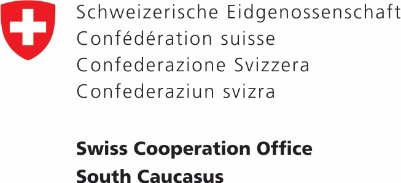
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| **Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia**  **on behalf of UNDP Georgia** |
| Final Evaluation Report |
| By Olena Krylova |





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| October 2017, Tbilisi |

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**Abbreviations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ADA | Austrian Development Agency |
| BDD | Basic Data and Directions |
| CEGSTAR | Center for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform |
| CiDA | Civil Development Agency NGO |
| CiDA | Civic Development Agency |
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| CSB | Civil Service Bureau |
| EU | European Union |
| GEL | Georgian Lari |
| GiZ | Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit |
| IFI | International Financial Institution |
| HR | Human resources |
| LED | Local Economic Development |
| LSG | Local self-government |
| MDD | Municipal Development Document |
| MDF | Municipal Development Fund |
| MoF | Ministry of Finance |
| MRDI | Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure |
| NALAG | National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| NTS | National Training System |
| RDA | Regional Development Agency |
| RDS | Regional Development Strategies |
| SDC | Swiss Development Cooperation |
| SGP | Small Grants Program |
| TA | Technical assistance |
| TF | Task Force |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| USD | United States dollars |
| WB | World Bank |
| WG | Working Group |

# Executive Summary

This reports presents results of the evaluation of the UNDP project “Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia” implemented in 2012-2017 with funding from SDC and ADA.

The project, while building on the previous UNDP intervention in the local governance domain, has laid the basis for advancing a more radical local self-governance and decentralization reform in the country.

The project was timely and highly relevant to national priorities in terms of advancing a local self-governance system, regional and local development (to the extent possible to align its assistance in the face of no comprehensive decentralization vision and strategy). UNDP flexibility in providing demand-based support to MRDI was particularly appreciated.

At different levels, the project produced a number of important achievements, which the evaluation recommends to further consolidate.

### UNDP supported national environment and stakeholders engaged in regional and local governance reform through preparation of a legislative package linked to the new LSG Code and facilitating the elaboration the new Decentralization Strategy. For advancing regional and local development, the project contributed to the elaboration of the adopted Law on Development of Mountainous Areas in 2015 and the Law on Regional Development and Policy Planning that is pending adoption.

MRDI will further require UNDP assistance for finalizing and implementing the Decentralization Strategy, as well setting up a system of progress monitoring and aligning international assistance with the decentralization strategic priorities. Further advancement of the reform will also imply strengthening the role of the Parliament and inter-ministerial coordination.

# To ensure sustainability of the national LSG training system, launched with the assistance of the project and cemented by the National Training Concept for LSGs, the system should be adopted to the new context (setting up the unified public service training system and a stronger role of the Civil Service Bureau). The challenges faced in operationalization of the municipal training funds also need to be addressed.

The project was active at both levels in supporting systems to steer inclusive regional and local development. It managed to introduce the mandatory practice of regional and local development planning by supporting MRDI in elaborating relevant methodologies, and assisting regions and municipalities with the design of their development strategies and plans; the plans implementation is being supported mainly from national budget sources. There is still potential for improving the methodologies’ strategic focus and emphasis on economic development, as well as more closely relating them with each other, ensuring solid linkages to the municipal budgeting process, and strengthening institutional capacities at both levels to plan and manage development, especially in the economic domain.

At the local level, the project also managed to contribute to strengthening civil society’s role in local development through its efficient Small Grant Program.

In order to sharpen focus on economic development and improve regional and local economic governance systems, in its future interventions UNDP should apply the economic development lens to all the support it provides to the decentralization vision and regulatory work, regional and local institutional capacity-building, capital investments, analytical and policy dialogue and partnership arrangements.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Brief Background

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the framework of different initiatives has been supporting development of the local governance system in Georgia at different levels. After the establishment of a new local self-government system in Georgia (the Organic Law was adopted in 2005 and enacted in 2006) and the local elections of 2006, UNDP assisted the government in restructuring its local government system[[1]](#footnote-1), elaborating key legislation on local self-government and defining decentralization strategies. Since then, the legislative and institutional framework for local self-governance reform was significantly improved, including the adoption of the new Local Self-Government (LSG) Code, regulatory amendments related to citizen participation, and transfer of some fiscal competences to municipalities, allowing them to retain a portion of the local income tax in addition to property tax already collected by municipalities.

