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CASE STUDY

QLab Supports Moldovan ICT Sector

USAID, ICT Association and European Software Institute join forces to support ICT sector maturity in Moldova



ATIC senior representatives Olivier Prado and Veaceslav Kunev meet with ESI Center Eastern Europe Director George Sharkov to establish QLab.

CHALLENGE Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is the highest value-added sector in Moldova, yet ICT companies are having a difficult time identifying skilled employees. The limited number of graduates simply cannot keep pace with the speed at which the industry is growing. There is a continuous need for training to help this field achieve its potential for job creation and economic development.

INITIATIVE In 2007, the USAID Competitiveness Enhancement and Enterprise Development (CEED) and Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI) came together to assist ICT sector leaders in implementing a comprehensive process improvement program based on the Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI, SEI/Carnegie Mellon University). The European Software Institute - Center Eastern Europe (ESI CEE) used a unique approach named ITMark to bring CMMI to small and medium enterprises. The companies that had participated in the program were among the key founders of the Moldovan Association of Private ICT Companies (ATIC) that in 2009 joined their efforts to support ICT sector competitiveness and market growth.

One of the first strategic initiatives of ATIC, in cooperation with ESI CEE and CEED, was to tackle knowledge and growth challenges by establishing an IT Excellence center named ESI EE Quality Laboratory (QLab) in 2010.

RESULTS In its first year, QLab operated as a training center under the umbrella of ATIC, hosting a number of events to address the specific training needs of the Moldovan ICT industry. More than 16 enterprises and 151 trainees benefited from the high quality courses in project management, agile software development, HR development, customer service, process improvement and quality management.

Currently QLab is cooperating with major ICT stakeholders to formulate a mid-term strategic plan based on a needs assessment conducted by the subsequent CEED II project with methodological support from RCI and QLab. The plan aims to transform QLab from a training center to a leading capacity-building service provider in Moldova and throughout the region.