

## SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA ASSESSED WITHIN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT PROPOSALS: CASE STUDY FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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**Abstract:** *In many cases, public funding for education is quite tight, and projects can help by leveraging additional funds. Therefore, educational institutions need to write projects to meet their strategic needs and to contribute to the development of the education system as a whole. Writing and implementing projects offers multiple benefits for institutions, communities and direct beneficiaries (e.g. pupils, students, teachers). Article 134 of the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova stipulates that educational institutions are financed from several sources, either from the state and local budgets that provide the basic funding for pre-university and vocational education or from extra-budgetary sources [1]. Institutions are encouraged to raise additional funds through grants, token fees for educational services and other external sources. Writing and implementing educational projects is essential for the modernization and development of educational institutions. Projects provide access to additional resources, improve educational infrastructure and quality, promote inclusion and prepare students for the challenges of the labor market. In addition, projects contribute to an innovative, sustainable and competitive educational environment. By actively participating in projects, institutions strengthen their role as agents of change in the education community.*

*An essential step in project cycle management is evaluation. The evaluation of a project is vital to determine its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Without proper evaluation, a project may risk not achieving its objectives, consuming resources inefficiently or failing to deliver long-term benefits. For example, in the field of education, a project initiated in the Republic of Moldova must be aligned with national strategies such as "Education-2030" [5], Sustainable Development Goals [3], Education Code (No. 152/2014), and international funding programs.*

*In this logic, sustainability criterion plays a decisive role in assessing educational projects' long-term viability and are applied in various ways around the world. In the Republic of Moldova and other countries, this criterion helps to ensure that projects contribute to education that fosters long-term development by being integrated into local policies and strategies. To demonstrate sustainability, institutions must carefully plan funding, integrate results into institutional structures and respond to the needs of beneficiaries and the community.*

*This research answers the question: How are educational project proposals evaluated? Do any changes occur at the level of the educational institution from one call for project proposals to another? What should educational institutions pay attention to in a project proposal submission process? In this context, the situation in the Republic of Moldova was analysed as a case study.*

**Keywords:** *educational project, evaluation process, evaluation criteria.*

**JEL Classification:** *H100, H118, H121.*

### INTRODUCTION

The sustainability criterion has been extensively analysed in academic and institutional literature, particularly concerning its application in projects related to education, development, and infrastructure. A study by the World Bank found that approximately 40% of development projects fail to sustain results after funding ends, highlighting the critical need for sustainability planning [7]. Failure to maintain project results can be attributed to a variety of causes, but they can be addressed through more rigorous planning, involving local stakeholders and ensuring a clear transition to beneficiaries. The World Bank study emphasizes the importance of creating a sustainable framework

that allows benefits to be perpetuated over the sustainability period, regardless of changes in context or resources.

In the Republic of Moldova, sustainability is an emerging priority. Educational projects often face challenges like limited budgets, institutional rigidity, and reliance on external funding and educational studies on national projects. *Successful projects integrate sustainability into their design from the beginning, focusing on capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and resource management* [2].

## DATA AND METHODS

This study examines the evaluation criteria applied for educational project proposals to be evaluated in the Republic of Moldova. Evaluation criteria are used to ensure a proper, objective and benchmarked assessment in the evaluation process and relevant at all stages of the evaluation process. Sustainability, as an evaluation criterion, aims to ensure the long-term impact, relevance and value for project resources. The research focuses on six Moldovan colleges participating in two calls for project proposals in the framework of national educational initiatives. The first call for project proposals was organized in January 2022 and the second call - in September 2023.

The study is based on the specific evaluation criteria similarly used in both calls for project proposals. These criteria align with international standards for project evaluation as presented by institutions such as the World Bank [7] and the European Commission [2], while also addressing local strategic priorities such as the Education-2030 agenda [5] and the Moldovan Education Code (No. 152/2014) [1].

