population, 2012, %	12
Figure 3: Structure of migrant population by destination country, 2014, %	12
Figure 4: Age of female and male migrants, 2013	12
Figure 5: Structure of migrant population, 2012, %	12
Figure 6: The period of last emigration, 2012	13
Figure 7: Employment prior to migration, 2013	13
Figure 8: Gender division of labour done by migrants, 2012	13
Figure 9: Informality of work among Moldovan migrants, 2012	14
Figure 10: Access to social and labour benefits among Moldovan migrants, 2012	14
Figure. 11: Frequency of returning to Moldova	14
Figure 12: Areas in which assistance is needed by those who intend to return in the following 2 years	14
Figure 13: Primary condition for returning back for those who intend to return back on a permanent basis	15
Figure 14: Remittances as share of the income for men and women in Moldova.	17
Figure 15: Remittances as share of the income for men and women in rural areas of Moldova.	17
Figure 16: Number of money transfers (in all forms) during the preceding 12 months	17
Figure 17: Total amount transferred during the preceding 12 months	18
Figure 18: Preferred method of sending money to home	18

Figure 19: Destination of the usage of money transferred by the migrants	18
Figure 20: Purposes of money transfer	18
Figure 21: Interest in investing the transferred money into a public sector infrastructure project in the community, in Moldova	19
Figure 22: Interest in investment together with local authorities or business people in a private sector enterprise in the community	19
Figure 23: Plans to initiate or expand an investment in a business enterprise	19
Figure 25: Confidence gaps among men and women in terms of starting a business	19
Figure 26: Confidence and knowledge on how to start a business among men and women	20
Figure 27: Total amount of remittances by sending country	20
Figure 28: Intention of women who have migration experience to migrate for work, N= 101, %	27
Figure 29: Number of countries in which women migrated for work, N= 109, %	27
Figure 30: The frequency with which women migrant worker come home, %	27
Figure 31: Owning legal documentation in the foreign country and type of documentation, N=109, %	28
Figure 5: Work that is practiced or intended to be practiced, N=109, %	28
Figure 34: Worked hours per week of women who have work migration experience, N=101, %	29
Figure 35: Possession and type of working contract, %	29
Figure 36: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=82, %	30
Figure 37: Places where employees can complain if there is a problem at work, N=101, %	30
Figure 38: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=101, %	30
Figure 39: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=101, %	30
Figure 40: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=101, %	31
Figure 41: Having children and where are they living	31
Figure 42: Having children back home, N=35, %	32
Figure 43: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=101, %	32
Figure 44: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=101, %	32
Figure 45: Which of the following statements describe you best, N=101, %	33
Figure 46: The frequency of communication with family, N=101, %	33
Figure 47: Means of communication with family, N=95, %	33
Figure 48: Does your family depend upon the income you earn?, N=101, %	34
Figure 50: What is the amount of money you send per one expedition (Lei)? , N=53, %	34
Figure 51: The frequency of sending money, N=53, %	34
Figure 52: Means to send money home, N=53, %	35
Figure 53: Proportion of income sent home each year, N=53, %	35
Figure 54: Who gets the remittances, N=53, %	35
Figure 55: The purpose for sending money, N=53, %	36
Figure 56: Sending goods to family	36
Figure 57: Modality of sending goods	36

TABLES:

Table 1: Gender differences of consumption of general income, 2013	19
Table 2: The monthly salary of women who have work migration experience	29

SUMMARY

This report is a result of an assessment carried out by Magenta Consulting for *UN Women* in spring-summer 2015. The current research implied several stages: desk review, in-depth interviews with NGOs, Governmental representatives and remittance mediators and survey with women who have migrated in the past (asking for the details of the last travel) and women who only plan to migrate for work in the future. The research had several important objectives: to find information enriching existent migrant profiles, and present aspects that could enhance the understanding and capacities of target groups to better address the gender equality and women's rights dimensions of labour migration. Indeed, there are certain gender differences among men and women migrant workers and the following need to be noted:

