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# **Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership, Project, Phase II (2018-2021)**

## Final Evaluation Report

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*Today should be better than yesterday*

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## Disclaimer

This project evaluation report presents the view of the evaluator and does not necessarily fully correspond to the opinions of UNDP, UNV, TFD or other stakeholders referred to in this report. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information given here is correct. Any factual error that may appear is unintended and falls under the responsibility of the evaluator.

## Acronyms

C-19	COVID-19
CO	Country Office
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
EoD	Experts on Demand
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FF	Fully Funded
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IRH	Istanbul Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS
ISCF	Innovative Solutions Challenge Fund
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
KII	Key Informants' Interviews
KM Project	Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in the Russian Federation-UNDP Partnership Project
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MGIMO	Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russian Federation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
MoED	Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation
PFA	Partnership Framework Agreement
POPP	Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures
RBM	Results Based Management
RCF	Russian Challenge Fund
Rosstat	Federal Service for State Statistics of the Russian Federation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TFD	Russian Federation - UNDP Trust Fund for Development
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of References
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP PSO	UNDP Partnership Support Office in the Russian Federation
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

## Executive summary

The “*Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia - UNDP Partnership*” regional Project (KM Project) Phase II was launched focused on continuation of the progress from the Phase I (launched in 2016) on promoting innovations in expertise and knowledge sharing between Russia and partner countries. The KM Project has four main components:

1. *Database of Russian experts for international development and Russian Experts on Demand (EoD) programme* - an instrument for knowledge sharing via rapid deployment of Russian experts.
2. *Knowledge sharing under the Russia - UNDP partnership* - providing information, coordination and technical support to implementation of the Russia - UNDP PFA and the TFD Agreement.
3. *Volunteering programme* (via the UNV parallel funding modality) - enhancing the Russia - UNV partnership and to support in promoting deployment of Russian nationals as UN Volunteers.
4. *Internship and secondment programme* - hiring interns and secondees with a Russian citizenship to facilitate their contribution to UNDP work on sustainable development.

The independent final evaluation of the KM Project was carried out on the initiative of the UNDP and was focused on assessing the project performance and generating relevant findings, conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations, which can be used by UNDP and its strategic and operational partners in a next Phase (III).

The evaluation adopted a participatory approach, engaging wide range of stakeholders (50 persons) representatives of: UNDP IRH, including project team based in Moscow; TFD; UNV; MFA of Russian Federation; MoED of Russian Federation; UN Volunteers, UNDP COs, interns, and end-beneficiaries of Russian expertise. The wide participation was necessary to ensure accountability, promote ownership, facilitate future buy-in and arrive at comprehensive recommendations. The methodology was based on remote data collection and followed a mixed approach, using in parallel *qualitative* methods (individual interviews, focus group discussion and on-line questionnaires) and *quantitative* methods (diagrams, data from the questionnaires) as reflected in the Evaluation Matrix.

The overall conclusion on the analysed aspects of the project is positive, based on the conclusive evidences collected from the desk review triangulated with the reflections shared during the consultations with the key informants engaged within implementation.

The KM Project represents a highly *relevant* multi-dimensional regional knowledge management and capacity development initiative, which involves several UNDP COs from CIS region (within EoD and internship components), and some other UN entities (UN Volunteering component) from different countries and regions. The project reflects the thematic priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and it is aligned to the SDGs, UNDP strategic priorities as well as to Russia - UNDP Partnership Framework and Trust Fund agreements. The HRBA is mainstreamed, while the LNOB Principle is not expressly incorporated in the project design, although the project supports different initiatives focused on reducing the poverty, increasing social inclusion and empowerment of the people (at risk to be) left behind.

The Theory of Change (ToC) approach is well articulated, however during the project implementation the change pathway of the ToC is not analysed. The project is consistent in terms of results-based approach with a set of clear results, baselines, targets and quantitative and some qualitative performance indicators. The majority of the output indicators are quantitative and a few are qualitative, the UNV component has no qualitative indicator. The cross-cutting issues, such as gender aspects are partially incorporated in the project design, particularly gender disaggregated indicators,

unlike the targets. Some of the achievements are gender disaggregated and remarked in the annual reports.

The *Effectiveness* is one of the key strength of the project (just like the multi-dimensional partnerships), as the action performed well and (over)achieved majority of its quantitative and qualitative targets reflected in the project document. The exception the secondment, which did not work due to the legal framework issues.

The *database of the Russian experts* created in Phase I of the KM Project was further quantitatively and qualitatively improved during the Phase II. The *EoD component* contributed to multi-area knowledge sharing and capacity development via mostly prompt deployment of Russian experts. The project had a two-dimension effect: On the one hand, it increased the thematic knowledge and enhanced the functional and technical capacities of the end-beneficiaries from different countries and in some cases it boosted institutional development and influenced policy making; On the other hand, it promoted innovations shared by the experts and consolidated the partnership between the end-beneficiaries, UNDP CO and experts. The end-beneficiaries are not aware of the database and this represents an area for improvement.

The *internship* subcomponent worked well and it is confirmed by the high level of satisfaction of hosting entities and interns; while the *secondment*, as mentioned, did not work because of existing legal framework, but provided a valuable lesson described in the report.

The *volunteering* component performed very well generating bi-dimensional benefits as the result of the win-win approach. On the one side, thanks to UNV's mandate and its worldwide volunteer deployment experience, the Russian volunteers had the opportunity to gain valuable international development experience in the multi-cultural contexts; On the other side, UNV increased its popularity among the Russian nationals, which is proved by the increased number of active profiles in the UNV pool and increased number of deployed Russian nationals as UN Volunteers.

Analysing the project fulfilment versus use of financial resources the project managed to reach the targets in a *cost-efficient* manner using previous experience that have identified and piloted modalities of expertise sharing. The distribution of the costs per component is adequate and resources are used for the budget lines as planned and reallocated without significant deviations. The evaluation did not find any alternative solutions, which could be provided at fewer expenses and/or would be more economical for the project.

The project *impacted* positively the sustainable development in the partner countries and generated policy institutional and grass-roots level changes through four distinct mechanisms or modalities, particularly EoD, internship, volunteering and support in sharing the available Russian expertise.

The *sustainability* prospects of the final achievements represent a mixed picture: promising regarding the policy, institutional and environmental sustainability prospects and mostly mixed in terms of financial sustainability aspects.

Following the analysis of the gathered data and consultations, the evaluation developed and explained seven recommendations for the next phase of the project:

1. *Capitalize on achievements and extend the project coverage.*
2. *Drop off the „secondment“ component.*
3. *Improve the project design aspects.*
4. *Reinforce the Russian Challenge Fund under the EoD component.*
5. *Increase engagement of the recipient countries.*
6. *Consolidate the partnership with UNV and fine-tune some procedures.*
7. *Promote more actively the database of available Russian expertise.*

## Part I. INTRODUCTION

The independent final evaluation of the “*Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia - UNDP Partnership*” Project, Phase II (hereinafter the KM Project) was carried out on the initiative of the UNDP. The evaluation was focused on assessing the project performance and on generating relevant findings, conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations, which can be used by UNDP and its strategic and operational partners in a next phase (III) of the project.

The evaluation report is prepared based on a review of the documents related to the project and remote consultations with stakeholders from different countries covered by the project. The report provides the background and the context, describes the overall methodology of the evaluation and the manner in which it was conducted, and reveals key findings, conclusions, lessons which should be learnt and provides the respective recommendations for increasing the project relevance, performance, efficiency and sustainability. The annexes are: evaluation questions, evaluation matrix, list of consulted stakeholders, list of reviewed documents, bio of evaluator and TOR.

## Part II. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The “*Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia - UNDP Partnership*” regional Project (KM Project) Phase I was launched in 2016 to support newly established Russia - UNDP Partnership and TFD by promoting innovations in expertise and knowledge sharing between Russia and partner countries. Phase I resulted in many positive outcomes and confirmed high relevance of Russian expertise for the development challenges in partner countries, especially in the CIS regions to be developed in Phase II.

**The main goal** of the project in Phase II (2018-2021) is to scale up several mechanisms of Russian expertise sharing applied in Phase I to support achievement of sustainable, scalable development impact in UNDP partner countries.

**The outcome** of the project is addressing the poverty and inequalities through more inclusive and sustainable development pathways and expertise and knowledge sharing and establishing new diverse partnerships with emerging donors and other stakeholders as stipulated.

The KM Project has four main components:

1. *Database of Russian experts for international development and Russian Experts on Demand (EoD) programme* - an instrument for knowledge and know-how sharing via rapid deployment of Russian EoD small-scale interventions, consultancies and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.
2. *Knowledge sharing under the Russia - UNDP partnership* - providing information, coordination and technical support to implementation of the Russia - UNDP PFA and the TFD Agreement.
3. *Volunteering programme* (via the UNV parallel funding modality) - enhancing the Russia - UNV partnership and to support in promoting deployment of Russian nationals in development projects as UN Volunteers.
4. *Internship and secondment programme* - hiring interns and secondees with a Russian citizenship to facilitate their contribution to UNDP work on sustainable development agenda while simultaneously enhancing their professional background.

The Project is funded by the Government of the Russian Federation through the TFD and implemented by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) in partnership with three ministries of Russian Federation: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Development.

The project is delivered with the project management and implementation support by the Project team based in Moscow under the overall supervision of the IRH Partnerships Team Leader and the Head of Partnership Support Office.

## Part III. EVALUATION APPROACH

### 3.1 Scope and objectives

The scope of the project review is to undertake a final evaluation of the project relevance, performance and progress towards its outcomes and outputs, challenges encountered and good practices.

The purpose of the final evaluation of the KM Project was twofold:

- *Assess the project performance* in terms of: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, early signs of impact, and sustainability prospects and
- *Identify the key factors (incl. C-19), which influenced achievements as well as the good practices, key lessons to be learned and develop tailored and forward-looking recommendations* for increasing the performance, maximizing the effects and consolidation the sustainability of the achievements.

It is expected that the evaluation, among other effects, will contribute to: 1) internal learning (*'improving'*) of the UNDP management and partnership approach and 2) increasing the relevance and performance (*'proving'*) of the next phase (III) of the Project.

### 3.2 Evaluation Management

To ensure effectiveness and quality of the final evaluation undertaken by the External Evaluator the evaluation report was submitted to UNDP IRH representatives: New Partnerships and Emerging Donors Team Leader and Regional Programme Coordination/RBM and Quality Assurance Specialist for qualitative review, ensuring relevance of the evaluation approach and identification of factual errors, omission or interpretation.

The UNDP IRH was consulted on key aspects of the evaluation process and provided input at key stages of the evaluation: inception report; draft and final reports.

### 3.3 Methodology

The final project evaluation adopted a participatory approach, engaging a wide and diverse range of stakeholders of the project. Participation of the main partners was a necessary condition to ensure accountability, promote ownership, facilitate future buy-in and arrive at comprehensive recommendations for UNDP, UNV, TFD and other project partners and stakeholders.

The methodology was based on remote data collection and followed a mixed approach, using in parallel *qualitative* methods (individual interviews, focus group discussion and on-line questionnaires) and *quantitative* methods (diagrams, data from the questionnaires) as reflected in the Evaluation Matrix.

The final evaluation took place over end of August - September 2021. The assessment process included three distinct phases as described below in the Table 1.

Table 1: *Phases of the final evaluation*

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Deliverable</i>
Inception phase	Preliminary desk review and initial remote interviews with UNDP project team and TFD to familiarize with the project intervention logic, identify the sampling framework and to fine-tune the evaluation methodology.	Inception report

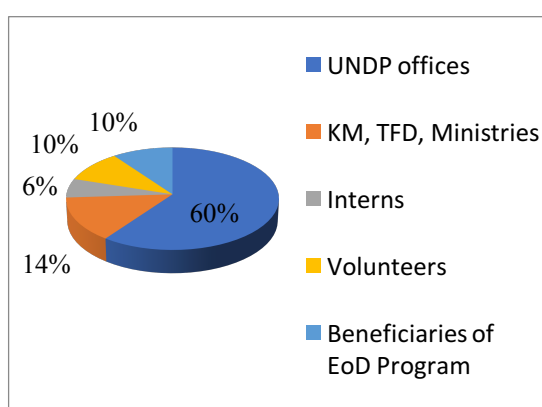


Data-collection phase	Further collection of documentation; in-depth desk review; remote interviews with the project stakeholders and online data collection through the questionnaires.	Draft Evaluation report
Data analysis and report synthesis	Analysis of the collected data, definition of findings in line with the evaluation objectives, assessment of progress and contribution of the project to achieved results, development of recommendations. Consultation/verification and peer review of draft evaluation report and final reporting.	Final Evaluation report.

Primary information was collected by the evaluator through remote semi-structured interviews, focus-group discussions and questionnaires sent by email. These involved a total of 50 interviewees (including 29 women) representatives of: UNDP IRH, including project team based in Moscow; TFD; UNV; MFA of Russian Federation; MoED of Russian Federation; UN Volunteers, UNDP COs, interns, and end-beneficiaries of Russian expertise.

The geographical coverage of the evaluation included 16 countries. See Figure 1 and Annex 2 of the evaluation report.

Figure 1: Respondents involved in the final evaluation



Evaluation questions were slightly tailored for each of the consulted stakeholder groups. *Secondary information* was gathered by the evaluator through the desk-review of written strategic and project documents, progress reports, knowledge products, and other documents provided by the project team. The full list of documents is presented in Annex 3 of the final evaluation report.

Collected data have been grouped by the evaluator into assessment areas (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability) and their sub-themes. Available documentation and involved structure of interviewees allowed quality evaluation of the data against the indicators in the logical framework and their triangulation in major part of the project. Both quantitative and qualitative aspects were considered and assessed.

The following methodologies in data analysis were found relevant and applicable:

Table 2: Analysis methodologies applied.

Method	Rationale
Responsibility assignment mapping	As a result of the logic of the intervention based on wide partnership and involvement of a wide range of UNDP offices, UNV and, educational institutions and other stakeholders, the evaluation systematised the collected data on partnership arrangements and expressed need for cooperation. Ultimately, this helped reaching conclusions on effectiveness and efficiency of the support and recommendations on how to increase the effectiveness of the cooperation.
	Collected data were systematised and compared against the achievements and expected changes according to the Theory of Change described in the

Change analysis	KM Project document. This helped reaching conclusions on progress of the project towards the targets and most effective approaches and recommendations for the Phase 3 of the KM Project.
Contribution analysis	Contribution analysis proved to be the most appropriate method used in understanding the causes of achieved results, results chains, roles of each of the stakeholder involved and other internal and external factors, including both enablers and barriers. That enabled drawing conclusions around the identification of the main contributors, including the level of contribution of UNDP, Russian experts, interns, volunteers and UNDP CO to the achieved results.
Attribution analysis	It was challenging considering the multi-stakeholder approaches of the initiatives supported by the KM Project. Still, the evaluator analysed the data trying to identify unique interventions and their effects that might be solely or largely attributed to KM Project.

The final evaluation adhered to the principles established in the UNDP Evaluation Policy. A collaborative and supportive participatory approach was followed at all stages of the assignment. The transparency of the process was ensured by the availability of and the agreement on the methodology (inception phase) and by clear communication through the entire process with all stakeholders involved. To maximize response of the respondents, evaluation interviews were done in English, Russian, Romanian and conducted via Zoom.

### 3.4 Quality Control, Challenges and Limitations

Diverse sources of information were used, and types of information gathered during the assignment. The data obtained from the desk-review of documentation and remote interviews ensured enough information for triangulation and synthesis of objective conclusions. Variety of data analysis methods mentioned above were applied in order to best respond to the requirements of the assignment.

Comprehensive and processed data were provided on most aspects through relevant project documentation and knowledge products. The evaluation methodology ensured a reasonable mix of sources and types of information gathered to ensure objectivity of conclusions and recommendations.

Evaluation had four „*check points*“, which increased the quality of the assignment and deliverables:

1. Review of the Inception Report to ensure that the requirements of the TOR are met.
2. Presentation and discussion of the preliminary findings and conclusions at the end of the remote data collection phase.
3. Review of the draft evaluation report.
4. Acceptance of the completed external evaluation report.

Adjustments were made to reflect feedback at each of these points. More interaction contributed to the quality of the key deliverables. Evaluation did not encounter any significant limitations in terms of available data. Most of the identified evaluation risks at the inception phase<sup>1</sup> have not materialized in negative effects on the evaluation and its results.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Inception Report for the final evaluation of the KM Project, August 2021.