The evaluation criteria for the two calls for proposals are presented in the table below together with the evaluation questions for each criterion:

**Table 1. Evaluation criteria**

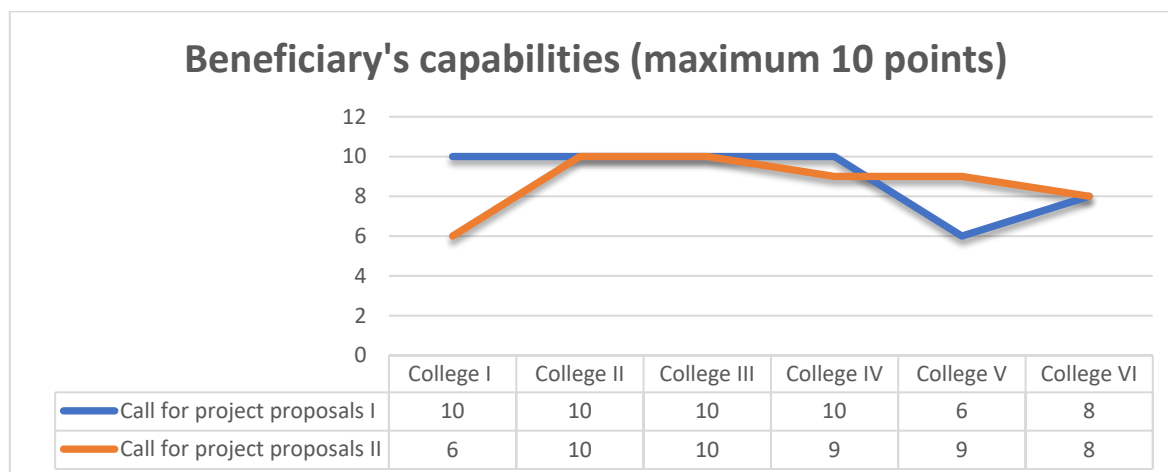
Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Beneficiary's capacities (maximum 10 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do applicants have sufficient project management experience and technical expertise?</li> <li>Do applicants have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and capacity to manage the budget of the action)?</li> </ul>
Relevance (maximum 35 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the funding program?</li> <li>How relevant are the specific needs and constraints of the requesting institution described in the sub-grant proposal?</li> <li>How clearly are the strategically chosen solution and activities defined?</li> <li>Does the proposal demonstrate an increase in the results obtained from implementation?</li> <li>How coherent is the overall design of the proposal?</li> <li>How relevant is the proposal to gender issues?</li> <li>How relevant is the proposal to climate change issues?</li> </ul>
Effectiveness (maximum 30 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the proposed activities appropriate, practical and in line with the objectives of the funding program and the expected results?</li> <li>Is the action plan clear and feasible?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the application form contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action?</li> <li>• Are stakeholders properly involved and participate in the action?</li> <li>• Do the results of the planned activities contribute to the achievement of the specific result and address the main problem of the funding program?</li> <li>• Do the proposed actions involve representatives of the labour market?</li> </ul>
Efficiency (maximum 10 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the activities properly reflected in the budget?</li> <li>• Is the relationship between estimated costs and expected results satisfactory?</li> </ul>
Sustainability and impact (maximum 15 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the action likely to have a concrete impact on the target groups?</li> <li>• Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including replication, extension and information exchange)</li> <li>• Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ financially (How will the activities be financed after the end of the grant? Will the financial formula be applied?);</li> <li>✓ institutionally (Will the structures allowing the continuation of the activities be in place after the closure of the proposal? Will the results of the action be locally "owned"?),</li> <li>✓ at policy level (where relevant) (What will be the structural impact of the action - e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods etc.?),</li> <li>✓ environmental (where relevant) (Will the action have a negative/positive impact on the environment?)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Source: Own work

## RESULTS

The beneficiary capacity evaluation criterion refers to assessment of the applicant institution's ability to implement and manage the proposed projects in accordance with the financial, administrative and technical requirements. This criterion ensures the success of the project and minimizes the risks related to inappropriate use of resources or inefficient implementation of activities. Below is the graph comparing the evaluation criteria on beneficiary capacity for two calls for proposals in which six colleges from the Republic of Moldova participated.