After the parliamentary elections of 2012 that were followed by democratically implemented presidential and local self-government elections, the Government of Georgia re-confirmed its commitment to further democratization and the advancement of its local governance system.

In its transition to democracy and sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the country faces multiple development challenges, such as: coping with unemployment, poverty, inequalities (including gender-based), regional development disparities, access to public infrastructure and effective and efficient delivery of public services (especially in rural areas). However, as a result of democratic changes and reforms, Georgia has already advanced on a number of various development indices, including the human development index (HDI).[[2]](#footnote-2) The country’s progress in political, economic and social domains in the last decade gradually translates into stable GDP growth and poverty reduction. Georgia’s tighter relations (through signing an associational agreement and a trade agreement) with the European Union (EU) imply a need to comply with European standards and implement further reforms in different areas, including those of decentralization and governance, public administration and civil service, and development of civil society.

The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI), established in 2009, was mandated to lead the regional development process and steer the regional and local governance reforms in Georgia. Real decentralization of competencies and resources is still an agenda that lies ahead, and the need to strengthen MRDI capacities to guide and coordinate the reform is as acute as the need to build the abilities of local governments and other relevant actors to implement the reform and produce its development gains.

The UNDP has already been investing in strengthening institutional and individual capacities of central government bodies and building an efficient local civil service at the national level. In parallel, at the regional and local level, it has also been strengthening regional and local capacities to govern and deliver public services.

The project “Fostering Regional and Local Governance in Georgia” was one of the largest international initiatives in the support of local governance development in the country. It was implemented from 2012 through 2017 with the funding from Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and ADA (Austrian Development Agency). The project aimed at:

* Strengthening national systems in support of the regional and local governance reform and development (*outcome 1*). This includes policy formulation and implementation capacities of MRDI and other national stakeholders (including enhancing the MRDI role in regional development, supporting the Parliament in legislative process, and facilitating policy dialogue among different governmental and non-governmental actors);
* Establishing effective systems to steer inclusive regional and local development (*outcome 2*). This was meant to be achieved through a dual strategy: a) strengthening role and capacities of regional and local authorities through provision of support to selected regional administrations and local self-governments (LSG) in strategic development planning, plans implementation and linkages to the budgetary process; and b) implementation of Small Grants Scheme (SGS) that allowed partner municipalities to access small resources and invest in some priority areas (sub-project);
* Establishing a sustainable system of continuous national-wide capacity-building and training for LSGs (outcome 3).

The project will be operationally completed by the end of 2017. This report is the result of the external project evaluation commissioned by UNDP and conducted by an international consultant in October 2017.

## 1.2 Evaluation Goals and Methodology

This external final project evaluation was tasked to assess the project’s achievements in line with its objectives and success indicators, as well as to elaborate recommendations for future UNDP interventions in the support of local governance and decentralization reform in Georgia (the ToR is included in *Annex 1*). It was also requested to provide recommendations for sharpening project focus in its future stage on the issues of governance and management of regional and local economic development, which are getting higher on the agenda of the Georgian government and the donor community.

The analysis of the project experience and achievements were structured along several levels:

* Relevance and project responsiveness to the national context;
* Efficiency and Effectiveness in term of delivery of planned outputs and outcomes;
* Sustainability and national ownership of project results.

The aspects to be evaluated are indicated in the ToR (see Annex 1).

The evaluation was carried out in October 2017 with the field mission in Georgia taking place in the period of October 2-10. It included the following data collection and analysis methods:

* Desk study of all documents, reports and written materials produced in the framework of the project, as well as legal and regulatory documents, relevant analytical publications and reports.
* Semi-structured and unstructured interviews and focus group discussions with key project stakeholders and informants, including UNDP management and projects staff, management and different departments of MRDI, local project partners (LSGs and civil society organizations), the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG), trainers and service providers involved in the project implementation, relevant international projects (A general semi-structured interview Guide is attached in Annex 3).

Due to time constrains (on the background of widely scattered project geography) and the pre-election period, the evaluation mission was able to visit only Rustavi municipality as the nearest and most experienced project partner. However, it was ensured that within the evaluation program the evaluator is able to meet a certain number of project partners in Tbilisi (five mayors from the near municipalities travelled to Tbilisi to take part in the interviews – see program in Annex 2).