These were largely thanks to the support provided by the project team, its openness in sharing available information and reflect on the evaluated topics. Still, the following challenges and limitations should be taken into consideration, in order to understand the scope of the evaluation report and to correctly interpret, use and communicate the data:

Table 3: *Challenges and limitations*

Scope	The focus of the evaluation was on the <i>relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact</i> signs and <i>sustainability</i> aspects in order to synthesize supportive recommendations for the remaining period of the project and future programming. Aspects of the <i>coherence</i> as evaluation criteria were not included in the ToR and were not assessed. The evaluator analysed briefly the synergy aspects.
Representation	The evaluation managed to ensure representation of all main stakeholders relevant for the project. The evaluation was not able to e-meet representative of the Ministry of Finance, who did not react to the messages. However, the evaluator managed to gather sufficient information to formulate evaluation findings and recommendations related to all key aspects of the project.
Approach	The evaluation was mostly done according to the methodology described in the report and outlined in the TOR. Because of the C-19 pandemic situation and the multi-country coverage of the KM Project the field visits and subsequently direct observations of the achievements were not feasible. The evaluator used remote cross-checking approach/triangulation to validate some of the findings.

### 3.5 Ethical aspects

The evaluation of the project was carried out according to ethical principles and norms established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)<sup>2</sup>.

- *Anonymity and confidentiality.* The evaluation respected the rights of individuals who provided information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.
- *Voluntary participation.* The evaluation respected the rights of all stakeholders consulted regarding voluntary participation in the project evaluation process, including their right to withdraw at any stage, if they so decide.<sup>3</sup>
- *Responsibility.* The evaluator is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected and for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- *Integrity.* The evaluator is responsible for highlighting all issues not only those specifically mentioned in the TOR.
- *Independence.* The evaluator ensured his independence from the intervention under evaluation, and he was not associated with its management or any element thereof.
- *Validation of information.* The evaluator is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected while preparing the reports and is responsible for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- *Intellectual property.* In handling information sources, the evaluator respects the intellectual property rights of UNDP.

<sup>2</sup> For additional information see: UNEG Ethical Code of Conduct to Evaluations in the UN system: [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100)

<sup>3</sup> None of the interviewed stakeholders has withdrawn.

## PART IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This part of the report presents the findings and analysis of the final evaluation organized to highlight project *Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact* and *Sustainability* prospects, as required in the ToR and specified in the inception report developed by the evaluator.

### 4.1 RELEVANCE

The relevance is assessed mostly by the extent to which the project is in line with the thematic priorities globally SDGs/Agenda 2030, UNDP's strategic priorities and the development needs of the end-beneficiaries and other project stakeholders. It takes into account the degree to which the logic of intervention and the design are consistent and coherent for achieving the expected results. The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), cross-cutting issues and the LNOB Principle are also analysed.

#### 4.1.1 Consistency between the KM Project and strategic priorities of UN/UNDP and beneficiaries.

Evaluation findings show that the project is relevant and consistent with both UN global thematic and UNDP strategic priorities as described below.

Thus, the KM Project is aligned to the UNDP Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2018-2021), which is focused on regional public goods and common development challenges, identified in the country programmes of the region and connection programme countries in capturing and sharing lessons learned and success stories, and in accessing regional/global expertise, including through triangular cooperation.

The regional programme states: „*Under the overall objective of accelerating achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Europe and the CIS, the priorities of the programme are captured in the following three outcomes: 1) Accelerating structural transformations for sustainable development through more effective governance systems<sup>4</sup>; 2) Addressing poverty and inequalities through more inclusive growth<sup>5</sup>; and 3) Building resilience to shocks and crises.*

*The programme applies, tailors and combines the UNDP global offer of signature solutions, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021. These include: a) keeping people out of poverty; b) strengthening effective, accountable and inclusive governance; c) enhancing prevention and recovery for resilient societies; d) promoting nature-based solutions for a sustainable planet; e) closing the energy gap; and f) strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment.*”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Output 1.1. *Low-emissions and climate resilience objectives are integrated into development policies and plans through regional initiatives promoting economic diversification and green growth;*

Output 1.2: *Regional capacity development initiatives and dialogues facilitated to improve social protection systems;*  
Output 1.4: *New forms of evidence and methods explored and leveraged through digital technologies, new sources of data and other innovative methods to address public service challenges common to the region;*

Output 1.5. *Data and risk-informed development policies, plans, systems and financing incorporate integrated solutions to reducing disaster risks, enabling climate change adaptation and mitigation, and preventing conflict and*

Output 1.6: *Solutions and regulatory frameworks to address conservation, sustainable use and equitable benefit-sharing of natural resources, developed in line with international conventions and national legislation through regional and cross-regional initiatives.*

<sup>5</sup> Output 2.3; *Enabling environment strengthened through diverse partnerships to expand opportunities for public and private sector, including alternative financing, for achievement of the SDGs*

Output 2.6. *Regional/subregional standards and practices enable evidence-based sustainable urbanization and local development, through smart cities and delivery of innovative, responsive public services, including for marginalized and key populations.*

<sup>6</sup> For additional information: <https://undocs.org/DP/RPD/REC/4>

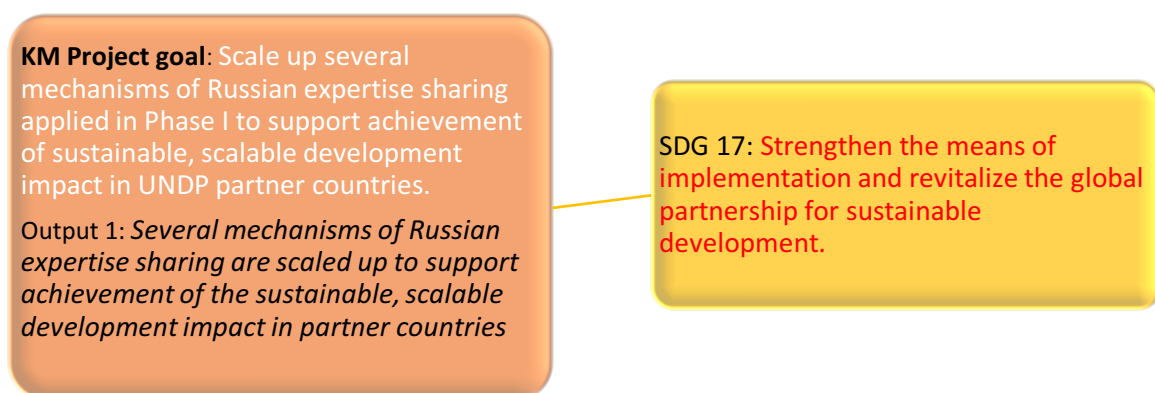
The KM Project is in line with the Russia - UNDP Partnership Framework Agreement (PFA) and Trust Fund Agreement, which states: „*The purpose of this agreement is to: a) strengthen the partnership between the parties; b) foster international partnerships that contributes to addressing development challenges of developing countries; c) collaborate based on the Russian Federation`s potential as a donor and a global development partner..., especially in the region of the Commonwealth of Independent States and d) increase the participation of the Russian Federation in the regional and global development activities of UNDP.*”<sup>7</sup>

The project involved in international development cooperation a wide range of individual experts, interns, UN volunteers, academic institutions, think tanks, NGOs from Russia as reflected in the above mentioned PFA, which foresees that Russia and UNDP collaborate in „*leveraging the knowledge, experience and expertise in development cooperation, including by involving academic institutions and individual experts from the Russian Federation.*”<sup>8</sup>

The project is rooted in the priorities of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, which, among others, is focused on helping the countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development through building on strengths, increasing the partnerships and promoting innovations.<sup>9</sup>

The KM Project supports multi-stakeholder and multi-dimensional partnerships between the UNDP, UNDP CO, other UN entities, individuals, state/non-state entities from Russian Federation and other stakeholders from different countries<sup>10</sup> and is aligned to the SDG 17 (*Partnership for the Goals*) as illustrated in the Figure 2.

Figure 2: Contribution of the project to SDGs.



The desk review and the consultations with the stakeholders show that beside the core linkage to the SDG 17, the project contributes to implementation of a large number of SDGs by supporting transfer of thematic Russian expertise, for instance on: improving healthcare<sup>11</sup>;

<sup>7</sup> For additional information: *Partnership Framework Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of the Russian Federation.*

<https://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/partnerships/russa-undp-partnership.html>

<sup>8</sup> For additional information: *Partnership Framework Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of the Russian Federation.*

<https://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/partnerships/russa-undp-partnership.html>

<sup>9</sup> For additional information: <https://strategicplan.undp.org/>

<sup>10</sup> See the Chapter: *Partnership.*

<sup>11</sup> SDG 3: *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.*

women economic and social empowerment<sup>12</sup>; increasing energy efficiency<sup>13</sup>; promoting digitalization and innovations<sup>14</sup>; increasing the social inclusion of the persons living with disabilities (PwD) and supporting youth employment<sup>15</sup>; urban development<sup>16</sup>; combating climate change<sup>17</sup>; protection of ecosystems<sup>18</sup>.

The UN's LNOB Principle<sup>19</sup> as such is not reflected in the project document, which represents an area for improvement. Nevertheless, the project supports the LNOB Principle by providing expertise (through EoD, interns, UN Volunteers) for increasing the social inclusiveness of the people left behind or at risk to be left behind. Some illustrative examples are support in: development of the participatory budgeting in Uzbekistan, which among others targets youth and women involvement; women economic empowerment (Armenia); increasing accessibility of public services and mainstreaming disability aspects (Kyrgyzstan), increasing digital literacy of women (Moldova).

The consultations with the UNDP CO and end-beneficiaries of the Russian expertise show that the KM Project is highly relevant for the sustainable development needs of the programme countries. As illustratively remarked one of the representatives of the UNDP CO from the CIS region: „We identify the need for external (Russian) expertise based on our strategic development needs reflected in the country programme document and operational projects and upon consultation with the national stakeholders. Our state partners are highly satisfied with the expertise support provided by the project and this proves its relevance.”<sup>20</sup>

The key reasons of high relevance of the Russian expertise are: common language (Russian); high professional level and adaptability of the experts, interns and volunteers; familiarity of the Russian experts with the development contexts of the countries; some common lines of the normative frameworks, as well as enabling environment or conducive country context.

#### 4.1.2 Consistence and coherence of the project design and intervention logic.

The project document reflects a clear Theory of Change<sup>21</sup> (ToC) approach, which describes the expected change pathway and consists of four types of interlinked changes/achievements (results-outputs-outcomes-impact), as well as four components/types of activities<sup>22</sup>, three risks<sup>23</sup> and two assumptions<sup>24</sup>. The desk review and consultations revealed that both initial assumptions are mostly valid as planned, i.e. the Russian expertise is indeed in high demand in

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<sup>12</sup> SDG 5: *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*;

<sup>13</sup> SDG 7: *Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all*;

<sup>14</sup> SDG 9: *Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive & sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation*.

<sup>15</sup> SDG 10: *Reduce inequality within and among countries*.

<sup>16</sup> SDG 11: *Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*.

<sup>17</sup> SDG 13: *Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*.

<sup>18</sup> SDG 15: *Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*.

<sup>19</sup> For additional information: <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind>

<sup>20</sup> Key informants' interviews.

<sup>21</sup> See the KM Project document, page 7.

<sup>22</sup> 1) *Database of Russian experts for international development*; 2) *Knowledge sharing*; 3) *Internship and secondment* and 4) *Volunteering*.

<sup>23</sup> 1) „*Potential security threats for experts, secondees and interns while on missions.*”; 2) „*High staff turnover in ministries and agencies participating in secondment programme*” and 3) „*Change in legislation or internal procedures in the ministries impeding the implementation of the secondment programme.*”

<sup>24</sup> „*Russian expertise is in demand in UNDP programme countries.*” and „*There is sufficient number of qualified and motivated Russian experts to work in development projects.*”



the programme countries and there is a consistent expertise available, which in a few cases was not sufficient.<sup>25</sup>

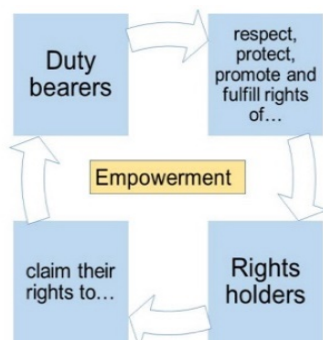
The third anticipated risk was materialised and because of unchanged legislative norms and regulations the secondment subcomponent was de-facto bottlenecked, just like in the Phase I of the project.

The Results Based Management (RBM) is well integrated. The link *baseline - performance indicator - target – results chain* is consistent and without the major gaps.

The results chain of the project consists of two expected **results**<sup>26</sup> – one **output**<sup>27</sup> – one **outcome**<sup>28</sup> - one development **impact**<sup>29</sup>, which are linked to the main goal<sup>30</sup>. Each type of result has distinct indicators, which measure the project performance. Four out of six output-level indicators are *quantitative* expressed in *Number of....*, while two indicators are *qualitative*.<sup>31</sup> This shows that overall the project is oriented towards both quantitative and qualitative results and performance.

The UN Volunteering component has three indicators all of them *quantitative* and there are no *qualitative* performance indicators, which represents an area for improvement, i.e. there is a need to include *qualitative* indicators, as well. See the Recommendation 3 of the report. The key elements of the HRBA, as reflected in the Figure 3, are mainstreamed in the design, with the grater accent on the capacity strengthening of the „*duty bearers*”, i.e. public authorities from the countries, which are the direct beneficiaries of the Russian expertise.

Figure 3: The core concept of HRBA



However, the end-beneficiaries are the populations of those countries, i.e. the „*rights holders*”. In some cases, as described above (LNOB Principle), the „*rights holders*” were targeted directly by the project supported interventions.

However, in terms of expertise, budget allocations, consistency and duration of the interventions the greater focus was on

the „*duty bearers*”. This approach is somehow justified given the fact that the *duty bearers* are responsible for sustainable development. It is also in line with the needs identified and

<sup>25</sup> For instance in case of expert for the *EU Focal regions Project* in Moldova. One UNDP CO also mentioned that it was not able to find an expert on sustainable agriculture development, despite the fact that the area of agriculture is included in the data base and profiles of 7 agricultural experts are available.

<sup>26</sup> *Several modalities of Russian knowledge and expertise sharing are supported and The human resources and expert base on international development assistance in Russia strengthened.*

<sup>27</sup> *Several mechanisms of Russian expertise sharing are scaled up to support achievement of sustainable, scalable development impact in partner countries.*

<sup>28</sup> *Leverage the knowledge, experience and expertise in development co-operation Regional programme outcome 2. Addressing poverty and inequalities through more inclusive and sustainable development pathways*

<sup>29</sup> *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17) via enhancing the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.*

<sup>30</sup> *To scale up several mechanisms of Russian expertise sharing to support achievement of sustainable, scalable development impact in partner countries.*

<sup>31</sup> *Quality of the performances of the Russian experts (EoD component) and Level of satisfaction of returned secondees and interns with the contribution of the secondment or internship experience to their professional development.*

described in the project document and confirmed by the interviewed stakeholders during the remote data collection.<sup>32</sup>

The gender aspects are mainstreamed at the output indicators` level. All 6 output level indicators (see above) specify gender disaggregation. As for the project targets, they are cumulative and not gender specific. Project activities, as described in the Multi-Year Work Plan<sup>33</sup> as well as the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan<sup>34</sup> does not contain gender aspects. Still, the gender aspects are reported in the progress reports, for instance *nr of Russian interns/students/volunteers, including women*. In the absence of the gender disaggregated targets, the performance data from the reports have mostly a statistical value.

In conclusion, the KM project is highly relevant and aligned to the thematic priorities of the UN system, Agenda 2030 as well as strategic development priorities of the programme countries and end beneficiaries. The relevance is one of the key strength of the KM Project, which was confirmed by all interviewed stakeholders. The project design represents a mixed picture: mostly consistent regarding the results` chain, baselines, indicators, and with realistic targets, clear ToC and incorporated HRBA, but with some design gaps in terms of LNOB, gender aspects and qualitative indicators of the UNV component. These represent opportunities for learning, consolidation and further improvement. See the *Conclusions and Lessons Learnt* and *Recommendations* parts of the reports.

## 4.2 EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness of the project was assessed preponderantly by analysis of its achievements and progress towards the targets. The key supportive factors and challenges, which influenced the achievement and/or non-achievement of the outputs, are also analysed.

The evaluation findings lead to conclusion that ***the project performed well judging through the existing set of performance indicators, targets and satisfaction level of the beneficiaries. The effectiveness is high within all components, except secondment.***

The diagram 1 shows the satisfaction level of the stakeholders, particularly end-beneficiaries of the EoD programme, UNDP COs, Interns and UN Volunteers, who were asked to assess their satisfaction based on the scale from 1 - *completely unsatisfied* to 10 - *highly satisfied*.