**Figure 1. Beneficiary's capabilities**

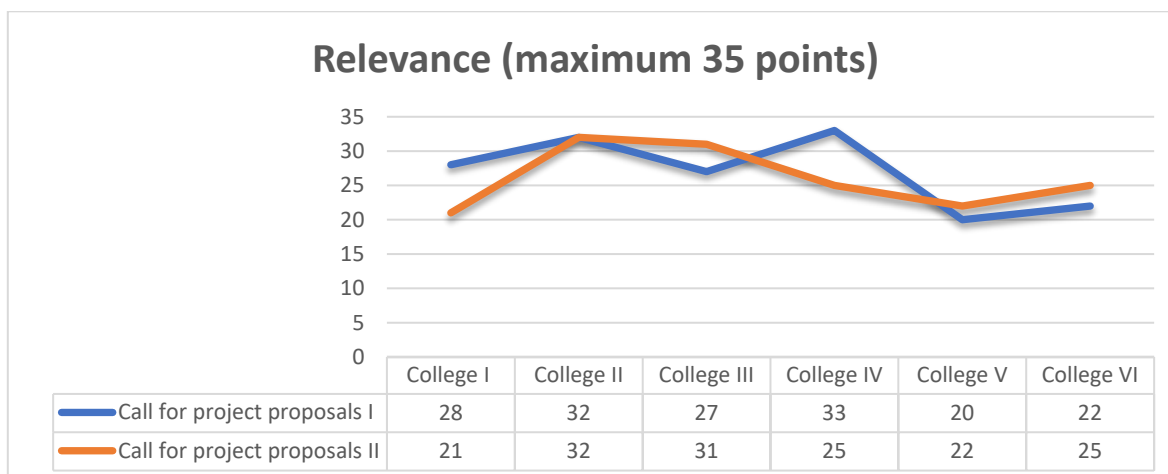
*Source: Own work*

The evaluation criterion on beneficiary capacity, which had the possibility to be scored with a maximum of 10 points, received a lower score in the case of College I in the call for proposals II than in the call for proposals I. This shows that the educational institution would have had difficulties in demonstrating administrative or financial capacity. This decrease may indicate:

- Lack of additional evidence required in the call for proposals II regarding project implementation history.
- Possible problems in the efficient use of the previously allocated budget.
- Lack of a clear strategy to improve or expand institutional capacity.

Constant performance of College II suggests a demonstrated capacity to manage funds and projects. College III shows a stable existence of the institutional framework capable of managing the resources needed for project implementation. A small decrease in College IV may reflect the lack of clarity in demonstrating administrative capacity in call for proposals II. The lack of a convincing track record of funds management or insufficient documentation in the case of College V in call for proposals I provided a lower score than that received in call for proposals II. The consistent score at 8 points received by College VI indicates a solid performance in demonstrating the ability to manage the available funds and signals a maintenance of this with no notable improvements.

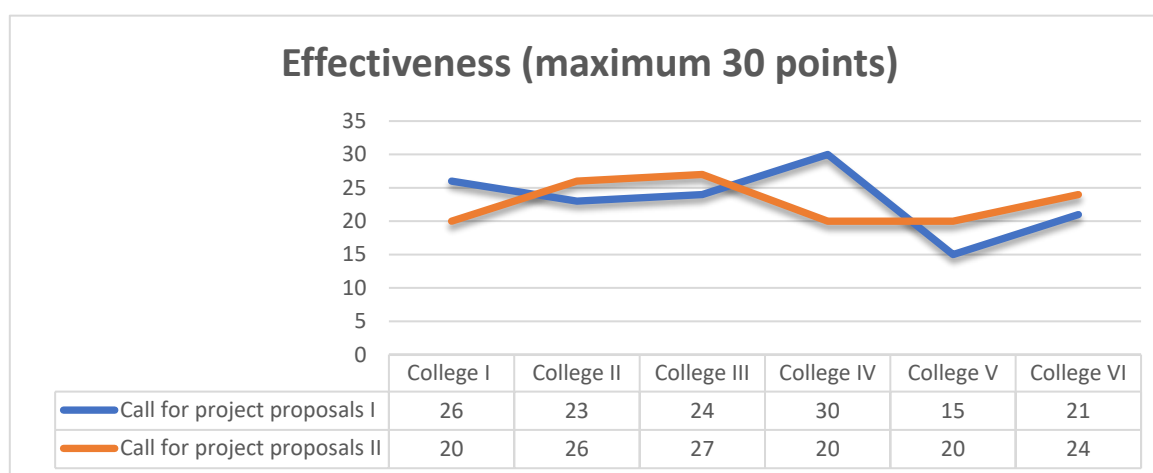
In the Republic of Moldova, the relevance criterion is used to select the educational projects that contribute the best to national objectives. In the calls for project proposals, relevance is assessed with a maximum score of 35, being the most important criterion (see graph below). In this way, College I shows an increase in relevance and may signal that the proposal in call for proposals II was better aligned with the priorities of the call and the needs of the community. This indicates a strategic improvement. The consistency of College II's score indicates that projects were very well aligned with strategic requirements. The increase in the score for College III indicates an improvement matching the call priorities. The significant decrease in College IV may indicate a project less aligned with call for proposals II priorities. College V showed a slight increase which indicates better alignment with the call for proposals requirements. In the case of College VI, the increase in score in call for proposals II indicates an improvement in demonstrating the relevance of the project and alignment with the call requirements. However, there is still room for improvement, in particular by detailing the alignment of the project with national and regional education policies and maintaining its contributions to the strategic objectives. These adjustments could increase the score in future calls.



