

# Partner Identification

## 1. Introduction

| DUFs international project pools     |                  |          |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| Which project pool are you applying? | MENA Pool        |          |
|                                      | The Project Pool | <b>X</b> |

| Project Information                 |                          |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Project title                       | <b>'Explore Moldova'</b> |
| Applying DUF member organization(s) | <b>Silba</b>             |
| Potential partner organization(s)   | <b>Promo-Lex</b>         |
| Country                             | <b>Moldova</b>           |
| Project Period                      | <b>April – 6 dage</b>    |
| Amount applied for (max DKK 40.000) | <b>16.590</b>            |

### 1.1 Summary of the Partner Identification

SILBA seeks international partnership with Moldovan NGO Promo-Lex to enhance young participation and thus active democracy in the rural areas of Moldova. Our organizations share not only democratic values but also goals of engaging the Moldovan youth in active participation in projects towards influencing society. We both find the participatory aspect of democracy important for developing a well functioning society through sustainable, democratic involvement in local community. We therefore believe that many interesting projects, ideas and learning opportunities can arise from a future partnership.

We aim to urge and strengthen democratic initiatives led by the youth of Moldova and generate encouragement for young people to involve in work towards societal, permanent change. In the process we aim as well to enhance trust in society by urging the democratic functioning in organizations. The trip will hopefully end with a signed mandate of a future partnership on the topic of youth empowerment and will thus lead to several future youth led projects in the rural areas of Moldova.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Background for the Partner Identification

In the summer 2015 DUF announced a project called 'Explore Moldova', a project that Silba not only gained a lot of knowledge and ideas from, but a project that also fostered an interest of continuing the process. As a part of the 'Explore Moldova' project, Silba's project group was on a trip to Moldova in the beginning of November.

We found one organization in particular interesting. The Moldovan NGO Promo-Lex. Unfortunately, we did not have the chance to explore the match further. A perfect match between the partners are the foundation for a long-lasting partnership, and we therefore apply to go on a Partner Identification trip with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the organization Promo-Lex.

We would like to be given the opportunity to explore the work and engagement of the volunteers in the rural areas of Moldova. We would also have time to find out if Promo-Lex fulfils DUF's requirements for partner organizations.

After the trip in November, we have been in contact with Promo-Lex about a possible next visit. The focus of a next visit has especially been on exploring the local departments and meeting the volunteers. We will also use the partner identification to match expectations with Promo-Lex and get a better understanding of their aim with a partnership project. At the first meeting there was a good chemistry between the two organizations and we found that, the project should be about democratic participation.

### **The Danish member organisation – vision, work and capacity**

SILBA - Initiative for Dialogue and Democracy is a volunteer based cross-political youth organization (est 1995) working to promote democracy and dialogue in our partner countries, primarily in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Caucasus.

Silba conduct a wide range of activities both in Denmark and abroad.

In Denmark Silba's main aim is to inform our members and the Danish society in general about the situation and development of democracy in our focus area. The local activities range from lectures by university professors and presentations about members' own experience to cooking Eastern European food. Our main international activities are elections observation missions and seminars. Several times every year we send members to participate in seminars and election observation missions. The election observation missions have the purpose of giving the observers a deeper knowledge about the political climate in the different countries; observe the democratic processes on the Election Day and reporting the observations to the media. The international seminars focus on different topics such as integration, democracy, youth empowerment and liberty. All of the activities Silba participates in aims to fulfil the goal of democratic development and dialogue. In our work we cooperate with organizations from all over Europe.

When the board of 2015 started their work one of the main aims was to develop a long-lasting international project a long side our short-lasting projects such as seminars and election observation missions. In the summer 2015 DUF offered the 'Explore Moldova' project. This was not only within our focus area, a country in which we several times have conducted seminars and election observation missions, but it was also a project, where we would have guidance in how to develop a long-lasting partnership and project. There was no doubt; this was the ultimate way for Silba to start the process of a long-lasting international project.