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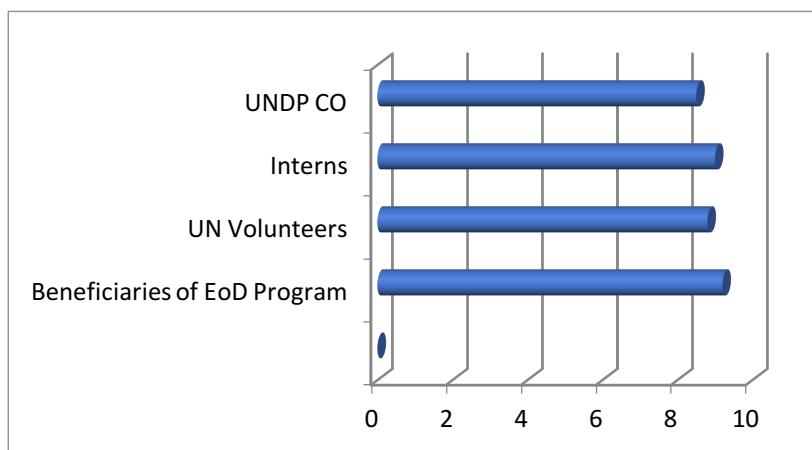
<sup>32</sup> Key informants` interviews.

<sup>33</sup> KM Project document, pages 21-21

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem, pages 19-20



Diagram 1: Satisfaction level of the stakeholders



The analysis of the diagram shows that the satisfaction level of all four types of stakeholders is high: UNDP CO – 8,5; Interns - 9; UN Volunteers – 8,8; end-beneficiaries of the EoD component – 9,2. This illustrates the relevance of the project, but also its

effectiveness. The findings regarding the stakeholders' satisfaction identified by the final evaluation are in line with the results of the survey among the COs undertaken by the KM Project, which also showed a high level of the COs' and national partners' satisfaction with the experts'.<sup>35</sup>

Below are described the project performance per each of the components.

**Component 1: Database of Russian experts for international development and Russian Experts on Demand.**

According to the initial logic of the intervention, this represents the core component of the KM Project in terms of: financial allocations, \$491,584 or about 36%<sup>36</sup> of the total budget; consistency of the involved expertise and generated results. In other words, it is the most expensive, but also the most productive component, which generated the core achievements.

**The project performed very well within this component judging through the existing set of performance quantitative<sup>37</sup> and qualitative<sup>38</sup> indicators.**

The database<sup>39</sup> of the Russian experts created in Phase I of the KM Project was further quantitatively and qualitatively improved during the Phase II. Thus, as of September 2021, the database contains 277 experts versus the baseline value<sup>40</sup> (December 2018) of 135, including 37% women. This illustrates an impressive 105% increase, which is significantly higher than 60% (20% per each year) targeted.

The thematic areas of the available expertise were also increased from 14 to 18 and four new areas were added during the Phase II of the project: volunteer development, gender mainstreaming, statistics and construction engineering. All, thematic areas of expertise are linked to SDGs, as mentioned in the *Relevance* part of the report.

<sup>35</sup> According to the survey: 50% of the respondents rated the quality of the expertise as 'outstanding'; 42.9% - 'very good'; 7.1% - 'good'. For additional information:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Y5yw2gBlgBn1vfgayClgvu60bmhytH2mPfrVKUp\\_Ff4/edit#responses](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Y5yw2gBlgBn1vfgayClgvu60bmhytH2mPfrVKUp_Ff4/edit#responses)

<sup>36</sup> Without taking into consideration the project management and administrative costs.

<sup>37</sup> Nr of people (disaggregated by gender) registered in database of Russian experts for international development and qualitative.

<sup>38</sup> Quality of the performance under Russian Experts (disaggregated by gender) on Demand assignments improved.

<sup>39</sup> The data base is available in two languages: Russian and English. For additional information see the thematic website of the KM Project: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/base/>

<sup>40</sup> Final Project Narrative and Financial report , Phase I. October 1, 2018

Before analysing the qualitative aspects of the component, it worth noting that the project supported both individual and institutional assignments of the Russian EoD. However, a greater focus was on the individual assignments, given the logic of project intervention.

Findings of the final project evaluation confirm the information reflected in the progress reports about the high quality of the expertise provided by the deployed experts within both types of assignments, i.e. individual and institutional.

The *EoD component* contributed to multi-area knowledge and know-how sharing and capacity development via mostly prompt deployment of Russian experts for a demand-based small-scale, but well targeted interventions and consultancies. The project had a two-dimension effect. Thus, on the one hand, as described in the progress reports and remarked by the interviewed stakeholders<sup>41</sup>, the project increased the thematic knowledge and enhanced the functional and technical capacities of the end-beneficiaries from different countries and in some cases it boosted institutional development and policy making; on the other hand it promoted innovations shared by the Russian experts and consolidated the partnership between the end-beneficiaries, UNDP CO and the experts.

The experts brought by KM project also significantly contributed to the implementation and increasing the effectiveness of the UNDP COs` projects and initiatives. A few illustrative examples are described below:

- *Kyrgyzstan*: KM Project supported Russian specialists from the Academy of Sciences, who delivered a series of online psychological trainings for members of the Republican Crisis Response Headquarter in the Kyrgyzstan aimed at improving the capacity of mental health and psychosocial support experts under the circumstances of the global C-19 crisis. The webinars were effective and highly appreciated by the national beneficiaries from Kyrgyzstan. As remarked one of the stakeholders: *“During training, our practicing psychotherapists and psychologists got acquainted with the peculiarities of providing psychological and psychotherapeutic assistance to the most vulnerable group of people in emergency situations, like the elderly. Special attention was paid to the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders in women in emergency situations. The methods of psychotherapy of adolescents who have experienced psychological trauma from the perspective of the theory of adolescent vitality turned out to be very interesting and informative.”*<sup>42</sup> This example highlights project`s contribution to the response to the pandemic crisis, but also implementation of the LNOB Principle by supporting women (gender aspects) and elderly people.
- *Turkmenistan*: The country seeks to develop its digital economy and introduce digital technologies across various spheres. Such changes envisage upgrading software tools for the collection, processing, and analysis of statistical data. The expert from Russia provided valuable support in reviewing the existing software and regulations within the State Statistics Committee of Turkmenistan and, subsequently identified and recommended the IT solutions for modernization, which are under consideration by the authorities from

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<sup>41</sup> Key informants` interviews.

<sup>42</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskie-psikhologi-pomogayut-kollegam-v-kyrgyzstane-v-borbe-s-psikhicheskimi-rasstroystvami-vyzva.html>

Turkmenistan.<sup>43</sup> This example illustrates, among others, the project efforts to mainstream innovations for a sustainable development.

- *Belarus*: The country faces difficulties with the full integration of the national economy into the global trade space. To support Belarusian efforts of trade integration, the expert<sup>44</sup> supported by KM Project conducted a thematic analysis of the existing economic system and conditions of Belarus. The Belarussian authorities also learned the best practices and received tailored recommendations for enhancing the productive export capacities of Belarusian businesses. The interviewed stakeholders remarked the importance of such type of expertise for facilitation of the integration of the Belarusian economy into global trade.<sup>45</sup>
- *Moldova*: Violence against women is an endemic problem in Moldova, deeply rooted in cultural norms and entrenched behaviours. According to the data of the National Bureau of Statistics, about 63% of women have suffered from at least one form of violence perpetrated by their partners.<sup>46</sup> To support Moldova's efforts in tackling the problem the Russian expert assessed the legal and social aspects of the situation in perhaps the most patriarchal Autonomous Region Gagauz Yeri and developed tailored recommendations. The evidenced-based solutions were discussed with the involvement of a wide range of state and non-state actors. As a result, they elaborated a regional roadmap based on the policy recommendations, proposals for changes in legislation, education system, but also measures to empower women in Gagauzia region.<sup>47</sup> This case shows the support of gender sensitive initiatives by the project.

Similar examples are coming from other partner countries, such as: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.

Along with specific expertise provided by individual consultants, the KM project successfully piloted the *institutional assignment modality* through cooperation of UNDP Armenia with a well-known Russian company *Strelka*, which is specialized on advancing innovative solutions for urban development and progressive landscape architecture practice. The company provided methodological support to urban anthropologists from Armenia and project development support on the place-making concept for three areas in Yerevan.

As remarked interviewed stakeholders, often the assignments are very complex and require multidimensional expertise, which cannot be offered just by one expert and need institutional expertise. Therefore, about 30% of the UNDP CO and end-beneficiaries of the EoD component expressed the need for institutional assignment modality. See the *Recommendations* part of the evaluation report.

The consultations also revealed than the end-beneficiaries of the EoD component are not aware of the database of the available Russian expertise, but welcomed its establishment.

## **Component 2: *Knowledge sharing under the Russian Federation - UNDP partnership.***

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<sup>43</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-sposobstvuet-modernizatsii-informatsionnykh-tehnologiy-gosudarstvennogo-komiteta.html>

<sup>44</sup> Head of the International Trade Laboratory, Director of the Institute of International Economics and Finance of the All-Russian Academy of Foreign Trade.

<sup>45</sup> For additional information: [https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-pomogaet-integrirovat-ekonomiku-belarusi-v-globalnuyu-torgovlyu-.html](https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-pomogaet-integriruvat-ekonomiku-belarusi-v-globalnuyu-torgovlyu-.html)

<sup>46</sup> For additional information: *Violence against women in the family in the Republic of Moldova.* [https://statistica.gov.md/public/files/publicatii\\_electronice/Violenta/Raport\\_violen\\_fem\\_eng.pdf](https://statistica.gov.md/public/files/publicatii_electronice/Violenta/Raport_violen_fem_eng.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-podderzhivaet-moldovu-v-borbe-s-gendernym-nasiliem.html>

This component according to initial planning was supposed to benefit of \$184,014 or about 13%<sup>48</sup> of the total budget. It is difficult to assess its effectiveness, because there are no performance indicators linked to this component.

The portfolio of interventions is very diverse and includes a wide range of administrative and logistical support actions, for instance:

- Support and facilitation of the UNDP missions to the Russian Federation and participation in the high-level events provided by the KM project team led by the TFD Manager (Third Annual Partnership Consultation hosted by MFA of the Russian Federation; St. Petersburg International Economic Forum; TFD Steering Committee Meetings; high level online consultations on the review of TFD implementation)
- Facilitation of the TFD monitoring missions and preparation of Russia - UNDP and other events (e.g. monitoring missions to Cuba, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan; Joint webinar with OECD on the ODA Learning Series 2020 on Deploying development expertise; Russia - Serbia Agribusiness Forum)
- Support to implementation of the Russia - UNDP Partnership Framework Agreement and the TFD (e.g. Climate Change workshop in Kazakhstan, TFD Steering Committee meetings)
- Drafting and facilitation review and clearance of the MOU with different actors (e.g. Eurasian Development Bank, Agency for Strategic Initiatives to Promote New Projects)

Evaluation concluded that given the multi-dimensional aspects of the actions **this component** requires significant efforts, dedication and time from the project team, but as illustrated above, it **is important in facilitation and supporting bi-lateral and multi-lateral collaboration, partnership development and knowledge sharing** between Russian Federation and other international development actors, including UNDP.

### Component 3: **Internship and secondment programme.**

This component according to initial planning was supposed to be the second largest component benefitting of \$257,059 or about 19%<sup>49</sup> of the total budget. However, in line the with the KM Project Board Decision on 15 May 2020 the funds were reallocated to other components.<sup>50</sup>

The evaluation findings show that **the project performance represents a mixed picture** - On the one hand, the **internship subcomponent worked well** and **it is confirmed by the high level of satisfaction of both hosting entities and interns**; On the other hand, **the secondment**, as mentioned above, **did not work because of existing legal framework, but provided a valuable lesson which should be learned**. See the *Conclusions and Lessons Learnt* part of the report.

#### 3.1 Internship

KM Project involved 30 students, who provided much appreciated by the UNDP COs short-term (3-4 months) support on the wide thematic areas identified by the hosting entities, such as: rule of law, human rights, access to justice, rural development, environment and climate change, energy efficiency, women and youth empowerment, communication etc. The beneficiary countries were: Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan and the IRH.

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<sup>48</sup> Without taking into consideration the project management and administrative costs.

<sup>49</sup> Without taking into consideration the project management and administrative costs.

<sup>50</sup> Out of \$250,000 to secondment of specialists from Russian institutions (\$50,000 for 2020 and \$60,000 for 2021), EoD programme (\$120,000 for 2021), and Internship programme (\$20,000 for 2021).

It worth noting that one of the success factors, which facilitated internship of the Russian students, was the partnership between UNDP and educational institutions, for instance Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (MGIMO). The partnership was consolidated in the Memorandum of Agreement, which states: „MGIMO will submit semi-annually to UNDP request for internships. UNDP in consultation with MGIMO will define possible places and thematic areas for the interns` positions and prepare a generic TOR whereby each intern will work.”<sup>51</sup>

According to the Results Framework of the project document<sup>52</sup>, this component has one performance indicator: 1.3 *Level of satisfaction of returned secondees and interns with the contribution of the secondment or internship experience to their professional.*

The satisfaction level of the returned interns is high as illustrated in the diagram 1 above. The evaluation concluded that the internships had a double positive effect: on the one side on hosting entities, which benefitted of the socio-economic development support of the interns; on the other side, as confirmed by their exit interviews<sup>53</sup>, survey<sup>54</sup> undertaken by the project team and as illustrated below, on the interns, who learned more about the UN system and got valuable thematic experience. Below are described a few evidences/cases provided by the consulted interns, which support the findings on the satisfaction level.

*„The internship at UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub was an exceptional experience for me. The work fully corresponded to my previous academic preparation and let me gain real practical experience that I was further able to implement already working as a consultant for my team. I was not expecting (and was pleasantly surprised) by the level of responsibility that I was granted by my supervisor during my working months. She trusted me in full and always listened to my opinion while making some important decisions regarding our programming.”* (Intern)

*„I am very satisfied, as I have learned how to apply my knowledge into practice. Dealing with such sensitive issues as human rights, I learned to be politically correct when interacting with various partners and stakeholders. In addition, I gained much experience in reporting and preparation of project documents.”* (Intern)

*„First and foremost, I received a consultancy contract with one of the projects which I indirectly cooperated with in times of my internship. So, from this perspective, the internship was a door-opener for me. At the same time, I applied several times for the UNV positions, including with the UNDP and I am planning to continue this process in the future.”* (Intern)

One intern remarked some adaptation and orientation related challenges: *„The hosting entity was very welcoming; thus, I had a feeling that initially there was no full understanding what tasks are going to be provided to an intern. However, they were welcoming my*

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<sup>51</sup> Memorandum of Agreement between United Nations Development Programme and Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. Article 1.

[https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/upload/MGIMO-UNDP%20Agreement%20on%20Internships\\_signed.pdf](https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/upload/MGIMO-UNDP%20Agreement%20on%20Internships_signed.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> See the KM Project document, page 18.

<sup>53</sup> Upon completion of the assignments, the interns had exit interviews where they noted the importance of gained experience of living in other country and culture, working in an international setting in relevant fields and exploring workflow of UNDP offices as well as understanding of local context and practice in development assistance. For additional information: KM Project progress reports 2019, 2020.

<sup>54</sup> The survey was undertaken in August 2020 among the returned interns from both phases of the project (2017-2020). It showed a high level of their satisfaction with the contribution of internship experience to their professional development (63% 'very satisfied', 32% 'satisfied', 5% 'somewhat satisfied'). [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XgCZtuFX9ozEvojWBYlvcVZvCvG72\\_PDsDFZB8uhwKc/edit#responses](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XgCZtuFX9ozEvojWBYlvcVZvCvG72_PDsDFZB8uhwKc/edit#responses)

*ideas/suggestions and tried to provide me with opportunities to participate to all the events that are of my interest.” (Intern)*

The satisfaction level of the UNDP CO, although was not included as a performance indicator, is also high as illustrated in the above mentioned diagram. The interviewed representatives of UNDP COs remarked the receptiveness, fast-learning, dedication and academic background of the interns. In a few cases<sup>55</sup>, they admitted that their expectations and needs have not been fully met by the background of the interns, but again underlined the proactive approach and team player spirit of the interns.

There are examples when the internships were extended and funded by the hosting entities, which, among other aspects, underline the sustainability prospects<sup>56</sup>.

### 3.2 Secondment

As mentioned, this subcomponent was bottlenecked because of the legal framework reasons, despite the declarative commitment of the line ministries. Therefore, after a series of the preliminary consultations with the MFA, MoF and MoED held on the suggestions towards the implementing the secondment programme, the KM Project Board reviewed and approved reallocation of the \$250,000, initially budgeted for the secondment.<sup>57</sup>

The Project Board also approved the idea of establishment of the *Innovative Solutions Challenge Fund (ISCF)* or *Russian Challenge Fund (RCF)*<sup>58</sup> as an instrument for facilitation of sharing Russian know-how and solutions in the framework of the KM project, which was planned to be piloted during the rest of Phase II. The Challenge Fund is a more flexible format for sharing innovative ideas: does not limit the participants to just individuals or institutions, envisages participation of a wide range of stakeholders: academia, federations, associations, businesses enterprises, NGOs, etc.