**Figure 2. Relevance**  
*Source: Own work*

The relevance criterion is essential to ensure that the educational projects proposed respond to the real needs of the beneficiaries and contribute to strategic priorities. In the Republic of Moldova, the use of this criterion reflects both the strengths and weaknesses of institutions in understanding the requirements of funding call for proposals. By adopting a more detailed and integrated approach, institutions can significantly improve their performance in this area.

Effectiveness criterion in the evaluation of educational projects refers to the degree to which the planned activities are relevant, feasible and directly contribute to the achievement of the proposed objectives. It ensures that projects are well designed and implemented to produce the expected results. Below is the chart showing how twelve project proposals submitted under two different calls for project proposals from six colleges in the Republic of Moldova were evaluated.

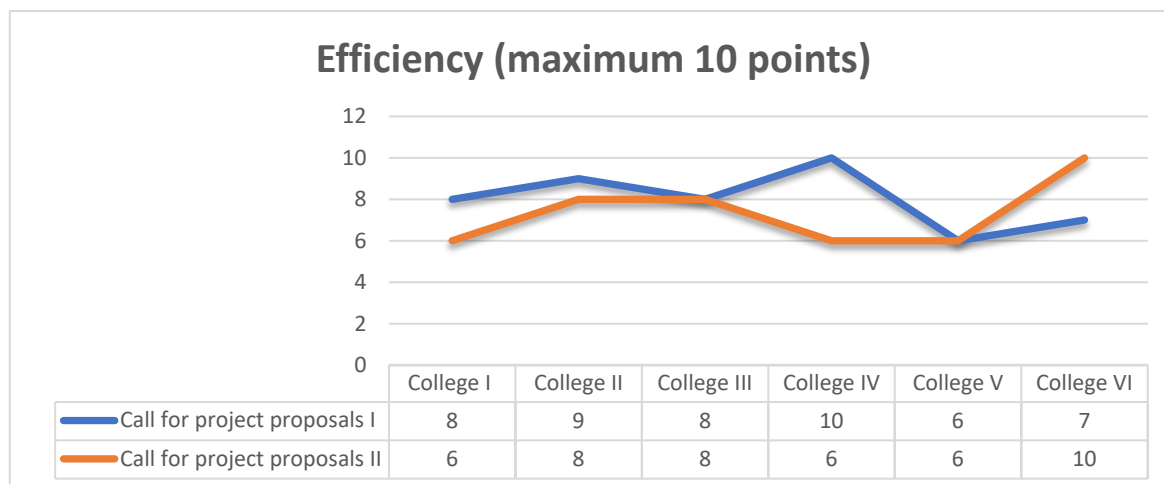


**Figure 3. Effectiveness**  
*Source: Own work*

Effectiveness could be rated at a maximum of 30 points, College I's implementation plan may be less feasible or insufficiently detailed in call for proposals II compared to call for proposals I. A slight decrease may signal minor problems in the coherence of the proposed activities. College II demonstrated an increase for the effectiveness criterion indicating better documented planning and better feasibility of activities. College III's implementation plan for the first call for proposals

demonstrated some gaps in feasibility or coherence. The decrease in the case of College IV may be due to a lack of detail in the implementation plan or insufficiently described activities. College V in the first call for proposals scored 15 points, indicating an average performance with potential for improvement. In the second call for project proposals the score increases to 20 points, suggesting significant progress in planning and presenting the effectiveness of the proposed activities. However, there are still opportunities for improvement, in particular by detailing activities, setting clear indicators and explaining more precisely how resources will be used to achieve the objectives. The increase in the score for College VI indicates clear progress in demonstrating the effectiveness of the project through better planning and detailing of activities. The link between project goals and proposed activities was better articulated, leading to a more favourable perception of feasibility.