- Share of migrant men is higher than share of women migrant workers. The situation in this domain has not changed significantly since 1995.
- Men migrant workers are younger, which is partly explained by the fact that women younger than 30 are raising small children that cannot be left with another family member since they are too small yet.
- Women migrant workers choose Italy, Greece, Israel, and Turkey while men migrant workers more often choose such destinations as Russian Federation, Portugal, Romania, Ukraine.
- Women migrant workers are overall more qualified than men migrant workers (according to their level of education and their past profession), although abroad they often do a job that does not correspond to their skills. Among WMWs there need to be singled out teachers, economists, skilled and highly skilled workers in health care system. There are also quite many WMWs who worked in food and services, trade. Men migrant workers more often have vocational education and prior to migration they have worked as drivers, in construction, as electricians and mechanics. Share of higher education among WMW is higher than among men migrant workers.
- When in migration women more often find a job related to house work, while men – in construction. Women more often are employed in jobs where there is no definite term of the work, while men more often know when their work in a particular job will be finalised. This might be the explanation of the fact that men being often employed seasonally, return to Moldova more often – almost every other man migrant worker returns home three or four times a year, while in case of women this happens less often and half of them return home once or twice a year.
- WMWs more often find longer-term jobs, work in a more formal sector. They more often have a contract, more often have social and labour benefits than men (including medical paid leave, health insurance, pension contributions, annual leave, overtime pay).
- Those WMWs who plan to return in the following 2 years need assistance in securing employment and at the same time in social security – medical insurance and pension

plan. For women these two aspects are almost at the same level of priority (a difference of 10 p.p. between the two), while in case of men employment is significantly more important (a difference of 34 p.p.).

- Men migrant workers are more inclined to investing the money, more inclined to starting a business upon coming back for permanent living in Moldova. A greater share of men migrant workers noted that they need assistance with business start-up (30% of men and 10% of women)
- Women are more concerned about their pension plan and set it as a primary condition for returning back more often than men. Still, the number one priority for both, men and women, is reaching the savings objective followed by securing gainful employment in Moldova. Men slightly more often noted that they need to be confident in starting their own business in Moldova (9% as compared to 6% for women).

REMITTANCES

- Women are more dependent on the remittances coming from abroad than men. Women more often are staying at home, taking care of children and not working, while men, even in case they have children can at least find an occasional job and work in Moldova. This dependence is even more evident in case of rural population.
- WMWs on average make more money transfers than men: 6.9 as compared to 6 per year. Still the amount that men are transferring is larger – 4699 Euro as compared to 4127 Euro in case of men.
- As the Nexus study shows, both men and women (73% of each segment) sent money preferentially formally. Money transferring systems, such as Western Union, Money Gram are slightly more popular among men 69% as compared to 64% among women), while women slightly more often pass the money via bus drivers, travel agencies (7% as compared to 3%). 45% of each segment also hand-carry the money by themselves and 20% of each use bank transfers. 7% of men and 8% of women trust their friends/ fellow migrant to hand-carry the money.
- Share of women who mainly pass the money for consumption is higher than in case of men (52% as compared to 46%), who slightly more often pass the money for savings (22% as compared to 17%).
- WMWs transfers are to a greater extent directed for family needs (supporting spouse/children, supporting other relatives), while men slightly more often sent money for home improvement and savings, even though the main goal for them remains supporting spouse and children.
- Men are more open to invest the money into infrastructure projects and development of local business in Moldova than women. And also a greater share of men plans to initiate or expand an investment in a business enterprise (47% compared to 32% for women). While men are more inclined to invest into agriculture and construction, women more often choose retail trade, agriculture being their second priority.