It is too early to assess the effectiveness of the RCF, it makes sense to widely pilot it during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of the KM project, given its advantages, such as: relatively simple operational procedures, reliable format and existing similar good practices in the Eastern Europe.<sup>59</sup>

See *Recommendations* part of the report.

Component 4: ***Volunteering programme*** (parallel funding).

This component according to initial planning got \$83,000 (through parallel funding) or about 6%<sup>60</sup> of the total project budget and was implemented under the overall leadership of UNV.

The set of performance indicators include three gender-disaggregated quantitative indicators: 1) *Number of active profiles of Russian specialists in the UNV pool*; 2) *Number of Russian nationals and organizations on the Online Volunteer pool* and 3) *Number of Russian nationals deployed as UN Volunteers*.

According to the existing set of indicators and corresponding targets, ***the project performed very well within this component and all the targets were achieved***. The 2<sup>nd</sup> target has an

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<sup>55</sup> For instance in case of communication background.

<sup>56</sup> see *Sustainability* part of the Report.

<sup>57</sup> Minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> KM Project Board, 15 May 2020.

<sup>58</sup> Challenge Fund was proven to be a reliable format successfully implemented under Czech, Slovak and Polish partnerships with UNDP.

<sup>59</sup> Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> KM Project Board, 27 April 2021.

<sup>60</sup> Without taking into consideration the project management and administrative costs.



impressive 363%<sup>61</sup> of achievements regarding the number of Russian nationals and organizations on the online Volunteer pool.

Just like in the case of internship, the findings show bi-dimensional benefits as the result of the win-win approach of the component. Thus, on the one side, thanks to UNV's mandate and its worldwide volunteer deployment experience, the Russian volunteers had the opportunity to gain valuable international development experience in the multi-cultural contexts<sup>62</sup> highlighted by them during the consultations; on the other side, UNV increased its popularity among the Russian nationals, which is proved by the increased number of active profiles<sup>63</sup> in the UNV pool<sup>64</sup> increased number of Russian nationals and organizations on the online Volunteer pool and increased number of Russian nationals deployed as UN Volunteers<sup>65</sup>.

Below are a few reflective testimonials expressed by the UN Volunteers from Russia consulted during the evaluation, which show the benefits of the volunteering experience, their satisfaction level, but also challenges encountered by some of them:

- „I was very satisfied of having got acquainted with the UNDP work in the country, and overall, it was a precious experience for my career, however I was expecting that there would be more induction and supervision.” UN Volunteer.
- „As this internship was my first real encounter with the UN, I've learned a great deal about the organization and the way it works (or doesn't) in addition to the cultural immersion and other benefits of moving for work. Most importantly, I've come to understand a more practical side of SDGs as opposed to a rather vague coverage in other sources. I've seen what it means to make SDGs happen on a local, national and global scale, and how much dedication and work it takes. An obstacle was the limited amount of advice that was provided beforehand. We received information packages about the country and some vital contacts, but it would have been beneficial to have an informal chat on the specifics of working at the UN/UNDP.” UN Volunteer.
- „My learning and working experience would have been more fulfilled if there were some introductory discussions or readings. Now, after I have started my UNV experience and have completed all the available courses and constantly reading the documents shared by colleagues, I see the difference... I think my work would have been much more efficient if at the inception phase I had a better understanding of the development cooperation framework and the portfolio of the UN system projects in the country.” UN Volunteer.
- „I have developed a solid knowledge of key trends and frameworks in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, field experience working in a conflict-affected country. My UNV modality has been upgraded (from Youth UNV to Specialist), and I was able to continue working for extra 6 months, after donor funding ended. The volunteering experience allowed me to better understand the regional dynamics, with its persistent conflicts and high levels of inequality. It became my first meaningful experience and in-depth exposure to the UN system, which I hope, will guide the next steps of my career.” UN Volunteer.

It worth noting that the impressive performance within this component, wouldn't be possible without the UNDP (KM project) assistance, which provided support in: 1) Dissemination of UNV information and recruitment of qualified Russian volunteers into the roster (e.g. partnership

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<sup>61</sup> 345 (incl. 252 women), 363% increase compared to 2019 (95 persons, no gender disaggregated data).

<sup>62</sup> In the UN entities from different countries, e.g.: UNODC Palestine, IOM Madagascar, UNDP Jordan, UNFPA Tajikistan, UNICEF Nepal, UN Resident Coordinator Office Guinea.

<sup>63</sup> About 75% versus target 30% per year. Annual KM Project reports, 2020.

<sup>64</sup> 3,954 persons, incl. 2,667 women (2020) versus 1,233 persons (June, 2018). Gender disaggregated data is not available for the baseline data (2018). See: Annual KM Project reports, 2019, 2020.

<https://vmam.unv.org/candidate/signup>

<sup>65</sup> 98 persons (50 persons in 2019 and 48 persons, incl. 32 women in 2020) versus 22 persons (2018).

with MGIMO, Higher School of Economics, Youth forum) and 2) Building partnerships between UNV and organizations from Russia and the other CIS countries (e.g. Russian Association of Volunteer Centres, Charity Foundation for the Promotion and Development of Volunteering, National Volunteer Centre, AVC).

As one of the key success factor was Full Funded (FF) Programme for the Russian Federation, which was officialised in the MoU between the UNV programme and the MFA of the Russian Federation signed in 2019. The Government of the Russian Federation approved the budget of US\$ 3,000,000 for the implementation of the 3 year FF programme in 2019-2021 aimed at ensuring the participation of Russian nationals in the activities of UN organizations.

#### **Key factors influencing the KM Project.**

Beside the legal and regulatory framework, which affected the secondment sub-component, the key factor influencing project delivery was/is pandemic situation<sup>66</sup>, which entailed border closure and consequent travel restrictions.

This factor affected project's *modus operandi* and its implementation dynamic. All planned global and regional events, and monitoring missions that used to be supported by the KM Project were cancelled or postponed.

As a management response, the actions with all active project components (EoD, Internships, UN Volunteering) were switched to online format. It generated savings, but also as remarked the interviewed stakeholders, affected interactions among them, somehow decreased the efficiency of the internships and volunteering, but also of the experts on EoD.

Still, as illustratively remarked one of the interviewed stakeholders: „*The pandemic situation increased our adaptability, enhanced our online communication skills and in the mid- and long-term perspective will boost digitalization, which is a positive aspect.*”<sup>67</sup>

Other factors, such as for instance some staff turnover within the UNDP CO and consistency of the national ToRs under the EoD component required additional efforts from the project team to cover the institutional memory gaps and to tailor the ToRs, but did not affect project delivery and its performance as such.

### **4.3 EFFICIENCY**

The efficiency was examined in terms of resources allocations and utilisation, cost-efficiency, the overall project costs, implementation of the major project activities and timeliness of the achievements. The aspects of project management arrangements were also considered along the evaluation process.

The project scored well regarding the cost-efficiency and effectiveness by leveraging activities and partnerships with other initiatives<sup>68</sup> and built on the previous experience that have identified and piloted modalities of Russian expertise sharing.<sup>69</sup> It also underlines the synergy with those initiatives.

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<sup>66</sup> COVID-19 pandemic declared by World Health Organization on 12 March 2020.

<sup>67</sup> Key informants' interviews.

<sup>68</sup> Such as: ongoing UNDP projects financed by Russian Federation (see: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/>), UNV initiatives (see: <https://www.unv.org/>), Russian research/expert centers on development assistance, etc.

<sup>69</sup> Final Narrative and financial Report „*Knowledge Management & Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership*”, Phase I.



Analysing the budget breakdown, it can be concluded that the distribution of the costs per components<sup>70</sup> is adequate. The analysis of the budget utilization for 2020<sup>71</sup> (90% TFD and 96% UNDP, average 91%) and absorption rate or delivery rate against the total budget (57% TFD and 81% UNDP, average 62%) shows that the financial resources invested in the project were adequately and sufficiently for reaching the initially planned results. The bottlenecked secondment generated savings, which as mentioned were reallocated to other components and contributed to a higher performance of those components. Still, the delivery rate should be increased by the end of the project, which means even a higher performance and underlines that the project has performed well in achieving the results in a cost-effective manner. The project managed to mobilize resources, from MGIMO, which, through parallel funding modality, covered the internship costs of 3 MGIMO students. UNDP additionally allocated the funds to pay GMS 8% from its contribution to the project.<sup>72</sup>

The resources are used for the budget lines as planned without deviations and the evaluation did not find any alternative solutions, which could be provided at fewer expenses and/or would be more economical for the project.

In terms of the timeliness of the implementation of the planned activities, because of the pandemic situation the project experienced lower implementation dynamic, which generated some delays and savings. Therefore, it was a smart decision to extend the project by 31 December 2021.<sup>73</sup>

The Project Board, as confirmed by its 4 Minutes was active during the project implementation period and was involved in the strategic decision-making and strategic monitoring. The project scores well in terms of monitoring, evaluation and learning and has structured M&E system. Thus, the following actions represented the MEL elements:

- Strategic monitoring done by the project Board, which analysis and endorses the strategic aspects of the project implementation, e.g. project fulfilment, annual reports, annual work plans, absorption rate, reallocations, non-cost extension, etc.
- Periodical bi-lateral (Zoom) in-office monitoring/conversations and emailing with the hosting entities, including the supervisors.
- Surveys (components related) conducted by the project team.
- Reporting of the Russian experts and institutions involved in the international development.
- Annual/progress reporting of the project team. The annual reports, among other chapters have a *Lessons Learnt* chapter, which is filled in by the project and which illustrates the learnings of the project team.
- Final project evaluation.

The management of the project is proactive, flexible and receptive, which is illustrated by the response to the pandemic (see above *Key factors influencing the KM Project*), but also prompt support of the project team to the UNDP COs, for instance in cases of: fine-tuning the ToRs, identification of the experts, guidance and communication. The project management team was remarked by the interviewed stakeholders, including UNDP COs as the key driving force of the project. The donor representatives are also highly satisfied with the project management, including communication and reporting.

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<sup>70</sup> The figures are presented in the *Effectiveness* part of the report.

<sup>71</sup> KM Project annual report. January – December 2020, Financial management, page 15.

<sup>72</sup> Thus, the UNDP funds in the project budget has increased from \$278,600 to \$300,888, while the total budget is \$1,653,352.07.

<sup>73</sup> Minutes of the 4th Project Board. 27 April 2021.

Both progress reports (2019 and 2020) are well-structured, evidenced-based and linked to the existing results framework and set of indicators. However, in the reporting there is no reference to the ToC, particularly there is no analysis of to what extent the changes are happening as predicted in the ToC from the project document, which represents an area for improvement.

#### 4.4 IMPACT

According to the project document and as reflected in the Theory of Change, the expected impact of the project is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development via enhancing the global partnership complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs in the developing countries. The KM Project impacted positively the sustainable development in the partner countries through four distinct mechanisms/modalities, particularly EoD, internship, volunteering and support in sharing the available Russian expertise.

The evaluation identified some country specific examples when the Russian experts not just influenced on-going development processes, but also boosted long-term (impact level) changes with the transformative potential at the policy and institutional levels, for instance:

- In Uzbekistan, as the result of the expertize delivered, the national stakeholders increased their knowledge and developed the national concept for participatory budgeting followed by the respective roadmap and revised funding sources, which highlight financial commitments of the national authorities. The new norms of the national concept for participatory budgeting, the thematic roadmap and financial commitments of the public authorities represent higher level changes, because at least two reasons: 1) long-term perspective, i.e. once adopted the norms and commitments are valid for a long period of time with a nation wide coverage and 2) potential for transformative/major change regarding the budgetary process, which expands public participation, involves the civil society and increases the accountability of budget spending by strengthening public oversight in Uzbekistan.<sup>74</sup>
- In Armenia the thematic recommendation of the EoD expert regarding institutional development of the Ministry of Environment was approved and the respective procedural documents were elaborated. This illustrates, the structural or system related changes within the national public authorities of the country, as the result of the scaled up expertise from the Russian Federation. There are also promising policy level changes linked to the drafted Regulation on Reforestation and Afforestation of the Forest Fund of the Republic of Armenia. This impact level changes are linked to the strategic commitment of the Government of Armenia to increase the national forest cover from the 11,2% to the optimal 20,1% by 2050. This commitment suits the country's obligations under the Paris Climatic Agreement.<sup>75</sup>

Early signs of the impact - level changes were identified in other countries, for instance: Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. However, the pandemic situation and restrictions affected not just the dynamic of the KM Project, but also the performances of the

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<sup>74</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-sposobstvuet-povysheniyu-vovlechenosti-obshchestvennosti-v-initsiativnoe-byudzhe.html>

<sup>75</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-okazyvaet-podderzhku-lesovosstanovleniyu-v-armenii.html>

hosting entities/national stakeholders. Therefore, the de-facto impact is quite difficult to be assessed at this stage and some transformative changes might happen later at the post - pandemic recovery stage as remarked some of the interviewed stakeholders.<sup>76</sup>

## 4.5 SUSTAINABILITY

The likelihood of sustaining the benefits of the KM Project at the final evaluation is particularly important. However, it is difficult to discuss about some sustainable aspects. Some achievements reflect a higher level of sustainability and some are premature to be assessed.

In terms of *policy sustainability* of the achievements, the project influenced or is in the process of influencing the national policies and regulatory frameworks in some partner countries (e.g. Uzbekistan<sup>77</sup>, Moldova<sup>78</sup>, Armenia<sup>79</sup>). This illustrates promising sustainability prospects, because once a policy, roadmap, regulation or other normative act is adopted it has a validity period for an undefined period of time, i.e. its sustainability is determined by the definition of the normative or regulatory framework. The same is valid in case of the operational procedures developed with the project contribution, for instance in Moldova<sup>80</sup> and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>81</sup>

In terms of *institutional sustainability*, the project was clearly geared towards knowledge sharing and capacity development of the key state and non-state actors from the partner countries. Evaluation findings and consultations with the stakeholders show that the institutional and individual sustainability perspectives are promising in terms of thematic knowledge acquired and skills developed. Staff turnover in the institutions and entities of the partner countries is a factor which affects the sustainability prospects.

The above described example with the Ministry of Environment of Armenia illustrates how the Russian expertise influences the institutional development of the Armenian state institutions, particularly enhances the environmental governance of the country. Similar example is in Turkmenistan, where the Russian expert worked on modernization of the information technology of the State Statistics Committee.<sup>82</sup>

Some of the interviewed representatives of the UNDP CO and end-beneficiaries (national partners) of the EoD component mentioned that they continue cooperation with the Russian experts, being the KM project. One of such examples was illustrated by a national partner: *“We started focusing on Russian incubators, accelerators and companies. Something was copied from them; we have a reference point - the Russian market. After the end of the project, we kept in touch with our expert from Russia and we turned to him for advice at the programme development stage.”*<sup>83</sup> The multi-dimensional partnerships developed by the project represent an important institutional sustainability indicator, because among others they are facilitating adaptation and institutionalization of the best practices for sustainable development.

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<sup>76</sup> Key informants` interviews.

<sup>77</sup> National concept and Roadmap on the participatory budgeting.

<sup>78</sup> Regulations on gender-based violence. See: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-podderzhivaet-moldovu-v-borbe-s-gendernym-nasiliem.html>

<sup>79</sup> Regulations on Reforestation and Afforestation of the Forest Fund. See: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-okazyvaet-podderzhku-lesovosstanovleniyu-v-armenii.html>

<sup>80</sup> The expert in urban mobility and dedicated bus lanes provided methodological support, including technical supervision in planning/piloting establishment of the public bus lanes in Chisinau. The City Hall introduced a series of rules for drivers.

<sup>81</sup> The expert developed recommendations on energy efficient solutions for modernization of lighting and heating system in the public school and operational procedures for implementation of a pilot project.

<sup>82</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/news/project-news/rossiyskiy-ekspert-sposobstvuet-modernizatsii-informatsionnykh-tehnologiy-gosudarstvennogo-komiteta.html>

<sup>83</sup> Key informants` interviews.

*Financial sustainability* of the project represents a mixed picture. On the one hand, it is promising given the examples of successful resources mobilization for instance from MGIMO (parallel funding) for covering the internships of 3 MGIMO students and express commitment of the Government of the Russian Federation to continue supporting the next phase of the KM Project; on the other hand, it is still unclear the future financial engagements of the UNDP COs to make use of their own funding to co-fund the costs of the Russian EoD or interns/volunteers. It is not a mandatory condition, but it would consolidate financial sustainability perspectives.

