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**Competitiveness Enhancement and
Enterprise Development (CEED)**

SUCCESS STORY

Group Marketing Maximizes Visibility

USAID catalyzes the creation of a new high-quality winemakers association in Moldova



Members of the Moldova Wine Guild prepare to show their wines at the London International Wine and Spirits Fair.

The newly founded Moldova Wine Guild demonstrates the commitment of seven major Moldovan wineries to create a category of high-quality Moldovan wines that can compete internationally; and it is already putting Moldovan wine on the map.

Moldova is a small country, little known in the West, but with a long winemaking history. Until early 2006, this fact did not worry many Moldovan wine producers since they sold most of their wine to Russia. But difficult trading relations with Russia have now forced producers to search aggressively for new markets. However, lack of awareness of Moldova and its winemaking potential have hampered efforts and frustrated wineries, especially those that produce wines in a modern style which could be sold in Western markets. Moreover, Moldova has never had an effective wine promotion program.

Responding to this challenge, USAID gathered several of Moldova's leading wineries to discuss ways to raise the visibility of local wine producers by creating a category of high-quality Moldovan wines. International experts recommended that wineries be united when approaching new markets; only as a group would producers be able to grab the attention of buyers, journalists, and others in the international wine industry. Encouraged by USAID and confident in the Agency's desire to be a partner in their future development, seven Moldovan wine producers organized themselves as the Moldova Wine Guild. The Guild is the first of its kind in Moldova, established to maximize members' marketing efforts for greater results and impact in international markets.

Members of the Moldova Wine Guild moved quickly. With support from USAID, and another donor attracted by its initiative, the Guild exhibited at the ProWein trade show in Germany and then at the London International Wine and Spirits Fair. As expected, the Guild's unified approach has attracted attention, with several journalists already taking notice and helping the industry to "discover" Moldova. The formation of the Guild has also encouraged its members; one marketing manager commented after ProWein, "This was the first time that Moldova presented its wines on an equal level with our regional competitors. We felt proud of our participation." The success of the Moldova Wine Guild will not only benefit its members but will create opportunities for all Moldovan producers.