Silba's main board decided, that the first members of the project group should be members of our local boards. A project group of three dedicated Silba members was established:

Lisa Mailand: International Project Coordinator in Silba since 2015. As International Project Coordinator you are automatically part of the main board in Silba.

Majbritt Dalgaard: Member of the local board in Aalborg.

Frederikke Thorning: Member of the local board in Aarhus.

We have all been members of Silba for a couple of years and are very dedicated to the work of the organization. We went into this project with a joint understanding of this project would require work on a longer basis.

### **2.3 Follow up on the Partner Identification in the Danish Member organization**

After the Partner identification trip, where we have settled on a partner and an overall aim of a project, we will broaden the project group to consist of 5-6 members and when the project is fully formulated the project group will include even more members. Our plan is to engage members as soon as possible, so they will have the same feeling of ownership and responsibility of the project as the current members of the project group. Our wish is to plan and implement course days for future project members, where they will be introduced to DUF, DUF's cross-cutting requirements, to democratic organizational work, to the partner Promo-Lex and the project itself. These course days will make sure, that every member of the project group has the same background and understanding of the project and of the practical requirements.

The project group has since the beginning made it a crucial focus point, that all of us are equally responsible for the project now and in the future. We have worked with circulating responsibilities, so everyone was able to and informed of every part of the process. This was also one of the main arguments that all three of us participated in the first PartnerID trip in November. The distribution of the responsibilities will continue this way within the project group.

Although the project group is equally responsible, as the International Project Coordinator is part of the project group, this person will always be the legal representative for all decisions made.

## **The potential Partner Organization(s)**

### **2.4 Vision and work of the Partner Organization**

Promo-Lex is a Moldovan Non-Governmental organisation focused on promoting democratic values, the development of a strong civil society and implementation of internationally recognised human rights standards in Moldova, including the Transnistrian region.

Their main activity is election observation and monitoring on a local and international level. They have been dealing with observational work since 2009 where seven observers monitored the parliamentary election in the Transnistrian region of Moldova. Since then Promo-Lex has been long-term monitoring the elections and short term monitoring more and more polling stations throughout the entire country. Today they are covering 100% of the polling stations in the country during the short-term observations. In total Promo-Lex accredited and deployed 2500 observers for the election in 2010.

### **2.5 The capacity of the Partner Organization**

The prior experience of Promo-Lex covers everything from election observations both short- and long-term, research and advocacy about basic human rights, equality and rights for women and programs to increase citizens' trust in the democratic process in Moldova. They are according to EPDE the leading organization with expertise in independent election observation and monitoring in Moldova from 2009. They have been working on smaller projects during the last couple of years in rural areas of Moldova as well. These projects are basically oriented towards young people and their needs and dreams of making a change in the local community. A supervisor and a project group run the projects. This because the aim is making young people active in deciding on, formulating and implementing projects of their own interest. Therefore Promo-Lex's experience in implementing projects on a local level is of very high value. The international experience limits on election monitoring but according to the thematic field we find the partner organization very experienced because of their general visions and aims.

The responsible person for managing and implementing the partnership identification will be the chairman of Promo-Lex Ion Manole with whom we already had one meeting with in November.

### **2.6 The structure and the organization of the Partner Organization**

Promo-Lex is a democratic build organisation in its wide definition. The board of Promo-Lex and the secretariat is chosen by election once a year and the structure, decision-making processes and general work of Promo-Lex has a high level of transparency and works with this exact factor as an aim in society. The reason for why Promo-Lex is only partly democratic is because the voters mostly are the secretariat and the people high in the hierarchy. We did, at the meeting with Ion in November not have an impression of Promo-Lex trying to let the youth out of the election for organisational president. On the other hand Ion promoted an open-minded approach to the fact of future involvement of young volunteers in the electoral process inside the organisation as well. The election observers and project entrepreneurs are volunteers, mostly young and connected to Promo-Lex. For each region there is a supervisor

connected who receives a small one-time-payment for organising the volunteers. As well there is a paid secretariat. Besides this, the organisation is non-profit and based on a volunteer basis in the Danish term. We still wish to further investigate the connection between the board and the volunteers, which is why we plan to talk to the board itself, and afterwards the young volunteers in the rural areas to hear the different perspectives of the organisational work and interrelations.