The UNDP COs highly appreciated the interns' contributions to implementation of the programme/project activities and COs' initiatives and there are examples (Belarus, Kyrgyzstan) when the COs extended the internships with funding from the office budgets. After the internships and volunteering, some interns and volunteers demonstrated a commitment to use their gained experience in UN entities and pursue a professional career in international organizations/development programmes and projects. This represents also a sustainability dimension regarding the interns and volunteers.

*Environmental sustainability* is consolidated through the thematic expert support environmental related actions, focused on: climate change, biodiversity conservation, reforestation, energy efficiency, urban mobility. The final evaluation did not remark any actions, which would produce harm or affect the environment.

#### 4.6 PARTNERSHIP

Normally, a partnership represents a sustainability aspect and is described within the sustainability criterion. However, given the KM Project's logic of intervention and architecture, evaluation decided to analyse it in a separate component.

The project document sets: „Partnerships are at the core of the project design...The project will continue reaching out to the Russian ministries, agencies, federal institutions and research centres working in international development assistance to collaborate on specific sectors for the expert database...“<sup>84</sup>

The evaluation concluded that **the partnerships were one of the key success factors. The project consolidated partnerships from the Phase 1 and supported two-dimensional (national and international) collaborations with the different state, non-state and inter-state actors, which represents consistent foundation for the next phase of the project.** Some examples are highlighted below.

*International dimension of collaboration.* The project performed well in establishing and extending numerous partnerships with a wide range of UNDP offices and other institutions:

- UNDP COs (Armenia, Belarus, Cuba, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Moldova, Serbia, Pacific Small Island Developing States, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe) and Istanbul Regional Hub of UNDP. The partnerships were within the EoD and internship components.
- Other UN entities, for instance: UNICEF (Nepal), UNFPA (Uzbekistan) UNODC (Palestine); IOM (Madagascar), FAO (Hungary), UN Habitat (Kenya), UN Women (Myanmar), UNHCR (Mozambique). The cooperation was established within UN Volunteering component, led by UNV. See the Figure 3 the coverage of the component.

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<sup>84</sup> Project document „Knowledge Management & Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership“ Project, Phase II. Page 16.

Figure 3. Coverage of the FF UNV component



Source: FF Programme for Russian UN Volunteers<sup>85</sup>

- Other international institutions, such as: Eurasian Development Bank and Eurasian Economic Commission.

*National dimension of collaboration.* The project reinforced and bridged involvement in international development of different organizations and institutions from Russia such as:

- Ministries of the Russian Federation: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development and Ministry of Energy<sup>86</sup>.
- Line agencies: Federal State Statistics Service *Rosstat*<sup>87</sup>, Russian Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring *Roshydromet*<sup>88</sup>.
- Educational institutions: MGIMO University<sup>89</sup>; University Higher School of Economics<sup>90</sup>;
- Innovation promotion companies: “KB Strelka”<sup>91</sup>; Agency of Strategic Initiatives<sup>92</sup> and Moscow Agency of Innovations under the Moscow Government<sup>93</sup>.

Final evaluation also underlined bi-dimensional management related cooperation: *UNDP/UNV dimension* and *UNDP/TFD dimension*.

The project followed Direct Implementation Modality and was implemented by the outpost team in Moscow under the New Partnerships and Emerging Donors Team in the UNDP Regional

<sup>85</sup> For additional information: <https://expertsfordevelopment.ru/volunteers/>

<sup>86</sup> E.g. during Russian Energy Week Forum.

<sup>87</sup> On statistics development, the agency was active also during the Phase I. For information: <https://eng.rosstat.gov.ru/>

<sup>88</sup> On hydro meteorological aspects, the agency was active also during the Phase I: For additional info:

<http://government.ru/en/department/49/>

<sup>89</sup> Including as funding entity, which covered costs of 3 MGIMO interns. <https://english.mgimo.ru/education/internship>

<sup>90</sup> Higher School of Economics signed a partnership agreement with UNV.

<sup>91</sup> Advancing innovative solutions for urban development and landscape architecture in Yerevan, Armenia.

<sup>92</sup> Promotion of greater international cooperation in the development of vocational education and training by sharing WorldSkills experience in Russia and other countries with UNDP offices and partner organizations.

<sup>93</sup> Strengthening collaboration to support UNDP CO in gaining access to Russian expertise and thematic innovations.

Hub for Europe and the CIS in Istanbul.

As remarked by the interviewed stakeholders<sup>94</sup> and confirmed by the project documents and reports, both partnership dimensions went smoothly, based on regular communication, active participation in the steering body/Board and according to the roles and responsibilities described in the project document<sup>95</sup> and strategic agreements.<sup>96</sup>

Evaluation also identified a next layer partnership support provided by the project. Thus, in one of the countries, the Russian intern contributed significantly to adjustment of the Partnership Plan for UNDP CO, which was revised and reconsidered. As the result, the new Partnership Plan (2021-2022) was aligned with the UNDP Country Programme Document and additional the potential partners were identified and mainstreamed in the document.

And last, but far not the least, as revealed the desk review<sup>97</sup> and consultations<sup>98</sup>, the KM Project and its stakeholders, especially UNDP COs followed the norms and guidelines of the Russian Federation - UNDP TFD Communication and Visibility Strategy<sup>99</sup> and cooperated actively with the national and social media outlets, as well as with the Russian Embassies from the countries, which regularly participated in the project actions, empowered the public events and increased the visibility of the actions. This also represents a distinct, but not distant partnership dimension, which should not be underestimated.

*Figure 4: Multi-dimensional partnerships likewise matryoshkas*



The described examples represent evidences, which support the conclusion that the project stimulated multi-dimensional partnerships and one-deriving from-other linkages, likewise matryoshkas illustrated in the Figure 4.

In sum, the KM Project was and still is implemented by UNDP in strategic (UNDP/TFD, UNDP/Line ministries) and operational (UNDP/other actors) partnership frameworks. These partnerships contributed significantly to share of Russian good practices and expertise and enhancing the capacities of the actors from the programme countries, but also increased the coverage and visibility of the project both internationally and within the Russian Federation.

The interviewed UNDO CO and their national partners expressed their commitments to continue cooperation with the Russian experts, interns and volunteers, which represents a promising sustainability indicator.

<sup>94</sup> Key informants` interviews.

<sup>95</sup> Project document „*Knowledge Management & Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership*”, Phase II. Pages 17, 23-24.

<sup>96</sup> Agreement between the Government of Russian Federation and UNDP for establishment of Russian Federation UNDP Trust Fund for Development.

<sup>97</sup> KM Progress reports 2019, 2020

<sup>98</sup> Key informants` interviews.

<sup>99</sup> Russian Federation – UNDP TFD Communication and Visibility Strategy, November 2016.



## PART V. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

This chapter of the final evaluation report summarizes key conclusions and lessons learnt based on the analyses of collected data and elaborations along the *Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact* and *Sustainability* evaluation criteria.

### 5.1 Conclusions

Overall conclusion on the analysed aspects of the project is positive, based on the evidences collected from the desk review and reflections shared during the interviews with the key informants engaged within implementation.

The KM Project represents a highly relevant multi-dimensional regional knowledge management and capacity development initiative, which involves several UNDP COs from CIS region (within EoD and internship components), and some other UN entities (UN Volunteering component) from different countries and regions. The project reflects the thematic priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and it is aligned to the SDGs, as well as UNDP Strategic priorities. The HRBA is mainstreamed, while the LNOB principle is not expressly incorporated in the project design, although the project supports different initiatives focused on reducing the poverty and social inclusion.

The project is consistent in terms of results-based approach with a set of results, baselines, targets and quantitative and some qualitative performance indicators. The majority of the output indicators are quantitative. The cross-cutting issues, such as gender aspects are partially incorporated in the project design and periodically reflected in the annual reports.

The *effectiveness* is one of the key strength of the project (just like the multi-dimensional partnerships and relevance), as the action performed well and (over)achieved majority of its quantitative and qualitative targets reflected in the project document, except the ones related to secondment, which did not work.

Analysing the project fulfilment versus use of financial resources the project managed to reach the majority of the targets in a *cost-efficient* manner. The distribution of the costs per component is adequate and resources are used for the budget lines as planned and reallocated without significant deviations. The evaluation did not find any alternative solutions, which could be provided at fewer expenses and/ or would be more economical for the project.

The project *impacted* positively the sustainable development in the partner countries and generated policy institutional and grass-roots level changes through four distinct mechanisms or modalities, particularly EoD, internship, volunteering and support in sharing the available Russian expertise.

The *sustainability* prospects of the final achievements represent mostly a mixed picture: promising regarding the policy, institutional and environmental sustainability prospects and mostly mixed in terms of financial sustainability aspects.

### 5.2 Lessons Learnt

Regardless of the project performance, there is always room for improvement. Usually, any aspect or approach, which did not fully work as expected or functioned surprisingly well, represents and delivers a lesson, which normally should be learned. Thus, based on the evaluator's review of project documents, interviews with the key informants, and analysis of

the performance-related information, evaluation suggests one lesson that may be of value to UNDP, TFD and other stakeholders.

*A component, which does not have a supporting legal framework is highly risky to be included in the project architecture, because it may affect the project delivery and require later adjustments, including budget reallocations. The declarative commitments of some of the actors at the project development phase are insufficient, unless supported by the respective legislative initiatives.*

The evaluator recognizes that there might be additional project specific lessons. Some of them were already well identified, analysed and discussed by UNDP in its progress reports. Nonetheless, the evaluator has restricted himself to four lessons that are overarching and that are the most striking. As “basic” the lessons learned maybe, their application offers the opportunity for UNDP and other stakeholders to increase the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the interventions in other future similar actions.

## PART VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This part of the evaluation report provides a manageable number of seven recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the final evaluation and are set forth for UNDP, UNV, TFD and other stakeholders to use in the next phase of the KM Project, if this is considered most feasible. Recommendations are developed and explained by the evaluator to his best professional judgment following analysis of the gathered data and consultations.

### 6.1 General framework of the recommendations

The table presents the general framework of the final evaluation recommendations.

Rec	Recommendations
<i>Rec. 01</i>	<i>Capitalize on achievements and extend the project coverage.</i>
<i>Rec. 02</i>	<i>Drop off the „secondment” subcomponent.</i>
<i>Rec. 03</i>	<i>Improve the project design aspects.</i>
<i>Rec. 04</i>	<i>Reinforce the Russian Challenge Fund under the EoD component.</i>
<i>Rec. 05</i>	<i>Increase engagement of the recipient countries.</i>
<i>Rec. 06</i>	<i>Consolidate the partnership with UNV and fine-tune some procedures.</i>
<i>Rec. 07</i>	<i>Promote more actively the database of available Russian expertise.</i>

### 6.2 Detailed recommendations

Below all recommendations are explained, which, as to the evaluator, could enhance the performance, stimulate learning and consolidate the sustainability prospects. The order of the recommendations does not reflect their value or importance.



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**Rec. 01 Capitalize on achievements and extend the project coverage.**

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Given the high relevance, well performance and further demand expressed by the interviewed UNDP COs and end-beneficiaries from different programme countries, it is recommendable for UNDP to continue its KM Project and capitalize on the achievements.

Subsequently, maintain and further develop the strategic partnership with the Russian Federation through the TFD. Increase the coverage of the project and set up partnerships with the UNDP from other countries, especially African developing countries.

This would be in line with the Partnership Framework Agreement between the UNDP and the Government of the Russian Federation, which among others in its Article 1 states: „*The purpose of the Agreement is to: Foster international partnerships that contribute to addressing development challenges of developing countries and to increase the participation of the Russian Federation in the regional and global development activities of UNDP*”.<sup>100</sup>

This represents a good opportunity to share and replicate UNDP’s experience on different modalities of knowledge/expertise sharing and capacity development and further establish and consolidate international development partnerships in line with the agreement.

In other words, use the consolidated international development experience and consider scaling up the project from a regional initiative to a global one.

The recommendations of the final evaluation might be useful in this regard.

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**Rec. 02 Drop off the „secondment” subcomponent.**

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This recommendation is linked to the lesson, which should be learnt<sup>101</sup> as the result of the experience gained from two phases of the KM Project, when the *secondment* subcomponent did not work, despite the declarative commitments of the line ministries.

If the respective regulatory framework in the Russian Federation will be adjusted during the Phase III, the project still can pilot a few assignments.

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**Rec. 03 Improve the project design aspects.**

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Eliminate the gaps described in the *Relevance* part of the report, add qualitative indicators regarding the volunteering component. A qualitative indicator is useful only in case when there are chances that the relevant data will be available. Therefore, while designing the set of indicators it is important to reflect on the question: *To what extent will we be able to gather the necessary data?*

Include expressly the LNOB Principle in the project design, mainstream in the reporting templates the respective question/s and highlight in the reports how the Russian expertise contributed to increasing the quality of life of the people (at risk to be) left behind.

Increase the genders sensitiveness of the project. The project has gender disagreed indicators, but there is a need to mainstream gender aspects at the targets level, in the project interventions, M&E system as well and analyse gender disaggregated data in reports.

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<sup>100</sup> For additional information: *Partnership Framework Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of the Russian Federation*. Article 1, points a) and d).

<https://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/partnerships/russa-undp-partnership.html>

<sup>101</sup> See the *Lessons Learnt* part of the report.

Whenever is possible, illustrate the extent to which both men/boys and women/girls benefited of the project achievements.

The project has a well-articulated ToC described in the project document, but there is a need to mainstream the *if... then... because...* causality chain. Afterwards, it is necessary to monitor the extent to which the changes are generated with the project contribution as predicted in the ToC. In other words, once the ToC is developed at the project design stage, get back to it during the project implementation and analyse the de facto change pathways, as well as the validity of the assumptions and risks and describe it in the progress reports.<sup>102</sup>

One cognitive recommendation is to distinguish between the terms „*capacity building*” and „*capacity development/strengthening*”, because the KM Project documents and informational sources use both terms as similar and they are not. Thus, the first term means building the capacity from the scratch, because we assume that there are no any capacities, i.e. the baseline is “0”; while the second one recognizes that there are some national/institutional/individual capacities already, i.e. the baseline is not “0” and it starts from existing capacities and is focused on their further strengthening.

*Capacity building* can be relevant to crisis or immediate post-conflict situations where existing capacity has largely been lost due to capacity destruction or capacity flight.<sup>103</sup>

Therefore, adjusting the project title might be a relevant suggestion, particularly changing the expression *capacity building* to *capacity development*, i.e. the project title in the next phase should be: “*Knowledge Management and Capacity Development in Russia - UNDP Partnership*” Project, Phase III.

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#### **Rec. 04 Reinforce the Russian Challenge Fund under the EoD component.**

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As explained, quite often the end-beneficiaries from the partner countries need complex development support, which is beyond the competence of one single expert. The two examples of UNDP Kyrgyzstan and Institute of Psychology and UNDP Armenia and KB Strelka Institute for Strategic Consulting, Urban Planning and Complex Research of the Cities can be perceived as good practices in this regard.

This recommendation reinforces the strategic decision of the Project Board, which approved the *Guidelines for the Innovative Solutions Challenge Fund (Russian Challenge Fund)*.<sup>104</sup>

The similar funds are successfully implemented under the Czech, Slovak and Polish Partnerships with UNDP. Therefore, the new Fund<sup>105</sup> represents a good opportunity for further piloting (because the piloting period<sup>106</sup> during the Phase II was too short) as a a new instrument for facilitation of sharing Russian know-how approaches/solutions.

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<sup>102</sup> The following source might be useful in this regard: *A Guide to the Application of the Theories of Changes to UNDP Programmes and Projects*.

<sup>103</sup> For additional information might be useful: *Frequently Asked Questions. UNDP Approach to Supporting Capacity Development*. Capacity Development Group. UNDP, June 2009, page 3. [http://content-ext.undp.org/aplaws\\_assets/2072460/2072460.pdf](http://content-ext.undp.org/aplaws_assets/2072460/2072460.pdf)

<sup>104</sup> Minutes of the 4th Project Board 27 April 2021.

<sup>105</sup> According to its Guidelines, the Challenge Fund is a more flexible format for sharing innovative ideas and it does not limit the participants to just individuals or institutions, envisages participation of a wide range of stakeholders: academia, federations, associations, businesses enterprises, NGOs, etc.

<sup>106</sup> Since May 2021.

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**Rec. 05 *Increase engagement of the recipient countries.***

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Again, this recommendation is mostly for the EoD project component. Its implementation among other aspects would consolidate the financial and institutional sustainability prospects, because it implies assuming of the financial and in-kind commitments by the beneficiary countries, ideally both UNDP CO and the end-beneficiaries.

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**Rec. 06 *Consolidate the partnership with UNV and fine-tune some approaches.***

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The partnership between the UNDP and UNV brought added value and mutual benefits for UNDP, UNV, Russian UN Volunteers, as well as for the hosting entities. Therefore, there is advisable for UNDP to consolidate the partnership with UNV.