According to the report Investing in Education Systems: Challenges and Strategies (IBRD, 2020), efficiency evaluation is essential to ensure the financial sustainability, relevance and impact of education projects. The varying scores between the two calls for project proposals reflect differences in planning, budget justification and demonstration of cost-benefit ratios.



**Figure 4. Efficiency**  
*Source: Own work*

In the case of College I, the coherence of the proposed activities and their link to the overall objectives were considered insufficient in call for proposals II, which led to a decrease in the score. The implementation plan submitted by College II was well documented in both calls, but without significant innovations or adjustments in call for proposals II. College III's steady performance reflects adequate planning but insufficient to increase the score. The significant drop in score for College IV indicates serious deficiencies in demonstrating the feasibility of activities. College V needs to improve its planning capacity and integrate a clear description of activities and objectives. Poor performance in both calls indicates persistent problems in planning and coherence. Regarding College VI, it demonstrated in call for proposals I an average implementation plan, but with potential for improvement. And in call for proposals II College VI reflected a clear improvement in the details and coherence of activities.

In the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova (No. 152/2014), the sustainability criterion is implicitly addressed through provisions that ensure continuity, relevance and efficiency of the education system [1]. Even if the term "sustainability" is not explicitly mentioned in all sections, the legal framework includes principles and measures contributing to the sustainable development of education. According to Article 5, fundamental principles that can be linked to sustainability include:

- Equity and social inclusion principle: Ensuring equitable and uninterrupted access to education for all pupils, regardless of socio-economic background.



- Efficiency principle: Rational use of resources in education to maximize outcomes.
- Partnership principle: Collaboration between institutions, public authorities and the private sector to support educational projects and institutional activities.

The Education Code of the Republic of Moldova provides for the establishment of clear mechanisms for quality assurance in education through implementation of quality standards; continuous monitoring of the educational process by internal and external structures; regular performance evaluation of educational institutions [1].

The "Education-2030" Strategy of the Republic of Moldova focuses on the sustainable development of the education system, ensuring equitable access, quality and efficiency [5]. From the perspective of this strategy, sustainability is seen as a central pillar for ensuring continuity, relevance and impact of education in the long term. Ensuring quality education, sustainable in the long term can be achieved by equipping institutions with modern resources and ongoing teacher training. Projects promoting sustainability must facilitate access for all categories of beneficiaries (rural pupils, pupils with disabilities, etc.) and make efficient use of financial and material resources. The "Education-2030" Strategy requires a clear framework for integrating sustainability into educational projects, emphasizing the balance between the financial, institutional, environmental, social and curricular dimensions [5]. Projects that include practical measures in these areas not only align with national priorities, but also maximize their long-term impact and sustainability.

**Table 2. Relevant dimensions of the sustainability criterion in relation to the sustainability assessment indicators according to the Education-2030 Strategy [5]:**

<b>Criteria dimensions</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Relevance for projects</b>	<b>Financial indicator</b>
<b>Financial sustainability</b>	It underlines the need to mobilize and diversify financial resources for education, ensuring investments in infrastructure, training and digital resources are efficient and sustainable in the long term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects must clearly demonstrate sources of post-implementation funding (additional grants, fees, sponsorship).</li> <li>• The education budget must be used optimally, avoiding inefficiency.</li> </ul>	Percentage of educational expenditure supported from alternative sources.
<b>Institutional sustainability</b>	It proposes to strengthen the capacity of educational institutions to ensure project results are maintained and continue as an integrated part of everyday activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutions must demonstrate the capacity to integrate the project resources into their structures (e.g. digital labs, new methodologies, modernized premises).</li> <li>• Continuous training of teachers and administrative staff is essential for the implementation and use of the results.</li> </ul>	Number of implemented resources still in use after project implementation.
<b>Environmental sustainability</b>	It should contribute to raising environmental awareness and reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement environmentally friendly solutions such as reducing energy</li> </ul>	Energy savings per institution or percentage of green materials used.

	environmental impacts. Educational infrastructure must be built and maintained in accordance with environmental sustainability principles.	consumption, using recyclable materials or purchasing energy-efficient equipment.	
<b>Social sustainability</b>	It emphasizes equitable access to education, reducing disparities between regions and vulnerable groups, and social inclusion through education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects must demonstrate how they will contribute to reducing inequalities (e.g. access for pupils in rural areas or with special needs).</li> <li>• Work with local communities and education partners to multiply the benefits of projects.</li> </ul>	Number of pupils from vulnerable groups benefiting from projects.
<b>Curriculum and educational resources sustainability</b>	It underlines the importance of a relevant and dynamic curriculum responding to the demands of a changing labour market and society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of digital educational resources and reusable teaching aids.</li> <li>• Provide access to resources through online platforms and digital libraries.</li> </ul>	Percentage of digital and repetitively used educational materials.