The interviews with the remittance mediators also added some useful information to this topic:

- Both interviewees mentioned that remittances mainly come from Russia. The main method is money transfer system – Western Union and Money Gram being the most popular. SWIFT transfers are more rare.
- 2-3 years ago the average sums were larger (about 1000) and were in US dollars, while now roubles are transferred more often and the sums have changed (from 1000 USD to 5000 Roubles). Money coming from EU comes in larger sums than remittances from Russia (about 500 Euro).
- The main receivers are women – either wives or mothers.
- There also are cases when fellow migrants send the money to each other in order to avoid carrying it with them, while travelling home.
- Some make transfers on their own name and since the term of the transfer availability in Moldova is sufficient – migrant men manage to come and get the money they had sent to themselves.
- Rural population is more reluctant to banks and their services and rather prefers to use informal ways.
- Currently more often the receivers are the same people, while before unique receivers were more often met. As the interviewee supposed – the possible explanation is that before the migrants could easily send the money to their friend to congratulate him with his birthday, while now people mainly send money to their relatives.
- The employees intermediating remittances are mainly young people, more often women than men, explanation is low salary, which is not attractive to experienced specialists, to men.
- There is no common practice to keep track or make a demographical representation of the receivers or senders. Sometimes, the bank officer might try to establish or maintain a personal contact with the client and might address him a question about the destination of the money use, but no statistics exists. As this particular inquiries show, not more than 10% of the money is used for business and usually it is men who come to receive this money.

LEGISLATION

It needs to be emphasized that the first complex legislation document, meant to regulate to a certain extent the situation in the area of migration appeared in 2011. At that point, as the Strategy specifies, number of people migrating for permanent living abroad was about 6-8 thousand persons annually for 10 years in a row. Number of people migrating for work has increased from 138.3 thousand to 311 thousand. Share of remittances in the GDP was 38% up to 2008 and then it decreased to 30%. Political situation in the country lead to the fact that the problem of migration was not reacted upon immediately. Thus, in 2011 the National Strategy in the area of Migration and Asylum (2011-2020) was approved by Government Decision Nr.665 from 08.09.2011. The main document that existed before that – Concept of Migration Policy of Republic of Moldova approved by Government

Decision Nr. 1386 from 11.10.2002 was a general one and mainly singled out the existing problems that needed to be solved.

All mentioned above serve as a logical explanation of the fact that the first complex document in this domain, approved on the Governmental level was a general one with no particular deep analysis of men/ women migrant workers differences and did not imply a particular differential treatment for these two groups.

Still, the Strategy specifies the following aspects:

- Though share of men migrating is larger, share of women is “alarmingly” large – 34%.
- Lack of parents, regardless of the cause and length of absence, “particularly lack of mothers” affects the emotional, psychological and intellectual development of the children that remain in Moldova.
- Men are majority of Moldovan migrants working in CIS - 2/3, they usually work seasonally and stay abroad for shorter terms – up to 12 months, while women represent majority of migrants working in EU – 70% and they stay abroad for longer terms (2.3 years on average for this destination).
- Chapter IV of the Strategy presents priority objectives. The 3rd priority objective sounds as “Counteracting and reducing brain drain, the emigration of young people, women, assuring protection measures for children that are left with no parental care because of the fact that the parents are gone to work abroad, with the help of national programs aimed at these particular categories of people.
- The measures implied by the strategy in response to the objective mentioned above include: “consolidation and development of juridical instruments and national as well as bilateral mechanisms related to the situation of the specific categories of migrants: highly qualified migrants, children of the migrants, migrant women etc.” This particular measure could not be found in the exact formulation in the Action Plan.
- The measures implied by the strategy in response to the objective of reintegration of the returning migrants include: “6) Design of the special programs of reintegration of vulnerable categories, such as: minor children, single women, people with disabilities etc.” This particular measure can be then found in the Action Plan 2011-2015 approved by Government Decision Nr. 1009 from 26.12.2014: action 12.3, referring to the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health.