The second part of the recommendation is mostly for UNV, which is managing the volunteering component.

Fine-tune and scale up some approaches, particularly piloting of the Junior Professional Officers (JPO) Programme<sup>107</sup> could be a big step forward. There is still a significant transition challenge for young professionals from Russia, who often, as remarked the interviewed UN Volunteers<sup>108</sup>, cannot effectively withstand competition with, for instance, HQ-based Korean JPOs or Japanese JPOs working for UNDP.

It is also advisable to revise some volunteering related procedures as suggested below.

- *Orientation.* Drop off the essay part (written before volunteers depart to their countries) and organize a thematic orientation discussion on the UN related aspects (UN corporate culture and values, communication with the supervisors, tips for a quicker adaptation, illustrative case studies and good practices of volunteering etc.) instead. There is not much use in the university-style essay in terms of future job performance, while it could be useful to share experience and tips on the actual upcoming assignment.
- *Communication and networking.* Enhance communication among volunteers, so that there is a network of Russian UN Volunteers who can support each other and share their experience.
- *Performance management.* Conduct informal mid-term review sessions so that both UN Volunteers and their supervisors can review the progress, and set targets for the second part of the assignment.

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**Rec. 07 *Promote more actively the database of available Russian expertise.***

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The project performed well in promoting the database regionally, within the UNDP system, and nationally, within the Russian Federation, for increasing the number of experts, which is remarkable. However, available expertise systemized in the database might be valuable not for preponderantly UNDP COs, but also for the COs of other UN entities, for instance: FAO, IOM, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, ILO etc.

Therefore, promote it within the UN system and target involvement of other UN entities within the EoD component. In other words, extend the EoD component of the project. The coverage of the UNV component is a good example to be followed in this regard.

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<sup>107</sup> For additional information: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/jpo/about/>

<sup>108</sup> Key informants interviews.

## **PART VII. ANNEXES**

### Annex 1: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Key questions	Sub-questions	Type of Indicators	Indicators related to EQs	Sources	Tools/Methods
Relevance	How aligned is the KM project to UNDP strategic priorities?	How relevant is the KM Project for/with the SDGs/ Agenda 2030, particularly SDG 17 - Partnership?	Mainly qualitative Partially quantitative	Confirmation of external coherence and relevance by the stakeholders.  Linkages of the KM Project with the priorities of the UN. Respondents which find full approximation relevant.	Written project and thematic policy documents.  Project stakeholders	Analysis of the project documents, progress reports and strategic thematic documents on UNDP CO, HE development priorities
		To what extent the objective and design of the project are suited to meet UNDP's strategic goals and priorities?	Mainly qualitative	Internal coherence of the project.  Consistency of the linkages of the project with the UNDP priorities.	Project documents and strategic documents of UNDP, TFD.	Remote key informants Interviews (KII), Focus Group discussions  Desk review KII, FGD, evaluation questionnaires with project stakeholders
	To what extent have the types of actions funded under the KM project been relevant and consistent for achieving the expected results?	To what extent the results were achieved due to the implemented activities?	Mainly qualitative  Partially quantitative	Confirmation of relevance by the stakeholders. Respondents, which find it relevant.  Evidences of the causality inter-linkage between the actions delivered by the KM Project and changes generated. Confirmation of relevance by the beneficiaries and stakeholders from the covered countries.	Project documents.  Evidences of increased capacities expressed by the beneficiaries and reflected in the documents.	Analysis of the project documents, progress reports.  KII, FGD with project stakeholders
		Are there any significant project design gaps?				
		To what extent the KM Project contributed to the GEWE?	Qualitatively  Quantitatively	The degree of inclusion of the cross-cutting issues (GEWE) in the project framework	Project proposal, logframe, results' framework.	Mostly desk review

Evaluation Criteria	Key questions	Sub-questions	Type of Indicators	Indicators related to EQs	Sources	Tools/Methods
	To what extent the cross-cutting and issues were considered?	To what extent the GEWE were reflected in the PMC?		(objectives, expected results, indicators, data base).		
	To what extent the project design is consistent in terms of results based and human rights based approach (HRBA) and LNOB?	To what extent the results` chain is interconnected with the targets and indicators? To what extent the KM Project targeted <i>duty bearers</i> and <i>rights holders</i> ? To what extent the LNOB aspects were reflected?	Mainly qualitative	Consistency and focus of the project approach in terms of RBM, HRBA and LNOB.	Project proposal, logframe, results` framework. Thematic guidelines on RBM, HRBA and LNOB.	Desk review KII, FGD
Effectiveness	To what extent have the <b>expected results</b> been achieved?	What are the main KM Project accomplishments against the set of indicators and target values? To what extent has the Project managed to perform sharing of Russian knowledge, expertise and know-how to the UNDP COs and their national partners?	Qualitative Quantitative	Project fulfilment. Performance indicators, e.g.: Nr of Russian experts registered in the database; Quality of their performance; Nr of (deployed) Russian UN Volunteers, etc. Evidences of increased capacities Evidence of contribution of the Russian expertise to sustainable development of the beneficiaries	Progress reports Survey questionnaires checklists. Project stakeholders UNDP Russia, TFD, UNDP CO, MoF, MFA, MED, Interns, UN Volunteers, End-Beneficiaries of the EoD programme	KII, FGD, evaluation questionnaires  Desk review of the secondary informational materials and documents
	What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes	Overview of benefits the KM Project brought to beneficiary	Qualitative Quantitative	Positive changes and added value generated by the KM Project	Project documents,	

Evaluation Criteria	Key questions	Sub-questions	Type of Indicators	Indicators related to EQs	Sources	Tools/Methods
	<p>brought about by the Project's interventions?</p> <p>What are the major factors influencing the achievements/ non-achievements?</p> <p>What are the key recommendations for increasing the project performance?</p>	<p>institutions and citizens in partner countries.</p> <p>How did the project adapt to (unforeseen) external and internal factors, including COVID 19?</p> <p>What should be adjusted, dropped off or reinforced to deliver better results?</p>	<p>Qualitative Quantitative</p> <p>Mostly Qualitative</p>	<p>Positive or negative unintended effects of the project.</p> <p>Amount, kind and degree of influence of the internal and external factors (enablers and barriers) on achievements.</p> <p>Degree of project flexibility and adaptability to the different country contexts. Learning and improvement.</p>	<p>Stakeholders of the project.</p> <p>Project documents, Stakeholders of the project.</p> <p>Project documents, Stakeholders of the project.</p>	<p>Desk review KII and FGD with stakeholders Evaluation questionnaires</p>
Efficiency	To what extent the resources were allocated strategically?	To what extent were the available resources (human, financial, materials, time) used as per agreed documents?	Qualitative Quantitative	Cost efficiency of the project	Financial documents versus project achievements.	Desk review KII with KM project team, TFD, UNDP CO, UNV
	What are the project's response mechanisms?	What were the key driving forces (KDF)? How the project reacted to changing environments?	Mostly Qualitative	Influence of the KDF. Receptiveness and flexibility of the project. Project adaptability.	Annual work plans versus progress reports	Desk review KII with KM project team
	What should be done to increase the efficiency?	Shall the project extents it coverage?	Mostly Quantitative	Replicability and coverage of the project.	Stakeholders of the project.	Desk review. KII with KM project team, TFD, UNDP CO
Impact	What has been changed quantitatively and qualitatively as the result of the KM Project?	To what extent the KM project contributed to sustainable development? What is the satisfaction level of	Qualitative Quantitative	<p>Long-term changes generated with the project contribution</p> <p>Satisfaction level of the stakeholders</p>		KII, FGD and evaluation questionnaires to the stakeholders.

Evaluation Criteria	Key questions	Sub-questions	Type of Indicators	Indicators related to EQs	Sources	Tools/Methods
		the stakeholders with the results?				
Sustainability	What are the sustainability prospects of the project?	To what extent the benefits and the achievements of a project are continuing after the project completion? What are the 1) <i>Policy sustainability</i> ; 2) <i>Institutional sustainability</i> 3) <i>Financial sustainability</i> and <i>environmental sustainability</i> perspectives?	Mostly Qualitative Partially Quantitative	Sustainability of the generated policy level changes with the support of Russian expertise. Evidences of the sustainability prospects. Degree of use of the increased knowledge/enhanced capacities. Will and commitments of the UNDO CO and their national partners to continue their initiatives.	Progress reports, visual ads. Policy documents regarding the KM Project components Financial plans, Decisions or other commitments.  Stakeholders of the project.	Analysis of the programme documents.  KII, FGD with the stakeholders.
	What were the major factors, which influenced the sustainability of the project?	How and why those factors influence project sustainability?	Quantitative Qualitative	Type and complexity of the factors	Project reports and key stakeholders	Desk review. KII, FGD with the stakeholders.
Partnership	What were the partnership arrangements and how did they work?	What worked well and what didn't in terms of partnership with UNDP Russia and other actors? To what extent has the Project managed to perform sharing of	Quantitative Qualitative	Partnership framework of the project. Effects of cooperation of UNDP and other actors.	Project documents and progress reports. Key stakeholders	



Evaluation Criteria	Key questions	Sub-questions	Type of Indicators	Indicators related to EQs	Sources	Tools/Methods
		Russian expertise and to the UNDP COs and their national partners?				
	What can be learned and adjusted from the partnership experience?	How to go about the UNDP-UNV-UNDP CO-Russian institutions partnership in future? What to learn from experiences for the future?	Quantitative Qualitative	Extension of the partnerships, replicability and sustainability of the project.	Key stakeholders	

## Annex 2: Evaluation Questionnaires

### Evaluation Questionnaire (sent via email)

*Beneficiaries under the Experts on Demand programme*

1. What is your general impression about the KM project? What is the uniqueness of the project comparing to others, if any?
2. To what extent the Russian expertise, knowledge and know-how was relevant for your institution?
3. What were the main difficulties encountered within this cooperation?
4. What has been changed as the result of the support provided by the expert?
5. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the results of cooperation (1-very unsatisfied – 10-highly satisfied)
6. Are you familiar with the database of Russian experts for international development created by the project?  
If “yes”, did you access or are you going to access additional Russian expertise? Please explain.
7. What should be improved, changed or dropped in the next phase of the project?

### Evaluation Questionnaire (sent via email)

*For UN Volunteers and Interns*

1. What is your overall impression of your volunteering/internship experience within the hosting entity?
2. What are the key achievements generated with your contribution?
3. Please rate to what extent your initial expectations were met? (1-not at all – 10-exceeded my expectations). Briefly explain.
4. What type of expectations were not meet (if any)? What were the main difficulties encountered during the internship/volunteering?
5. What did you learn from your volunteering/internship experience?
6. Are you going to continue your cooperation with UNDP/UNV?
7. What are your recommendations for UNDP/UNV and hosting entities for future similar projects? What should be reinforced, improved, changed or dropped?

## Annex 3: List of consulted stakeholders

	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Gen</i>	<i>Position</i>
Government of the Russian Federation				
1.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Konstantin KULIKOV	M	Adviser, Department for International Organizations
2.	Ministry of Economic Development	Anton TSVETOV	M	Deputy Director, Department of Multilateral Economic Cooperation and Special Projects
UNDP				
3.	UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS/ Istanbul Regional Hub	Berna BAYAZIT	W	Regional Partnership Adviser and Team Leader a.i., Partnerships Team
UNV				
4.	UNV HQ	Rafael MARTINEZ GIL	M	Partnerships Development Specialist, External Relations/Communications Section

	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Gen</i>	<i>Position</i>
<b>RUSSIA-UNDP TRUST FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT (TFD)</b>				
5.	UNDP Partnership	Alexander AVERCHENKOV	M	TFD Manager, Partnership Development Specialist, Head of Office,
6.	Support Office in the Russian Federation, RBEC/IRH	Anastasia MAXIMOVA	W	TFD Deputy Manager, Partnership Development Specialist
7.		Olga MARTYNENKO	W	TFD Programme Associate; KM Project Associate until December 2020
<b>KM PROJECT STAFF</b>				
8.	UNDP Partnership Support Office in the Russian Federation, RBEC/IRH	Natalia Voronkova	W	Project Manager
9.		Ksenia Kirilova	W	Knowledge Management Analyst
<b>UNDP OFFICES (hosting agencies for interns)</b>				
10.	Istanbul Regional Hub	Saran SELENGE	W	Knowledge Management Specialist
11.	Armenia	Anna GYURJYAN	W	Portfolio Manager
12.	Armenia	Alla BAKUNTS	W	Democratic Governance Portfolio Lead
13.	Armenia	Arman VALESYAN	M	SGR Project Coordinator
14.	Belarus	Tatyana BUHAYEVA	W	Human Resources Associate
15.	Kazakhstan	Victoria BAIGAZINA	W	Programme Associate
16.	Kyrgyzstan	Umar SHAVUROV	M	COVID-19 Economic Recovery Advisor
17.	Kyrgyzstan	Zhenishbek ARZYMATOV	M	Rule of Law and Access to Justice Advisor/Projects Coordinator
18.	Tajikistan	Firuz SAIDKHADZHAEV	M	Project Manager, Economic Development Adviser
19.	Turkmenistan	Jennet ANNABERDIYEVA	W	Project Manager
20.	Uzbekistan	Najiba KHAZRATKULOVA	M	Task Manager
<b>UNDP OFFICES on the Experts on Demand programme (EoD)</b>				
21.	Armenia	Lilit MIDOYAN	W	Project Manager
22.	Armenia	Tatevik KOLOYAN	W	Portfolio Manager
23.	Azerbaijan	Chingiz MAMMADOV	M	Project Manager
24.	Belarus	Maksim HUBSKI	M	Project Manager
25.	Belarus	Alexei TCHISTODARSKI	M	Communication and Advocacy Analyst
26.	Belarus	Kiryl STSEZHKIN	M	Programme Analyst
27.	Kyrgyzstan	Erkinbek KASYBEKOV	M	Assistant Resident Representative
28.	Kyrgyzstan	Lira ZHOLDUBAEVA	W	Programme and Policy Analyst
29.	Kyrgyzstan	Kumar KYLYCHEV	M	UNICEF Programme Officer, UNDP Programme Officer until Feb 2021
30.	Moldova	Andrei DARIE	M	Programme Specialist/Cluster Lead/Inclusive Growth
31.	Tajikistan	Mubin RUSTAMOV (also on internship)	M	Assistant Resident Representative

32.	Tajikistan	Zebo JALILOVA	W	Team Leader
33.	Turkmenistan	Lale CHOPANOVA	W	Programme Manager
34.	Turkmenistan	Gulalek BERDIYEVA	W	Project Manager
35.	Uzbekistan	Diyora KABULOVA	W	Programme Analyst
36.	Uzbekistan	Viktoriya ANOSHKINA	W	
37.	Uzbekistan	Fayzulla SALAKHUDDINOV	M	Project Manager

#### INTERNS

38.	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub	Polina KOROTKIKH	W	UNDP intern in 2020. Consultant in UNDP IRH
39.	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub	Meri PETROSIAN	W	UNDP intern in 2020. Consultant in International Committee of the Red Cross, Moscow
40.	UNDP Uzbekistan	Tatiana ZASHEVA	W	UNDP intern in 2021 (until 10 August)

#### INTERNATIONAL UN VOLUNTEERS

41.	UN Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) Guinea	Alsu AKMETDINOVA	W	UN Youth Volunteer since March 2021 UNDP intern in Armenia in 2019
42.	UNFPA Tajikistan	Ruben GAZANCHIAN	M	UN Youth Volunteer, UNFPA Tajikistan, Resource Mobilization and Monitoring Assistant; UNDP intern in Tajikistan in 2020
43.	UNDP Kenya	Mariia IASTREBOVA	W	UN Youth Volunteer, Environment and Climate Change Associate Officer; UNDP intern in Belarus 2020
44.	UNDP Jordan	Denis KORCHUNOV	M	UNV - Sustainable Energy Specialist (completed in 2021)
45.	UNODC Palestine	Daria YAKSEN	W	UNV - Reporting and Project Development Officer (completed in July 2021)

#### UNDP BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE EXPERTS ON DEMAND PROGRAMME - Evaluation questionnaire via email

	Country Office	Beneficiaries
46.	Armenia	<i>Ms. Gayane Nersisyan</i> - Yerevan Municipality specialist who worked with the Urban development/public space expert under the 6 <sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals of the EoD.
47.	Uzbekistan	<i>Ms. Alexandra Khvan</i> , Head of the Division of State Financial Statistics and Budget Transparency of Ministry of Finance of Uzbekistan. Worked with the Russian expert on participatory budgeting under the 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals of the EoD Programme
48	Tajikistan	<i>Mr. Jahongir Jalolov</i> , Director of IT company Livo,
49		<i>Ms. Karina Burykhm</i> Director of Business School, Beneficiaries of the assignment on IT and startups with the Russian expert Artem Krytcyn
50	Turkmenistan	<i>Ms. Rita Mirzoyan</i> , TurkmenStat civil servant who worked closely with the Russian expert Olga Obratsova under the 5 <sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals of the EoD Programme