Source: Own work

The sustainability criterion is considered the most vulnerable in the evaluation of educational projects as it involves complex and long-term challenges that are more difficult to demonstrate and implement compared to other criteria. Unlike other criteria (such as relevance or effectiveness), sustainability requires a clear vision of how the project will continue to have an impact after the initial funding ends. In the process of developing a project proposal most schools have limited resources to detail and subsequently implement post-implementation plans. Sustainability planning requires additional effort to identify alternative funding sources, institutional structures and partnerships. In many cases financial and institutional sustainability depend on factors that are not always under the project team's control. Thus, changes in public policy or government priorities may affect the resources available to continue the projects. And partners' financial or logistical commitments may become uncertain in the long term.

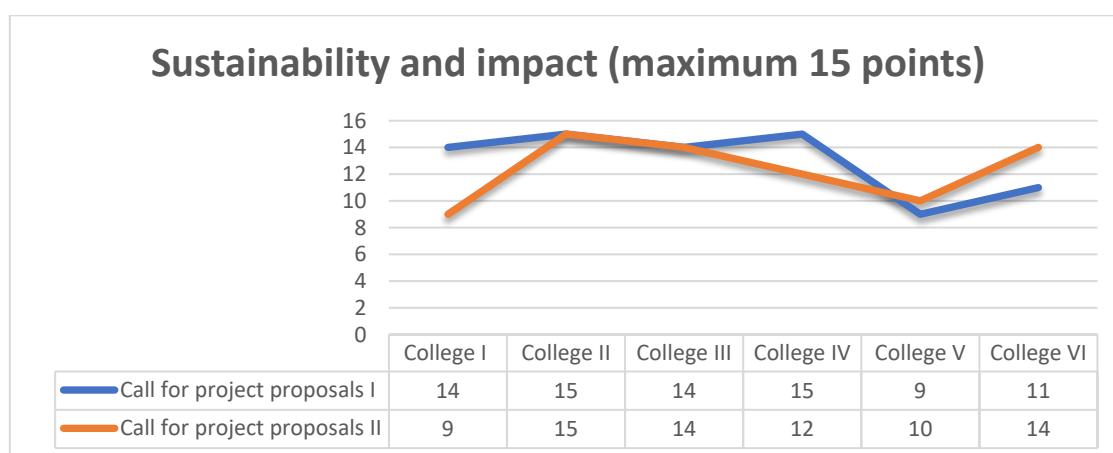
Educational projects often focus on immediate results, overlooking environmental measures that could contribute to sustainability. There are situations where lack of some environmental components (energy efficiency, recycling, sustainable use of resources) can lower the score on this criterion. Failure to integrate environmental sustainability limits long-term sustainability. Unfortunately, educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova consider only the context they are operating in, without focusing on a replication and dissemination mechanism. Projects should demonstrate how the results can be replicated in other institutions or contexts. If the project does not include scaling-up strategies, its impact will be perceived as limited. The lack of strong partnerships for transfer of good practices affects the perception of sustainability. Not all educational institutions



are prepared to integrate sustainability as a fundamental principle in their activities. Some institutions perceive projects as one-off initiatives rather than catalysts for systemic change. A lack of dedicated teams or an organizational culture oriented towards maintaining results can undermine sustainability.

A project that is not properly planned or implemented (effectiveness criterion) will have difficulties in ensuring sustainability. Lack of relevance to community needs may affect long-term support. In this context, sustainability is influenced by other criteria. Addressing these vulnerabilities could be achieved through detailed sustainability planning, diversification of funding sources, creation of clear indicators to demonstrate the long-term impact of the project (e.g. number of beneficiaries, use of resources), embedding the results in institutional structures, training of teachers and administrative staff to capitalize on the project results and integrate them into practice, creation of strategic partnerships with other relevant institutions.

The graph below shows how the sustainability criterion was assessed in two calls for proposals.