A detailed program of evaluation is attached in *Annex 2*.

# 2 Evaluation Findings

## 2.1 Relevance

The project was timely and highly relevant to national priorities in the area of advancing local self-governance, regional and local development. The delayed formulation of the national Decentralization Strategy by the Government of Georgia (the process that UNDP is currently supporting), makes it somewhat difficult to assess project alignment with the national decentralization priorities, as they are not yet clearly articulated. However, the chosen composition of project components with its focus on the key capacity-building areas – enabling reform environment and national level reform steering, regional and local systems and capabilities and continuous LSG training system – seem to be very suitable to the existing context and reform challenges.

The project flexibility to react to the needs of the national counterpart (MRDI) was cited as its strength on several occasions by different interviewees. Maintaining a certain level of flexibility was important for securing an adequate response in the context of the on-going process of decentralization vision formation.

The intervention is also relevant to the 2011-2015 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Georgia and the 2016-2020 UN Partnership for Sustainable Development whereby democratic governance is the first of the five foci. Moreover, it is fully in in line with the traditional UNDP mandate and its comparative advantages – namely, the ability to provide flexible technical assistance (TA) to national government actors and, by combining this instrument with micro and meso level interventions, have policy level leverage.

## 2.2 Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability

### National systems in support of regional and local governance reform and development (outcome 1)

LSG legislative and regulatory base, strengthening capacities of national stakeholders

Under this project component, the aim was to support reforms promoting local inclusive development facilitated by MRDI in five key areas: decentralization of competencies; decentralization of property; fiscal decentralization; HR policy reform and capacity development; and participatory local and regional strategic planning.

Through technical expertise the project has contributed greatly to the improvement of the LSG legislative and regulatory base, including the preparation of amendments to 2014 LSG Code. The new LSG Code introduced such important changes as: direct elections of Mayors and Gamgebelies (chief executive of the municipality); transfer of some competencies to municipalities, such as water and melioration management; management of cultural heritage monuments; housing for homeless people and care of stray animals; mandatory allocation of at least 1% of LSGs salary fund to training; transfer of the income tax; institutionalization of public participation through village assemblies and civil councils.

The alignments of more than 175 sectoral laws with the 2014 LSG Code were prepared and submitted to the Parliament. Some were passed, but many put on hold due to the launching of the process of elaboration of the Decentralization Strategy, meant to provide an overall vision of the reform and further guide the law-making process. To support the process of the Strategy development, the project commissioned preparatory research in six key thematic areas that informed the MRDI work on the strategy. The key directions of the strategy include: increasing competencies of LSG in different areas of public service provision; fiscal decentralization; standards for accountability, transparency and citizen participation; increased role of LSG in local economic development; effective and result-oriented management system at local level.

In its support to the law-making process, the project was very effective in employing several instruments:

* Legal assistance and advice to MRDI in the process of preparation of the amendments package to the new LSG Code, and synchronization of the sectoral laws with the new Code, as well as organization of workshops attended by Parliamentarians, the Prime Minister’s office, other ministries and LSGs. The MRDI management praises the project for the improvement of capacity of MRDI to guide the local governance reform process through various types of TA. The fact that the project is integrated in MRDI made it a close partner and part of “the MRDI institutional memory depository”;
* Discussions at the Parliamentary Committee on Regional Policy and Self-Government concerning different LSG-related issues, including amendments to the LSG Code’s chapter 16 related on LSG supervision at the regional level and community advisory councils; provisions on monitoring and supervision of gas supply in municipalities; Election Code amendments; initiation of collegial executive body at Mayor’s office, etc.
* Awareness-building of the newly elected Committee members and the newly appointed management of MRDI on regional and local self-governance issues through an introductory workshop;
* Facilitating the involvement of NALAG and strengthening its ability to influence the regulatory process and LG policies by enhancing its role in the consultations process, advocacy and lobbying. According to NALAG management, all key recommendations related to adoption/ amendments of the laws and regulations related to the local self-governance system proposed by NALAG in the course of collaboration with the UNDP projects were either adopted or being considered by the Parliament.
* Parliamentary inter-committee meetings and cross-sectoral policy debates and legislative discussions. Those contributed to reaching an agreement on further transfer of competencies to municipalities in such important service provision areas as: education (maintenance of school infrastructure and pupils transportation); regulation and management of public transportation within administrative boundaries of municipalities; cultural heritage protection; environmental protection (including removal of wild animals from natural environment, management of Tusheti-protected landscape, sanitary protection of resorts and resort locations, and restriction of general water consumption); administrative services (in line with the Code of Administrative Offences – parking and standing rules, pet-keeping, street trading within administrative boundaries of municipalities, issuance of certificates by Trustees, establishment of the concept of municipal civil servants, assignment of geographical names, etc.).