### Annex 3: List of Consulted documents

1. Project Document “Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia - UNDP Partnership”, Phase II.
2. Terms of Reference for final evaluation of the Project “Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia - UNDP Partnership”, Phase II.
3. Memorandum of Agreement between United Nations Development Programme and Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
4. Partnership Framework Agreement between UNDP and the Government of Russian Federation, 23.01.2015.
5. Agreement between the Government of Russian Federation and UNDP for the Establishment of the Russian Federation - UNDP Trust Fund for development, 11.06.2015.
6. Communication and Visibility Strategy of Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development, 25.11.2016.
7. Minutes of the Project Board meetings 20.11.2018; 20.02.2020; 30.04-15.05.2020; 17.03-27.04.2021, 19-30.07.2021.
8. Annual Work Plans 2019, 2020, 2021.
9. Annual project report 2019.
10. Annual project report 2020.
11. Project Narrative and Financial Final Report Phase I, 01.10.2018.
12. Annexes to the Project Narrative and Financial Final Report Phase I, 01.10.2018.
13. Evaluation Board Report - Russian Challenge Fund 2021.
14. Annex II: Scoring Card to the Evaluation Board of the Call for Proposals to the Russian Challenge Fund 2021.
15. Note for the 4<sup>th</sup> project board discussion and decision points “Enhancing cooperation in development of vocational education and training based on WorldSkills International standards”, Jan. 2021.
16. “Suggestions on possible refocusing the secondment programme and respective reallocation of funds” for 3<sup>rd</sup> project board meeting.
17. Secondment Programme, RU & ENG, May 2021.
18. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Serbia, 31.10.2019.
19. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Turkmenistan, 21.01.2019.
20. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Slovakia, 22.05.2019.
21. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Bangladesh, 18.11.2019.
22. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Turkey, 28.10.2019.
23. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Tajikistan, 03.06.2019 & 26.08.2019.
24. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Armenia, 08.11.2018.
25. Back to Office Report Mission to UNDP CO Belarus, 18.11.2019.
26. Commercial Offer UNDP Tajikistan, Appendix 1. Qualifications of the organization and the team, Appendix 2. Implementation Plan, 19.11.2020, RU.
27. Application of LLC “Accelerator FRII” - UNDP Tajikistan, 11.11.2020, RU.
28. Press release: Companies from Tajikistan passed the acceleration program of the Internet Initiatives Development Fund (IIDF), RU.
29. Contract for Services between the UNDP and LLC IIDF Accelerator; Appendix 3. Financial part of the proposal, RU.
30. Thanks Letter IT NOVA to UNDP, 30.03.2021, RU.
31. Minutes of Interns selection Feb-May signed, 22.01.2019.
32. UNDP internships announcements Feb-June 2019, for 2020.
33. UNDP Internships Logistic Note January'19 updated.
34. Screening Internships sheets 2019, 2020, 2021.
35. Reporting Documents of Internships 2019, 2020 (photos, reference letters, BTORs, research papers etc.).
36. New UNDP Internship Policy active 01 January 2020.
37. Evaluation form template.

38. Covid-19 BMS Guidance 20 March 2020.
39. Correspondence with Cansu Seval in relation to COVID-19.
40. Adjustments made to the Internship Programme in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, 28.08.2020.
41. Minutes of selection of interns Feb-May 2020, 21.01.2020.
42. Minutes of selection results Internship 2021, 05.02.2021.
43. Terms of Reference “Consultancy services for public space design methodology development”.
44. Reports Strelka KB: Report 1 Dec. 2019, Report 2 March 2020, Reports 3-4 June 2020, Report 5, Report 6 July 2020, Report 7 Aug. 2020.
45. Annual 2019 Report UNV Full Funding Programme for Russian Citizens.
46. Annual 2020 Report UNV Full Funding Programme for Russian Citizens.
47. UNV Full Funding Programme Retention Survey Key Findings.
48. Annex I Interim financial report Youth FF UN Volunteers.
49. Annex II Interim financial report Specialists FF UN Volunteers.
50. Annexes I and II Russian FF Volunteers Jan 2020.
51. UNV-Russia Full Funding Programme Results Report.
52. Article “UNDP supports the youth to strengthen their career potential”
53. Report “Study of the Infrastructure for the Development of Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Tajikistan”.
54. Report on Short courses on Front-end and Go for beginner developers in Dushanbe.

#### Annex 4: Bio of Evaluator

**Gheorghe Caraseni** – Master Degree in Political Science, has a background working as evaluator of *governance, human rights, rule of law, gender, sustainable development, economic empowerment and children protection* projects in different countries from Eastern Europe, CIS Region, Central and Southern Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Gheorghe is well familiar with the evaluation criteria and guidelines, incl. DAC/OECD, as well as with the UNEG and UN development approach as he assessed over 60 initiatives (incl. 17 as Team Leader) implemented by different organizations, including UN Agencies: UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, ILO, OHCHR, and World Bank.

His evaluation report of the UNV (Bonn, Germany) „*Talent and Capacity Development Programme for Persons with Disabilities*” was awarded by the Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP HQ as the *Winner of 2020 Evaluation Excellence Award, category Outstanding Evaluations*.<sup>109</sup>

Gheorghe is fluent in English, Russian, Romanian and Gagauz.

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<sup>109</sup> It came from about 170 decentralised evaluations from a range of organisations, incl. UNDP, UNV, UNCDF, as well as regions (Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America). For additional info: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/award/index.shtml>. For additional information: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/award/evaluations/2020/unv.shtml>

## Annex 5: TOR

### Individual Contract Terms of References



<b>Job Title:</b>	IC (Individual Contract) - International consultant for final project evaluation
<b>Project:</b>	<b>Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership, Phase II</b>
<b>Supervisor:</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Remotely, home based work
<b>Travel requirement:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Practice Area:</b>	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction
<b>Type of Contract:</b>	<b>International</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>Up to 23 working days</b>
<b>Estimated starting date:</b>	<b>2 August 2021</b>

#### I. Background and context

**The UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021** sets out the direction for UNDP to support countries to end extreme poverty, reduce inequality, advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and achieve the goals of the Agenda 2030. Essential instruments of the work are solutions exchange, promotion of innovations, knowledge-sharing, leveraging expertise and building capacity of partners.

**The Russian Federation** has been an active provider of expertise for developing countries and stays committed to use the achievements in science and technology to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Concept of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance provides for sharing of expertise with a view to strengthening institutional and human capacity in the areas of health, education, environmental protection, disaster management, counterterrorism, etc.

Russian experts possess both local experience highly relevant for the local context in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and international expertise accumulated via strong international cooperation of Russian think tanks and educational institutions. Russia is actively sharing its know-how in pediatric care, children and mother's health protection, HIV response, sanitary and epidemiological safety, food security, education quality assessment, emergency response, financial monitoring, and so on.

In January 2015, the Russian Federation and UNDP signed the **Partnership Framework Agreement (PFA)** to bring the cooperation to a qualitatively new level and emphasized the growing role of Russia as a donor in advancing the development agenda throughout the world. Cooperation under the PFA envisages 'leveraging the knowledge, experience and expertise in development cooperation, including by involving academic institutions and individual experts from the Russian Federation in accordance with UNDP's applicable regulations and rules, and policies and procedures as set forth in UNDP's POPP when done through UNDP development projects/programmes' (PFA Article 2).

The establishment of the Russia-UNDP **Trust Fund for Development (TFD)** in 2015 made it possible to work out a sustainable financial mechanism for providing Russian assistance to the CIS countries, as well as



countries in other regions with low and lower middle income. To date, Russia's financial contributions to the TFD amounts to \$95 million to implement UNDP projects in such countries as Armenia, Belarus, Botswana, Cambodia, Cuba, Guinea, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Madagascar, Pacific SIDS, Serbia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe and others. The TFD Agreement states that 'a small portion of the annual Fund's budget (up to 10%) can be allocated by the [TFD] Steering Committee to knowledge management and capacity building projects with Russian ministries and agencies involved in international development assistance'.

### **About the Project**

The regional project "**Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership**" (Project) Phase I was launched in 2016 to support newly established Russia-UNDP Partnership and the TFD by promoting innovations in expertise and knowledge sharing between Russia and partner countries. Phase I resulted in many positive outcomes and confirmed high relevance of Russian expertise for the development challenges in partner countries, especially in the CIS regions to be developed in Phase II.

**The outcome** of the Project Phase II as stated in the Regional Programme Results and Resource Framework is addressing the poverty and inequalities through more inclusive and sustainable development pathways. The outcome is being achieved through expertise and knowledge sharing and establishing new diverse partnerships with emerging donors and other stakeholders as stipulated in the Russia-UNDP PFA and the TFD Agreement and to address the SDGs and the priorities of the UNDP Strategic Plan for 2018-2021.

**The main goal** of the Project in Phase II is to scale up several mechanisms of Russian expertise sharing applied in Phase I to support achievement of sustainable, scalable development impact in UNDP partner countries.

The Project is funded by the Government of the Russian Federation through the TFD and directly implemented by UNDP IRH in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and with the project management and implementation support by the Project team based in Moscow, Russian Federation, under the overall supervision of the IRH Partnerships Team Leader and the direct supervision of the Head of Partnership Support Office in the Russian Federation, Manager of the Russia-UNDP Trust Fund for Development.

The Project is structured around **four main activities**:

#### *1. Database of Russian experts for international development and Russian Experts on Demand programme*

The database containing the Russian experts' profiles is located on the website [expertsfordevelopment.ru](http://expertsfordevelopment.ru) created in Phase I. The website and the database are being maintained and regularly replenished with experts' profiles, news on the Partnership, the TFD and the Project itself. The database is facilitating synergies and smoother implementation of the Experts on Demand programme by serving as a convenient source to find experts for specific assignments on demand.

The Experts on Demand programme provides an instrument for knowledge and know-how sharing via rapid deployment of Russian experts for on demand small-scale interventions and consultancies and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing for promoting innovations in Russian knowledge and expertise sharing and strengthening the human resources and expert database on international development assistance of the Russian Federation for development impact.

#### *2. Knowledge sharing under the Russia-UNDP partnership*

The Project is providing information, coordination and technical support to implementation of the Russia-UNDP PFA and the TFD agreement via:

- Support to Russia-funded and other UNDP projects in identifying and locating Russian expertise;
- Monitoring of the knowledge management and visibility dimensions of the Russia-funded UNDP projects;
- Advisory support to UNDP COs;
- Supporting monitoring missions of Russia-funded UNDP projects;
- Facilitating participation of Russian officials/experts in UNDP events and UNDP high-level visits to Russia.

#### *3. Volunteering programme (via the UNV parallel funding modality)*

The programme is to enhance the Russia-UNV partnership and to support in promoting deployment of Russian nationals in development projects as UN Volunteers via Full Funding Programme, expanding the number of qualified Russian nationals in the UNV roster and attracting Russian nationals to online volunteering.

#### *4. Internship and secondment programme*

The activity arranges hiring interns and secondees with a Russian citizenship to facilitate their contribution to UNDP work on sustainable development agenda while simultaneously enhancing their professional background, and to promote the formation of a pool of young specialists.

**Partnerships.** The Project is being implemented in close cooperation with the three ministries of the Russian Federation: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Development. Under the various components the Project team is reaching out to the Russian agencies (Rosstat, Roshydromet), research and educational institutions, such as Agency of Strategic Initiatives, Association of Volunteer Centers, Association of Clusters and Technoparks, Internet Initiatives Development Fund (IIDF), KB Strelka Consulting company, Higher School of Economics, Moscow Agency of Innovations, Moscow State Institution of International Relations (MGIMO), WorldSkills Russia, and other Russian institutions to collaborate on specific partnership-related activities. The Project closely works with the UNDP offices in the countries implemented the TFD-funded projects and under the Experts on Demand and Internship programmes and is partnering with the Eurasian Development Bank. *An indicative list of main stakeholders that may be considered for meetings is provided in Annex 2.*

**Beneficiaries.** The Project uses the triangular cooperation modality in a form of Russia-UNDP-partner countries to facilitate sustainable, scalable development impact in partner countries through the programmatic promotion of several mechanisms of Russian expertise transfer. Russia provides financial support and serves as a source of expertise. UNDP applies its know-how and experience in facilitating knowledge sharing and supporting capacity building of development donors. Partner countries are the ultimate beneficiaries of the project. Senior Beneficiary is individual or group of individuals representing the interests of those who will ultimately

benefit from the project. The Senior Beneficiary's primary function within the Board is to ensure the implementation of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. The IRH Country Office Support Team will represent the UNDP COs in the role of Senior Beneficiary.

**Project relevance and alignment.** The Project is contributing to the Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2018-2021) Outcome 2: Addressing poverty and inequalities through more inclusive and sustainable development pathways as well as it is aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Russia-UNDP PFA: Leveraging the knowledge, experience and expertise in development cooperation and the TFD agreement supporting knowledge management and capacity building projects, developed in partnership with and using the knowledge, experience and expertise of Russian ministries, agencies, think tanks, universities and NGOs involved in international development cooperation. The Project contributes to targets set within the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17: Partnerships for the Goals. *List of relevant documentation is provided in Annex 3.*

**Main achievements.** During the Project cycle in the Phase II, the following results were attained:

*1. Database of Russian Experts for international development and Russian Experts on Demand programme*  
The expertsfordevelopment.ru website and the database was created, maintained, updated and replenished (78 news were posted, and more than 250 expert profiles are registered) to ensure information support to the PFA, TFD and Project implementation, and provide visibility for Russian knowledge and expertise. Under the Experts on Demand programme 29 consultancy assignments in a range of countries in the region were completed, 24 are in progress to be finalized by the end of the project (totally 66 applications were submitted by the UNDP COs, 58 applications approved, 5 withdrawn).

*2. Knowledge sharing under the Russian Federation-UNDP partnership*

The assistance and support provided by the Project to the eligible UNDP COs contributed to achievement of the specific development results in UNDP programme countries via gaining access and deploying Russian expertise for the Russia-funded projects and other initiatives. The Project also provided input to implementation of the PFA and TFD agreements by facilitating Partnership consultations, preparation of annual reports and reviews, visibility and other materials and support to identifying and promoting relevant Russian expertise and achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Project facilitated organization of the TFD monitoring missions to the countries where the TFD projects are implemented.

### *3. Volunteering programme (parallel funding)*

The partnership between UNV and the Russian Federation is enhancing: the Government of the Russian Federation contributed \$3 mln to the Russia-UNV Full Funding programme; a number of qualified Russian nationals in the UNV roster, of candidates and eligible organizations in the UNV online volunteering platform <https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en> and of Russian nationals deployed as UN Volunteers in UN offices increased up to 4 000, 450 and 48 persons respectively.

### *4. Internship and secondment programme*

40 Russian students were deployed in the UNDP offices and 30 successfully completed the internships in 7 countries and the IRH and 10 internships are in process (including in remote mode partially in 2020 and fully in 2021).

Development of the secondment programme was one of the project's activities with many preparatory works conducted in the previous years. However, ultimately it was decided by the Project Board in 2020 to move away from its implementation due high and unavoidable impact of the one of the regulatory risks initially envisaged in the Project Document: "legislation or internal procedures in the ministries impeding the implementation of the secondment programme". The funds initially allocated to the secondment programme for civil servants have been partially reallocated to secondments of specialists of Russian institutions (to be launched after lifting travel restrictions) and the Experts on Demand programme. Due to the ongoing pandemic the Project funds is proposed to reallocate to new activity "Innovative Solutions Challenge Fund" as an instrument to facilitate sharing of know-how and innovative ideas and solutions, new methods, approaches or products by Russian institutions.

As of 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic as the new coronavirus rapidly spread to all regions of the world and has triggered a serious economic crisis over the world including Russia and other CIS countries. In the face of the pandemic and travel restrictions in all countries, the Project team explored a possibility to continue providing support to the UNDP COs and their national partners by reprogramming of the activities to online format with no travel to avoid the risk of infection.

## **II. Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope**

### **a) Purpose**

The purpose of the Final Project Evaluation is to provide an impartial review of the Project in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, management and achievements including impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the Project implementation and reprogramming, if any, of the Project activities. The information, findings, lessons learned and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by the Project Board, UNDP, and by the implementing partners to strengthen the remaining project implementation and the Phase III which is being elaborating.