The Strategy specifies that among the strong points of Moldova it can be mentioned that the state cooperates with regional and international structures in the area of migration and asylum:

Since the late 90's Republic of Moldova actively participates in the Budapest Process, Sederkoping Process, Process of Cooperation in the South-Eastern Europe, Central-European Initiative and Multinational Consultative Group of the Centre for Cooperation in the Area of Security (RACVIAC). During years 2008-2009 Moldova has played an active role in the Organization of Economic Cooperation at the Black Sea and in the Regional Council for Cooperation, SECI, GUAM. A particular role belongs to cooperation with the international structures

such as European Council, World Bank, IOM, ILO, ExCom of UNHCR.

Another recent document that also has some reference to women is Action Plan of the Government for the years 2014-2016 approved by Government Decision Nr. 339 from 20.05.2014 regarding support of the reintegration of the citizens who return from abroad. This document specifies the following:

- Action 5: Development of the entrepreneurial abilities of the migrants: 5.1. Implementing program of social and economic empowerment of migrant women and of women who returned into the country. This action was planned for the 3rd trimester of 2014 and it was supposed to be implemented by the Ministry of Labour Social Protection and Family and other central public authorities in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, ODIMM (Organization for Development of Small and Average Enterprises) and local public authorities.

One of the most complex documents presenting various aspects of migration and noting the gender differences is the Extensive Profile of the Migrant which was published by IOM and Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova. Several aspects need to be noted:

- Share of women in the number of victims of traffic of human beings: 76,3% women and 23,7% men.
- The fact that emigration figures are significantly higher than immigration and the fact that women in the fertile age leave the country to work abroad leads to worsening demographic indicators as a result of decreasing birth rate.

The in-depth interviews with the government representatives showed the following:

- There are no bodies or policies which would be directed exclusively at women
- When being asked about the approach of the Government in protecting women migrating for work, the respondent concentrated on the issue of human trafficking, which indicates that currently this is the domain where the gender aspect is most observable.
- With no gender specifics, the contact between the working migrants and the job from abroad can only be established based on an agreement between countries. Out of the six existent agreements only one is functional – the agreement with Israel, but it regards construction jobs for men. On the rest of agreements (with Azerbaijan,

information via ANOFM, Service Centre of Nexus is also available for this matter.

The following results were obtained after the discussion with the recruiting agencies:

- Because of the difficulty to reach a recruiting agency and motivate its representative to participate in an in-depth interview, all 4 interviews were carried out with recruiting agencies sending people to Israel. These agencies particularly work with women who are invited to take care of the elderly. The Israeli Government pays for this work and the women work abroad absolutely legally.
- The interviewees noted that they work with recruitment agencies from Israel and receive job offers from them. The preferred age of the women for recruitment is 28-53. Women are helped at all stages of migration. They are informed about the country they are migrating to, their rights and obligations at the work place. When the women are already in Israel, they keep in touch with the agency via internet.
- Both – the Governmental representatives and the agency representatives mentioned the fact that the recruiters need to comply with laws that forbid them to charge the migrant and only allow them to charge the employer party.

The interviews with the NGOs revealed, that all three organizations – La Strada, Nexus and IOM, are rendering services to both – men and women. Still, all three organizations make an effort to pay special attention to the segment of women. All three NGOs have foreign headquarters. La Strada has several key areas of competence, while Nexus is mainly an information centre, an example of the centres that are now being developed by the Ministry of Labour and will start to appear in 2016. These centers will be established in all Territorial Agencies for Employment of the Workforce and will aim at integration in the job market of returned migrants and counseling services for all migrants, both those who intend to leave, and those who returned home. IOM is dealing with migration issues all over the world, it can assist Moldovan citizens who have no clear status abroad to get back home, make research on various topics in migration, and always keep to disaggregation on gender. A special attention by La Strada and IOM is paid to the subject of human trafficking and its prevention.

The participants of the survey have mainly worked in one country, a small share worked in several.

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