For advancing regional and local development, the special achievements to which the project has greatly contributed are:

* Adoption of the Law on Development of Mountainous Areas in 2015. The Law introduced special policies and support measures to promote development of the mountainous regions in Georgia.
* Elaboration of the Law on Regional Development and Policy Planning that defined roles and responsibilities in the field of regional development. The draft Law was elaborated as a result of wide inter-Ministerial consultations and was submitted for adoption.

So far, the project has been less successful in pursuing issues of fiscal decentralization and land and property management. The National Agency for State Property failed to prepare a new decree governing transfers of state land and property to municipalities (due by 2017) due to its inability to conduct an evaluation of the property and elaboration of a schedule for transfer. The government’s commitment to fiscal decentralization (and increasing the target for local budgets’ share in GDP from 4.2 to 7%) was declared as late as in June 2017.

International coordination

UNDP has been hosting the international community Partnership Platform in support of local governance reform and decentralization processes in Georgia. So far, the platform has been more effective in terms of information exchange and consolidation of international community opinion on some controversial aspects of the reform, than in coordination and streamlining of international interventions. It should be noted that its potential to become an effective coordination mechanism has been objectively limited by the absence of a clear national reform framework along which the international contributions can align and seek synergies. At the same time, the decentralization vision and strategy for meeting the European local governance standards has been under elaboration for some time; and most international players are impatient to see the strategy and to discuss its content.

### Effective regional and local systems to steer inclusive regional and local development (outcome 2)

Regional development

At the regional level, institutionalization of regional and municipal strategic and operational development planning is the key project achievement under this outcome, mainly through supporting MRDI in elaboration of the national methodology and provision of TA to the regions in designing their plans.

Currently, all nine regions of Georgia have their Regional Development Strategies (RDS); six of those regions were effectively developed with the technical assistance from the project in 2014-2015. All RDPs were approved by Regional Advisory Councils and the Government of Georgia and are supported with the Action Plans. The fact that since 2016, relevant Regional Advisory Councils have been updating their Action Plans on their own is a clear sign of sustainability of the planning practice.

The regional development planning has become the basis for the allocation of the national Regional Development Fund (RDF) resources[[3]](#footnote-3). As the regions in Georgia are not administrative units, the national approach to defining regional development policy is not yet articulated; the regional development structures/ agencies are not operational, national budget remains the main source of funding for the RDSs implementation[[4]](#footnote-4); and with each year the fund has been increasing progressively.[[5]](#footnote-5) The consultations on Draft Law on Regional Development Policy were recently conducted with the support of the project and its adoption is anticipated.

The analysis of several RDSs show that the key weakness of the regional development planning is the deficit of strategic orientation and a lack of focus, especially on issues related to economic development. The absence of competent agencies responsible for regional economic development is one of the reasons for this shortcoming.

The project has also actively contributed to the elaboration of the Law on Development of High Mountain Regions of Georgia, and the Strategy and Action Plan for Development of High Mountainous Regions. As a result of the Strategy and Action Plan implementation, already in 2016 almost 343,000 beneficiaries received assistance amounting to GEL 16,612,368.

Local Development

Similarly, at the local level the project invested in institutionalization of the Municipal Development Documents (MDD) - mid-term development plans. The MDD methodology was developed with the project’s assistance and adopted by MRDI in 2015. As a result, 43 MDDs were developed in 2016 with the project technical assistance (covering 2016-2019),[[6]](#footnote-6) which exceeded the target more than twice.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The primary sources of funding for MDDs are the RDF and the Municipal Development Fund (MDF). The latter is an independent agency that invests state funds (often coming from international grants and loans) in municipal services and infrastructure.