We find Promo-Lex very compatible with the guidelines of DUF concerning both democratic organising, dealing with youngsters and non-discrimination.

## 2.7 Perspectives of the cooperation

As stated above Promo-Lex and SILBA shares the same overall values and visions. We both have a main focus on the development of democracy, basic human rights and activating participation in civil society. Thus we find it very relevant and educating for us to cooperate with an organization that deals with the same problems as us, but has a wider interface and local base. At the same time Promo-Lex's primary work is, as noted, election monitoring both long- and short-term, and since SILBA works with only short-term monitoring, we find it very educating to work with them as we can learn a lot from their experiences and work.

On the other hand we think that SILBA will be able to teach Promo-Lex about the aspect of volunteering in general and encouraging the youth in organizational, democracy-building work.

Another aspect in which Promo-Lex is lacking experience is the inclusion of volunteers in the board and secretariat. One of the long-term goals for the future partnership is therefore to develop Promo-Lex into a more democratic building of the board and the organization itself, to make it more available for young activists.

## 3. Project description

### 3.1 Context analysis

#### The Youth in Moldova:

In Moldova around 1/3 of the population is under 25 years. One of the major problems in the country is that the youth are emigrating in the hope to find better opportunities. The consequences are that many children are left alone in the country either at an orphanage or with relatives. Especially in the rural area is the emigration a problem.

The education level in Moldova is high in proportion to how poor the country is. A large part of the youth is studying at university. It is often among university students that the young people, who do volunteer work, are found. Among other parts of the young population the focus is more on how to survive from one day to another. Among these groups, volunteering is a luxury they cannot afford.

Another problem in Moldova is human trafficking, especially with young women who are sold to prostitution abroad. It is difficult to found out what the proportions of the problem is, because these women in the statistic just count as young people, who have emigrated.

#### The political system:

The main line in Moldovan politic is drawn between Pro-Russia or Pro-EU. In the last 25 years the country has shifted between Pro-Russia and Pro-EU governments, but there has been no change in the country's main problem, that the level of corruption is extreme high. The consequence of this has been that the Moldovans trust in the politicians and the political system is very low, which among other things contribute to a very low election turnout and engagement in the civil society.

The past year has been a very turbulent time in Moldovan politic. A range of demonstrations in front of the parliament- and government buildings in the fall resulted in the president at the

time resigned in the beginning of November. Moldova has therefore been without government the last couple of months. At the moment, it is unsure if the parliament can assemble a new government or there will be election.

#### The volunteering culture:

It can be argued that volunteering in Moldova is an unknown concept. One of the active members in one of the organization we visited last time in Moldova said that they had a *special form of volunteering in their organization because they all participated without being paid and beside their normal job*. This is what we would normally define as volunteering in Denmark, but in Moldova it is only a small group of people, who has the economic surplus to do that kind of work without being paid to some degree. In most of the organisations we met, we got the impression that many of the organizations were primarily managed by professionals with very few volunteers.

#### Equality:

In Moldova the gender roles are relatively traditional. Most women marry early so they can start a family and get children. Despite this, women and men are almost equally active in the civil society. On our last partner identification, we met both men and women in the organizations and we did meet women, who had leading positions in the organizations. Though men are still the dominating gender in the political system.

### **3.2 Purpose**

What we expect to get out of this PartnerID is to get closer to the young people actually involved in the volunteer work. We are interested in the way the organization de facto works outside the board and secretariat.

We would like to talk to the young people that are active in volunteer work about their distribution of responsibility and work with implementing projects in the rural areas. Even though the legal papers show that the organization is democratic and equally represented by men and women, it is important to see, whether this assertion is true and actually implemented in the periphery.

An important goal is as well to identify the actual problem of engaging the youth in volunteer work on a longer basis and towards young, active participation in society. Therefore a main goal is to learn about which factors motivate young men and women to participate in non-profit, NGO related work on a longer basis. We need to collect the information needed to construct a future model for us to use when recruiting the Moldovan youth.