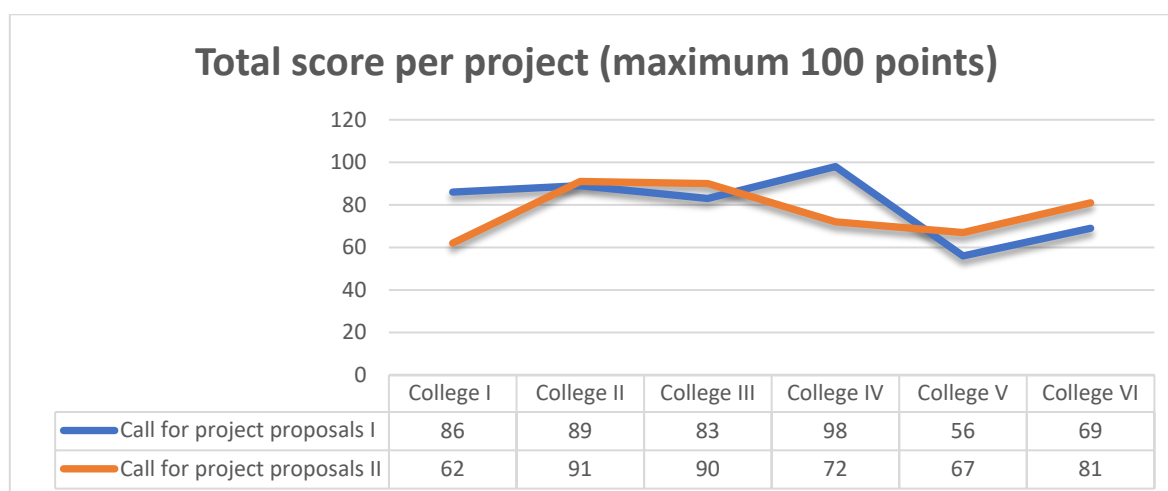


**Figure 5. Sustainability and impact**

*Source: Own work*

College I had a constant score for the sustainability and impact criterion that was able to score with maximum 15 points. This score indicates that the sustainability of the project was considered solid in both calls, with no notable improvements or weaknesses. Maintaining the maximum score in the case of College II reflects solid plans for sustaining the project's results in the long term. The constancy of College III indicates that sustainability was considered adequate with no significant improvements. The decrease for College IV reflects insufficient documentation of sustainability measures. College V showed a slight increase in score in relation to the detailing of measures for sustaining results. The score from 11 points to 14 points provided for college VI shows significant progress in planning and demonstrating project sustainability and impact.

The overall score of projects depends on a combination of objective factors, such as performance against the evaluation criteria, and the evaluators subjectivity in perceiving the overall quality of the project. Institutions providing well documented proposals, coherent and relevant to the strategic priorities are more likely to achieve maximum scores. The graph below shows the total score per project received from the six Moldovan colleges participating in two calls for project proposals within the framework of national education initiatives. The first call for project proposals was organized in January 2022 and the second call for project proposals – in September 2023.



**Figure 6. Total score per project**

*Source: Own work*

The graph compares the scores obtained by six colleges in the Republic of Moldova in two calls for proposals. All project proposals were evaluated by the same evaluator. Each college was evaluated according to several criteria that collectively had to score a maximum of 100 points, and the values are shown for calls for proposals I (blue line) and calls for proposals II (orange line). Thus, Colleges I and IV showed a significant decrease in score between the two calls. They should review proposal documentation and identify weaknesses such as lack of sustainability plans and impact justification. College II increased slightly in score (from 89 to 91), while Colleges III and VI showed moderate improvements. These increases indicate an adaptation effort and learning from past experiences. College V remains the lowest rated, although it has seen an increase (from 56 to 67). Overall, there are wide variations between the two calls for proposals, with a general downward trend for some institutions and upward for others. This variation reflects an uneven competition between colleges, with differences in institutional capacities and the level of professionalism of project teams.