However, institutionalization of the MDD planning practice is incomplete without ensuring strong linkages between municipal planning and the budgeting process. The Budgetary Department of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) is responsible for preparing Basic Data and Directions (BDD) documentation that is supposed to ensure communication between national/regional strategies and priorities, on one side, and spending legal entities strategies/priorities, on the other, within the mid-term macro-economic framework. In reality, the BDD formulation is a parallel process, not well coordinated with the MDDs or RDSs. Moreover, the limit of BDD is that it is a spending and accounting tool rather than a strategic budget document. Most interviewed stakeholders admit that the MRDI ability to negotiate with MoF the linking MDDs with program budgets of municipalities seems very limited.

Other hindrances to sustainable institutionalization of municipal planning include:

* Weak capacities of municipalities to formulate development policies, also due to overstress on outsourcing elaboration of MDDs to external consultants;
* Deficit of project preparation and project cycle management skills, especially in rural municipalities. According to the MDF management, poor quality of project proposals received by the fund is often the main obstacle to obtaining investment funds by municipalities;
* Lack of conceptual links between MDDs and RDSs, as well as other important elements of the planning system, such as spatial plans or national programs. For instance, those interviewed during the evaluation almost univocally referred to the inability of RDSs to provide good guidance to their municipalities on the issues of economic development and inter-developments between different municipalities within the regions.
* Limited competencies and assets of the municipalities, including those related to public property and land.[[8]](#footnote-8) This seriously impacts their ability to elaborate and take ownership of special plans that are being now actively supported by different international projects across the country.

Small Grants Program

The Small Grants Program (SGP) was initially meant to support priority municipal development projects stemming from MDDs; however, (since most of these projects are related to public infrastructure, which is already generously funded from the national funds) the project has flexibly reoriented its Program towards funding “softer” projects – initiatives implemented by local NGOs and community organizations, mainly in the following areas:

* Support to local tourism and agro-tourism service providers;
* Promoting innovative approaches to energy efficiency and waste management at the local level;
* Advancing pre-school, professional and non-formal education;
* Enhancing citizen engagement (including children and national minorities) in local self-governance and service management.

As a result, a total of 31 SGPs (approx. USD 650,000) benefited some 30,000 people in six targeted regions.

The SGP was efficiently implemented by the Civic Development Agency (CiDA), which was responsible in 2015-2016 for the overall management of the grant facility. The Agency published a representative catalogue “Role of Civil Society in Regional and Local Development of Georgia” that summarizes all supported projects.

Given the small budget available per project (on average some USD 20,000 per project) the achievements of some projects seem to be highly efficient. While the tangible effects of some projects are visible (e.g. activation of small tourism operators, due to better organization, training and support infrastructure; demo solar heaters installations and other improved infrastructure in kindergartens; introduction on interspecies (non)hybrid fruit varieties by local farmers; municipal waste management plans designed; established training center for farmers and agro-specialists; new training modules for the Agricultural University of Georgia; libraries infrastructure improvement; etc.), the “soft” impact of others is difficult to assess and requires more precise monitoring (e.g. further youth and citizen engagement in local governance process; functionality of supported citizen advisory councils and participatory mechanisms; application of problem identification and solution skills by local governance actors; citizen awareness; minority engagement; improved citizen access to information; functionality of the established multistory apartment owners’ associations; etc.). Judging the sustainability of structures and processes supported through SGPs may also need extra monitoring, although sustainability risks were minimized by the project strategy to fund already existing NGOs and community structures.

At the same time, the project seems to have had a clear positive impact on the local NGO community. The interviewed grantees refer to such benefits as: NGOs’ greater engagement with LSGs; networking between central and periphery NGOs; improved technical capacity and skills among NGO staff; locally promoted voluntarism; improved local image of NGOs; strengthened NGOs grass roots base; and LG as a new niche.

Gender focus

On several occasions, in its work at the local level the project zoomed in on gender issues, specifically in the process of elaboration of MDDs and in strengthening women’s participation in the local political process. The latter was a result of synergies with another UNDP project on political women’s empowerment.

As a result of this focus, of 43 supported MDDs, 14 were reported to be gender sensitive. It is still too early to assess the impact of UNDP's enhancement of women’s role in local political processes. According to the official data, only 11.6% of elected candidates in the 2014 local government elections were women. In the next local elections (due October 2017), according to the preliminary data available to UNDP, only two female candidates will run for Mayor’s offices from the ruling party of “Georgian Dream” but some 25% majoritarian candidates running for local councils from all parties will be women.