### **b) Objective**

The evaluation objective is to examine the overall performance of the Project, its results, inputs and activities, and how the outputs delivered added value to the efforts of national governments in UNDP partner countries to strengthen mutual cooperation with UNDP in reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development in the CIS and other regions by capacity building on knowledge management which follows the SDG 17 and is

rooted in the priorities of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021. In a substantive analysis of the effectiveness of the project approach and feedback from beneficiaries, the evaluation should highlight strengths, weaknesses/gaps, good practices and impact of COVID-19 on the project and provide forward-looking actionable recommendations to the Russian Federation and UNDP for scaling up support on Russian expertise sharing, rolling out sustainable knowledge management and dissemination of lessons learned.

### **c) Scope**

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the specific project objective/outcome and results/outputs have been achieved since the beginning of the project and likelihood for their full achievement by the end of the project in June 2021 (based on the Project Document and results framework). The evaluation will look into all project activities and processes implemented in the CIS and other countries.

Specifically, the evaluation will review and make recommendation regarding the implementation of the critical project's aspects, such as strategies, implementation mechanisms and partnerships with the UNDP COs as well as knowledge sharing with the UNDP national partners in countries and support to the Partnership and the TFD implementation.

## **III. Evaluation criteria and key questions** (based on OECD DAC criteria<sup>110</sup>)

The Project evaluation is to answer the following questions to determine the project's relevance, performance, results, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, including lessons learned and forward-looking recommendations. The evaluation questions are summarized below.

### **Relevance**

- Were the Project's objectives relevant to the needs of the UNDP partner countries in terms of their social and economic development?
- To what extent is the project aligned with the relevant national development priorities in the partner countries as the beneficiaries, UNDP strategic objectives and SDG 17 - partnership?
- To what extent does the Project contribute to gender equality and empowerment of women?

### **Effectiveness**

- To what extent were the Project activities implemented and intended results and the specific objective/outcome achieved and reported? What are the main project accomplishments? Please provide outline of a measurable overview of the project results against the indicators and their target values/statements as defined in the Project results framework.
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the Project's interventions? This may, inter alia, include an overview of benefits the Project brought to beneficiary institutions and citizens in partner countries.
- What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended specific objective/outcome and outputs/results?
- To what extent has the Project contributed to strengthening partnership between UNDP and the Russian Federation?
- To what extent has the Project managed to perform sharing of Russian knowledge, expertise and know-how to the UNDP COs and their national partners?
- How COVID-19 affected or limited the Project activities and what actions were undertaken to offset the negative impact?
- Assess the degree to which project implementation was flexible and adaptive to the context.

### **Efficiency**

- Whether the Project has utilized the project funding as per the agreed work plan to achieve the projected targets?
- Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically to achieve the Project results?
- Are there any weaknesses in the Project design, management, human resource skills, and resources?
- Analyse the role of the Project Board and whether it is optimally being used for decision making.
- Assess the timeline and quality of the reporting followed by the Project.

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<sup>110</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

- Identify factors and constraints, which have affected the Project implementation including technical, managerial, organizational, institutional and socio-economic policy issues in addition to COVID-19 related challenges and other external factors unforeseen during the Project design.

#### **Impact**

- What are the Project effects and impact in terms of implemented Project activities, both in qualitative, and quantitative terms, on achievement of specific development results by partner countries via providing small scale feasibility studies, on-site assessments, scoping missions, trainings, workshops, conference contributions, and various types of bilateral consultations?
- To what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the Project implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support and what are specific expectations for the potential follow-up assistance?
- How the implementation and interventions of the Project may have been impacted by reprogramming?

#### **Sustainability**

- To what extent the Project outputs/results are likely to be sustainable beyond the Project's lifetime? How could the Project results be further sustainably projected and expanded in the countries?
- What would be future priority interventions to ensure long-term sustainability of the project's achievements and contribute to further sharing knowledge and expertise to partner countries?
- How has the Project enhanced and contributed to the development of national capacity?

#### **Lessons learnt**

- Analyse the main lessons learnt in relation to the effectiveness of implementation modalities.

## **IV. Methodology**

Based on the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines](#), [UNEG Norms and Stand for Evaluations](#) and in consultations with UNDP IRH the evaluation will be participatory, involving relevant stakeholders.

The International Evaluation Consultant (the Consultant) will propose an evaluation methodology and agree on a detailed plan for the assignment as a part of the evaluation Inception Report. The proposed methodology may employ any relevant and appropriate quantitative, qualitative or combined methods to conduct the Final Project Evaluation, exploring specific gender sensitive data collecting and analytical methods and tools applicable in the concrete case. The Consultant is expected to creatively combine the standard and other evaluation tools and technics to ensure maximum reliability of data and validity of the evaluation findings.

Standard UNDP evaluation methodology would suggest the following data collecting methods:

- Desk review: The Consultant will conduct a detailed review of the programmatic materials and deliverables including the Project Document, results framework, monitoring and project quality assurance reports, annual workplans, progress and annual reports etc. *An indicative list of documents for desk review is provided in Annex 3.*
- Key informant interviews: The Consultant will interview representatives of main institutional partners, UNDP, other relevant stakeholders. For the interviews, the Consultant is expected to design evaluation questions around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability criteria, according to different stakeholders to be interviewed. *An indicative list of main stakeholders that may be considered for meetings is provided in Annex 2.*
- Meetings (min 2, max 5) via Zoom or WhatsApp with will be arranged to meet with beneficiaries and stakeholders and review the results of the Project;
- Other methodologies, as appropriate, such as surveys, case studies, statistical analysis, social network analysis, etc.

As an integral part of the evaluation report and specifically under the impact criteria, the Consultant will review the project effects and impact on its target groups. In this context, the consultancy is expected to gain insights from the key national and international players in knowledge and experience sharing.

**Stakeholders involvement:** During the evaluation process, to assess project performance, approach and modalities, the Consultant is expected to meet UNDO COs' representatives, key partners and stakeholders, including the ministries of the Russian Federation and members of Project Board etc. Initial briefing and evaluation debriefing to obtain the critical feedback on the evaluation findings, are envisaged. In addition, the views of the Project actors, such as consultants and interns, will be considered to obtain critical insight and information on the project activities and results. During these meetings, it would be important to record and accumulate inputs necessary not only for the project evaluation, but also to highlight recommendations and advise on potential project follow-up phase.

The COVID-19 global pandemic made travel to the countries impossible. In this case the evaluation team should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the evaluation virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the Inception report and agreed with the Evaluation Manager.

If all or part of the evaluation is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/computer may be an issue as many government and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the evaluation report.

If a data collection/field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). International consultants can work remotely with national evaluator support in the field if it is safe for them to operate and travel. No stakeholders, consultants or UNDP staff should be put in harm's way and safety is the key priority.

The expected duration of the assignment is up to 23 workdays in the period from the beginning of August to mid-September 2021.

## V. Competencies and Qualifications for the International Evaluation Consultant

### a) Competencies

#### Core values

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling UN values and ethical standards;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

#### Core competencies

- Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and post requirements and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- Results-Oriented: Plans and produces quality results to meet established goals, generates innovative, practical solutions to challenging situations;
- Communication: Excellent communication skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations, both orally and in writing, in a clear and persuasive style tailored to match different audiences;
- Teamwork: Ability to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations with a culturally diverse team;
- Client orientation: Ability to establish and maintain productive partnerships with national partners and stakeholders and pro-activeness in identifying of beneficiaries and partners' needs and matching them to appropriate solutions.

### b) Required qualifications

- Academic Qualifications/Education
  - Advanced university degree in international relations, social sciences, economics, public administration, or other related sciences; MA in any of indicated fields is considered an advantage.
- Experience
  - At least 3 years of extensive expertise and experience in evaluations of the projects/programmes;

- Sound knowledge of UNDP results-based management systems, and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation methodologies;
- General understanding and knowledge of the political/administrative and development context of the CIS region, with specific focus on project targeted beneficiaries and stakeholders;
- Experience of working in the CIS region is an asset;
- Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualize and write concisely and clearly.
- Languages Requirements
  - Fluency in Russian and English.
- Other
  - Excellent computer skills (MS Office applications) and ability to use information technologies as a tool and resource.

## VI. Evaluation of Applicants

Individual consultants will be evaluated based on a cumulative analysis taking into consideration the combination of the applicants' qualifications and financial proposal.

The award of the contract should be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- a) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
- b) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical (P11 desk reviews and interviews) and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

Only highest ranked candidates who would be found qualified for the job based on the P11 desk review will be invited for an interview”.

### Financial

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max. 70 points:

Criteria A (Relevant education) – max points: 5

Criteria B (Experience) – max points: 25

Criteria C (knowledge of English and Russian) – max points: 10

Criteria D – interviews (expertise in evaluation of projects/programmes will be scored and evaluated) – max 10

Criteria E - interview (knowledge of results-based management systems will be scored and evaluated) – max 10

Criteria F – interview (knowledge of development context of the CIS region will be scored and evaluated) – max 10

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max. 30 points

The financial proposal will specify a total lump sum amount and payment terms around specific and measurable (qualitative and quantitative) deliverables. Payments are based upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR and according to the lump sum breakdown as presented below.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and the closed borders evaluation will be conducted online through Interview and desk review.

	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>## of working days per task for Consultant</b>	<b>Tentative due date</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
1	Initial meeting with the project owners and desk review; Inception report including detailed evaluation workplan	6	9 August	
2	Evaluation and data collection; Two pager presentation with main messages resulting from	14	27 August	



the evaluation, including main findings, highlighting success, challenges, and the political value of the interventions and recommendations

3 Submission of the Final Evaluation Project Report 3 2 September

## VII. Application procedures

Qualified candidates are requested to apply online via this website. The application should contain:

- **Cover letter** explaining why you are the most suitable candidate for the advertised position, personal CV including at list 3 references and a **brief methodology** on how you will approach and conduct the work. Please paste the letter into the "Resume and Motivation" section of the electronic application.
- **Filled P11** form including past experience in similar projects and contact details of referees (blank form can be downloaded from [http://europeandcis.undp.org/files/hrforms/P11\\_modified\\_for\\_SCs\\_and\\_ICs.doc](http://europeandcis.undp.org/files/hrforms/P11_modified_for_SCs_and_ICs.doc)); please upload the P11 instead of your CV.
- **Financial Proposal in US\$\*** - specifying a total lump sum amount for the tasks specified in this announcement. The financial proposal shall include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (number of anticipated working days, per diems and any other possible costs).
- **Incomplete applications will not be considered. Please make sure you have provided all requested materials.**

*\*Please note that the **financial proposal is all-inclusive** and shall take into account various expenses incurred by the consultant/contractor during the contract period (e.g. fee, health insurance, personal security needs and any other relevant expenses related to the performance of services). Travel is not envisaged due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and the closed borders.*

**Payments** will be made only upon confirmation of UNDP on delivering on the contract obligations in a satisfactory manner. In line with the UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the IRH and/or the Consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the evaluation, that deliverable or service will not be paid. Due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, an extension of the contract may be considered if the consultant invested time towards the deliverable but was unable to complete to circumstances beyond his/her control.

*Qualified women and members of minorities are encouraged to apply. Due to large number of applications we receive, we are able to inform only the successful candidates about the outcome or status of the selection process.*

## VIII. Evaluation ethics

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG '[Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations](#)'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

## IX. TOR annexes

Annex 1. Project results framework

Annex 2. Indicative list of main stakeholders to be interviewed in evaluation

- Annex 3. List of documents to be considered for the evaluation desk review
- Annex 4. Evaluation matrix template
- Annex 5. Standard outline for the UNDP evaluation report

## Annex 1. Results Framework

inclusive and sustainable development pathways

Output 2.3. Enabling environment strengthened through diverse partnerships to expand opportunities for public and private sector, including alternative financing, for achievement of the SDGs

**Outcome indicators as stated in the Regional Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:**

Output Indicator 2.3.1. Number of new partnerships with emerging donors and other stakeholders (including through South-South and triangular cooperation), regional and financial mechanisms created and sustained in support of the SDGs

**Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan:** Strategic Plan outcome 1. Advance poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions

**Project title and Atlas Project Number:** 111918 Knowledge Management and Capacity Building in Russia-UNDP Partnership, Phase II

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS			Data collection methods & risk
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
<b>Output 1</b> <i>Several mechanisms of Russian expertise sharing are scaled up to support achievement of the sustainable, scalable development impact in partner countries</i>	<b>1.1</b> Nr of people (disaggregated by gender) registered in database of Russian experts for international development	<i>Database statistics</i>	To be set at project start	2018	20% increase as compared to the baseline	20% increase as compared to year 1	20% increase as compared to year 2	Number of active profiles in the database
	<b>1.2</b> Quality of the performance under Russian Experts (disaggregated by gender) on Demand assignments improved	<i>Individual Contract Performance Evaluation Form</i>	n/a	2018	60%	70%	75%	Nr of experts (disaggregated by gender) ranked 'excellent' or 'very good' for technical expertise and quality of reports
	<b>1.3</b> Level of satisfaction of returned secondees and interns with the contribution of the secondment or internship experience to their professional development (disaggregated by gender)	<i>Survey of returned secondees or interns</i>	n/a	2018	In accordance with expectations	Above expectations	Above expectations	Feedback questionnaires and perception surveys
<b>UNV implemented activity 4</b>	<b>UNV 1</b> Nr of active profiles of Russian specialists in the UNV roster (gender-disaggregated)	<i>UNV Roster statistics</i>	To be set at project start	2018	30% increase	30% increase	30% increase	UNV Russian Candidates Statistic
	<b>UNV 2</b> Nr of Russian nationals and organizations on the Online Volunteer roster (gender-disaggregated figures)	<i>UNV Online Volunteer statistics</i>	To be set at project start	2018	35% increase	35% increase	35% increase	<i>UNV Online Volunteer statistics</i>
	<b>UNV 3</b> Nr of Russian nationals deployed as UN Volunteers (gender-disaggregated)	<i>UNV statistics</i>	To be set at project start	2018	5% increase	20% increase	20% increase	UNV Statistics

## Annex 2. Indicative list of main stakeholders to be interviewed in evaluation

UNDP Country Offices and the national partners in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cuba, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Moldova, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan that have received Project's support via the Project modalities;  
 Selected experts that were engaged for the assignments under the Experts on Demand modality;  
 Selected interns that were supported by the Project;  
 Russian institutions involved in the project (e.g. Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence at HSE, Institute of Psychology, MGIMO).  
 Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation;  
 Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation;  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation;  
 United Nations Volunteers programme;  
 WorldSkills Russia.

## Annex 3. List of documents to be considered for the evaluation desk review

### Agreements and strategies

- Russia-UNDP Partnership Framework Agreement, 2015;
- Russia-UNDP Trust Fund Agreement, 2015;
- TFD Communications and Visibility Strategy.

### Relevant Project knowledge products, monitoring reports, studies and publications

- Project Document, Phase II;
- Project Work Plans;
- Project Annual Progress Reports (2019 and 2020);
- Minutes of the Project Board meetings;
- Calls for Proposals under the Experts on Demand programme;
- Experts' evaluation forms provided by the UNDP COs;
- Minutes of the selection, Back to Office Reports (BTOR), evaluation forms/recommendation letters of the interns deployed in COs under the Project;
- Survey on the implementation of the Russian Experts on Demand programme and the Internship programme;
- Article '[UNDP supports the youth to strengthen their career potential](#)';
- BTORs of the Project staff;
- Final Project report for Phase I.

## Annex 4. Evaluation matrix template

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
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## Annex 5. Standard outline for the UNDP evaluation report

- 1. Title and opening pages** with details of the project/project/outcome and of the evaluation team.
- 2. Project and evaluation information details:** title, Atlas number, budgets and project dates and other key information.
- 3. Table of contents.**

**4. List of acronyms and abbreviations.**

**5. Executive summary:** a stand-alone section of maximum four pages including the quality standards and assurance ratings.

**6. Introduction and overview.** What is being evaluated and why?

**7. Description of the intervention being evaluated.** Provides the basis for report users to understand the logic and evaluability analysis result, assess the merits of the evaluation methodology and understand the applicability of the evaluation results.

**8. Evaluation scope and objectives.** The report should provide a clear explanation of the evaluation's scope, primary objectives and main questions.

**9. Evaluation approach and methods.** The evaluation report should describe in detail the selected methodological approaches, methods and analysis.

**10. Data analysis.** The report should describe the procedures used to analyse the data collected to answer the evaluation questions.

**11. Findings and conclusions.** Evaluation findings should be based on an analysis of the data collected and conclusions should be drawn from these findings. Specifically, the Project Evaluation Report will include a review of impact and effects of the Project on its beneficiary institutions.

**12. Recommendations.** The report should provide a reasonable number of practical, feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make prior and during the Project Phase III to be elaborated.

**13. Forward-looking actionable recommendation** for the Project, outlining key strategic priorities to be addressed in the potential next phase of the project.

**14. Lessons learned.** As appropriate and as requested in the TOR, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation of the intervention.

**15. Annexes.**