We as well hope to visit different groups of young volunteers Promo-Lex have in the rural areas to decide on whom we connect with and would like to work with in a possible pilot-project.

During the PartnerID we seek to make the agreement that the partnership will be happening in the coming future by signing a mandate that describes the projects keystones. This mandate will describe no further details than an agreement on a future partnership with equally distributed responsibility and where both organizations are equally devoted to the project during the whole process. Therefore the mandate will describe that SILBA and Promo-Lex in cooperation will formulate the guidelines inside which we will be working, on a future meeting. The aim is clear agreements about distribution of responsibility, handling of budget, future development and of avoiding future disagreement.

### **3.3 Program and activities**

Since our meeting we have been in contact with Promo-Lex, who has offered to make a program for our up coming trip. To be sure our aims for the trip is reached, we will put forward some requirements:

- Visit 2-3 local departments in the rural areas to meet the volunteers and get some better insight into the organization.
- Have several meetings with the staff and volunteers to get a better understanding and knowledge about Promo-Lex as an organization.
- Have a meeting with the staff about the future project and their vision about it.

### **3.4 Exploring the match between the Danish organization and the potential partner**

Silba and Promo-Lex already meet on our trip in November, unfortunately, as mentioned, we did not have the chance to go deeper into the match or explore interesting issues. We received all the written statements of Promo-Lex and legally there does not seem to be any issues according to the DUF' requirements for partner choice, but we wish explore if this is also applicable in practice. This would involve site visits at the smaller project group in the rural areas to get a better understanding of their definition of voluntarism, gender division and the build of the organization among the volunteers, as well as the profile of the volunteers in the rural areas.

During the 'Explore Moldova' training we participated in during the fall, we gained experience in how to have a rewarding partnership meeting. Our idea is to use some of the technics we learned at our next meetings with Promo-Lex.

#### **QUESTIONS:**

- How does Promo-Lex understand 'voluntarism'?
- How are the project groups in the rural areas working with the office in Chisinau?
- What made the volunteers become volunteers? (and why at Promo-Lex?)
- What can encourage the youth of Moldova to participate in *long-term* volunteer work – how do we attain their attention?
- What are the Youth of Moldovas perspective on volunteer work (in general and in Promo-Lex); how do they define it, do they feel involved, are they included enough in the decisions. Etc.

The last three questions we intend to answer by talking to both young active people and people not active in volunteer work and therefore get a first hand insight. We will here try to create a safe environment for the youth to talk about their perspective on being a part of an organisation and volunteering in general. We will try as much as possible to also talk to the young people without interaction from the board of Promo-Lex and its possible impact.

### **3.5 Future process**

We hope to have our PartnerID in the beginning of April. Here we will establish our partnership with Promo-Lex and have a dialogue about the future project. After this, we hope to have a preparatory study around summer, where we will create the foundation for our pilot project. This we hope to begin in the fall 2016.

Right now, we do not have a fully developed idea about our project, but from our first meeting with Promo-Lex we hope the project will be about active citizenship and how the youth can get more involved in the civil society.

## 4. Signatures

I hereby confirm that my organization fully supports this partner identification and this project application, that we have knowledge about the DUF guidelines as well as the financial guidelines and that we are prepared to take on all obligations that an approval of the application will put on us as an organization. I furthermore confirm that I have the authority to make decisions and sign agreements on behalf of my organization.

31/01/2016, Roskilde

Date/Place

Lisa Mailand

Name

International Project Coordinator

Position in organization

Signature

Stamp (optional)

## 5. Contact Information

### Contact information - The Danish applicant organization

- Organization's name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address
- Website, if any
- Name and address of other co-applicant DUF member organizations, if any

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### Contact person

- Name of contact person
- Contact person's address (if different from the organization's home address)
- Contact person's email
- Contact person's telephone number

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## 6. Annexes

### List of annexes

#### Obligatory annexes

- Budget (DUF format)
- Detailed program and time plan

#### Other annexes

- List them here...