### LSG training system

### (outcome 3)

The adoption of the National Training Concept for LSGs in 2015, followed by investments in the development of the National Training System (NTS), was among the significant project achievements. The system was innovative, introducing a decentralized market-based model of training provision, institutionalizing mandatory allocation of 1% of municipalities’ salary fund for trainings[[9]](#footnote-9); it was also supported by a smart technical solution allowing a match between a database of municipal training needs and a list of certified training providers across the country.

The NTS was meant to be managed by the Center for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform (CEGSTAR) – an MRDI unit primarily responsible for policy work within the Ministry. To organize demand for training services, CEGSTAR trained LSG human resource managers in all municipalities to undertake training needs assessments based on a specially elaborated methodology. In 2016, 74 out of 76 municipalities submitted the annual trainings plans to NTS. The same year, an e-register of training providers was set up ([www.edu.lsg.gov.ge](http://www.edu.lsg.gov.ge)): 105 training programs of 23 providers were certified from 122 submitted programs. The CEGSTAR also elaborated a training quality assurance system that foresaw selected training monitoring by external experts and CEGSTAR staff, with constant feedback from trained municipalities. Additionally, an e-library was created with resources related to local self-governance (<http://www.library.lsg.gov.ge/>) that had to be responsible for maintaining the quality assurance system.

The project supported CEGSTAR to deliver training courses for 759 national civil servants (372 men; 387 women) and 4,427 local civil servants (2,497 men and 1,930 women) trained in more than 23 topics (12,907 person/day with 11,506 person/day for local civil servants).

However, further financial sustainability of the NTS is not yet secured. To procure training services, municipalities had to undergo a tender process that is disproportionally complex for satisfying training needs of most municipalities. A direct simplified procurement procedure for training was never endorsed by the MoF and State Procurement Agency. The CEGSTAR’s budget, increased by nearly 75% (from 258,000 GEL in 2015 to 450,000 GEL in 2016), but was reduced in 2017 to 280,000 GEL.

Institutionally, sustainability of the TNS is endangered by the lack of clarity of roles between MRDI/CEGSTAR and the Civil Service Bureau (CSB). Following the unification of the public service training system, the CSB is solely responsible for all matters related to human resources and learning in the civil service system, of which municipal staff is a part. The project has been cooperating with CSB in conducting LSGs’ institutional analysis and elaborating guiding principles for their effective organizational structure, but it has not yet advanced in negotiating their role in NTS. The Bureau has praised the NTS but also admits that it is not functional under the current set-up and requires revision.

# 3 Conclusions and Recommendations

## 3.1 Conclusions

The UNDP project “Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia”, while building on the previous UNDP intervention in the local governance domain, has laid the basis for advancing a more comprehensive local self-governance and decentralization reform in the country.

The project was timely and highly relevant to national priorities in the area of advancing local self-governance, regional and local development (to the extent possible to align its assistance in the face of no comprehensive decentralization vision and strategy). UNDP flexibility in providing demand-based support to MRDI was particularly appreciated.

At a different level, the project produced a number of important achievements that need to be further consolidated.

### National systems in support of regional and local governance reform and development and strengthening capacities of national stakeholders (outcome 1)

Effective support was provided in preparing the LSG legislative and regulatory base by aligning laws and regulations with the new LSG Code and facilitating the recent elaboration of the new Decentralization Strategy by MRDI in coordination with line Ministries and the Parliament.

Deployment of diverse TA instruments accounted for the project achievements in this domain. This included: strengthening the institutional capacity of MRDI; awareness-building and cooperation with the Parliamentary Committee on Regional Policy and Self-Government; active involvement of NALAG; support to inter-ministerial discussions and inter-sectoral policy debates.

The project is praised for its partnership by MRDI, in particular for investments made in capacity-building of different departments and individuals at the Ministry.

In the context of regional and local development, the project contributed to the elaboration of the adopted Law on Development of Mountainous Areas in 2015 and the Law on Regional Development and Policy Planning that is pending adoption.

The project was less successful in pursuing the issues of fiscal decentralization and land and property management, although those issues are integrated in the Decentralization Strategy that is currently being developed.