## CONCLUSIONS

The cause of discrepancies between the scores obtained in the first and the second call for proposals is due to the fact that some educational institutions are unable to update their project proposals based on the feedback received in the previous call for proposals. Insufficiently updated documentation, lack of additional clarifications or budgetary details may lead to loss of scores. Lack of human or financial resources to develop adequate responses to additional criteria is also an impediment in accessing additional funds. In this context, educational institutions should analyse the evaluation criteria in detail and adapt the project proposals. In case they participate in one call for project proposals and subsequently the same donor launches another call for project proposals based on the same evaluation criteria, education institutions should integrate the feedback received in the first call and revise impact indicators and sustainability plans. Institutional capacity development through dedicated project writing and management teams is essential. To improve performance, institutions should strengthen their internal processes, pay more attention to sustainability and learn from past experiences.

Based on the evaluation criteria presented above - beneficiary capacity, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability - some conclusions can be drawn regarding the evaluation process of educational projects, with particular reference to the Republic of Moldova:

**Table 3. Importance of a clearly defined structure of criteria**

<b>Importance of a clearly defined structure of criteria</b>	The evaluation criteria provide a standardised and objective framework for selecting projects with the highest potential for impact. They facilitate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritisation of well planned projects relevant to national strategic objectives.</li> <li>• Creating a transparent and comparable system for analysing proposals [2].</li> </ul>
Institutional capacity is crucial	Projects submitted by institutions with demonstrated capacity to manage funds and projects receive higher scores, highlighting the importance of qualifications of staff involved and documentation of project implementation track record [4].
Relevance as a central indicator of success	The relevance criterion receives the highest score, emphasizing the importance of aligning projects with identified needs and strategic priorities, such as those described in the Education-2030 Strategy of the Republic of Moldova [5]. Projects not integrating community perspectives or not aligning with national objectives tend to receive low scores [4].
Efficiency reflects optimal use of resources	In the Republic of Moldova, efficiency criteria evaluation in educational projects reveals some important lessons, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some projects do not provide sufficient information on how the funds will be used, which lowers the confidence of the evaluators.</li> <li>• Institutions collaborating with other organizations for co-financing or additional resources receive higher scores.</li> <li>• Projects with a solid track record in managing financial resources score better.</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness reflects practical planning</b>	Effectiveness assessed through the feasibility of activities and stakeholder involvement shows that projects that are well documented and include a detailed action plan score better. Involvement of beneficiaries such as teachers, students and communities are a key factor for success [2].
<b>Sustainability can be vulnerable</b>	The criterion of sustainability is considered the most vulnerable because of the difficulty to demonstrate the continuation of the project's impact after the end of the funding. Also, in the case of educational institutions there is a lack of financial and institutional planning to maintain results. Educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova should pay more attention to integrating sustainability into their strategic plans, including by diversifying funding sources and working with local and international partners.

Source: Own work

Experiences from the Republic of Moldova and the findings of UNESCO UIS reports emphasize that institutions need to adopt a more strategic and integrated approach to ensure the relevance and continuity of educational initiatives [6]. Investments in planning, monitoring and collaboration can transform education projects from one-off initiatives into catalysts for systemic change.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation of education projects remains a fundamental process for identifying added value initiatives and maximizing impact in the education sector. Valuable lessons can be drawn from the analysis of evaluation criteria and performance in selection processes, which can guide improvements in the quality of future proposals.

The standardized evaluation criteria - beneficiary capacity, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability - provide a transparent and comparable framework for project analysis. This allows fair selection and alignment of projects with national and international priorities. Standardization of criteria is essential to prevent subjectivity and encourage fair competition between institutions [2]. Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and climate change increases the quality of proposals. Projects that demonstrate a clear link with strategic priorities and respond to local needs are most likely to succeed. A detailed analysis of beneficiaries' needs and their involvement in project development significantly increase scores [5]. Projects addressing real community problems, such as educational disparities or digitalization, receive higher scores [4]. Effectiveness is directly linked to the quality of planning and coherence of the proposed activities. Institutions with experience and detailed plans score better, reflecting the feasibility and relevance of their proposals. Establishing SMART (specific, measurable, achieved, relevant, time-bound) indicators is crucial for monitoring and evaluating results [7]. Stakeholder involvement at all stages of the project brings significant benefits in perceived effectiveness. Projects that are well budgeted and demonstrate a favourable cost-benefit ratio are scored higher. Detailed budgets, together with clear justifications, inspire confidence in evaluators [2]. Projects that attract alternative sources of funding or use existing resources increase the chances of success. Integrating project results into institutional structures and identifying sources of post-implementation funding are essential for a high score (Education-2030 Strategy). In the case of Moldova, projects that include environmental components and promote resource efficiency are more highly rated.

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