*International coordination*

The international community Partnership Platform in support of local governance reform and decentralization processes in Georgia hosted by UNDP is potentially a good venue for ensuring coordination and synergies among the international community actors, and the MRDI, in the process of the LSG and decentralization reforms implementation, given that this coordination is framed by a clear decentralization strategy and enjoys stronger national ownership on the part of MRDI.

Regional and local systems to steer inclusive regional and local development (outcome 2)

At the regional level, institutionalization of regional and municipal strategic and operational development planning is among the key project achievements. This includes the national methodology, and ensuring full coverage of regions in Georgia with RDSs and supporting Action Plans (out of which UNDP directly assisted in the elaboration of six). Sustainability of regional planning is supported by the ability of the Regional Advisory Councils to revise their RDSs and Action Plans independently and by the availability of RDF funding for the implementation of the strategies. The current weaknesses of the regional development planning system, however, include: a lack of strategic focus and guidance on issues of economic development of the regions, and an absence of competent agencies responsible for regional economic development.

At the municipal level, the project invested successfully in introducing municipal development planning practices across the country (including elaboration of MDS 43 municipalities with 14 of them qualified as gender-sensitive). The institutionalization of planning at this level is still incomplete without ensuring linkages between planned and budgeting processes. Other deficiencies include: weak capacities of municipalities to independently formulate development policies and to prepare and manage investment project proposals; deficient conceptual links between MDDs and RDSs; and lack of guidance to municipalities from the regional level on such strategic issues as economic development; limited competencies (particularly related to land and assets management) of municipalities for planning and managing local economic development (LED) effectively.

Through its Small Grant Program, efficiently implemented at the local level, the project managed to support a wide range of local community and NGO initiatives that enhanced and demonstrated the potential role of civil society in local development. These projects produced both tangible and intangible impacts on their communities, including the empowerment of local NGOs.

# LSG training system (outcome 3)

The project support to the National Training Concept for LSGs laid the basis for the establishment of the innovative NTS in Georgia. Sustainability of this system is still to be ensured in the context of the unified public service training system and a key role assigned to CSB. For financial security of the system, a solution needs to be found for the operationalization of the mandatory allocations from the municipal salary funds to training and learning.

## 3.2 Recommendations

Based on the above-presented findings and conclusions and a need to consolidate some project achievements, the following recommendations can be made to UNDP:

### National systems in support of regional and local governance and decentralization reform

1. Provide further TA to MRDI in finalizing and putting into implementation the Decentralization Strategy.
2. Support MRDI in developing a monitoring framework for tracking progress of the Decentralization Strategy implementation and the contributions of different actors, including the international community. The existing Partnership Platform has potential to become an effective donors assistance coordination mechanism, provided a clear reform coordination framework and national ownership are ensured. The Strategy monitoring plan can become the basis of more structured coordination between different actors. In this context the SDC experience of supporting the Donors Board and its Common Result Framework as an instrument for coordination of assistance to decentralization in Ukraine can be looked at.[[10]](#footnote-10)
3. As launching the reform will be a dynamic and demanding process, build in a degree of flexibility for provision of technical assistance to MRDI and other national partners in some emerging strategic areas of reform implementation (possibly through establishing a Contingency Fund for on–demand TA provision with transparent rules for funds use).
4. Since the reform implementation will require active law-making and legal analysis components, intensify involvement of the Parliament with its Committee on Regional Policy and Self-Government and the Budgetary Office, very capable of conducting analytical work.
5. Enhance further inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation using already tested instruments, and also through establishing a formal coordination body at the supra-Ministerial level (e.g. through reanimating the work of the State Committee on Regional Development and expanding its mandate to “decentralization and regional development”, or establishing an inter-Ministerial WG or TF at the Prime-Minister/ Cabinet of Ministries level).

**LSG training system**

1. Start active dialogue between different stakeholders (consider establishing a WG) on the issue of advancing the NTS, which the project has already massively invested in. It is suggested to clearly define the essential components of the system that need to be preserved for the TNS to be functional (e.g. needs assessment; training providers registration and programs certification; quality control; system of matching demand and supply; procurement of training services) and discuss the possible redistribution of roles and components among relevant actors (e.g. CSB, MRDI/CEGSTAR, NALAG). Explore sustainable opportunities for operationalizing the 1% salary fund for procurement through NALAG (e.g. collective procurement of training services by municipalities through NALAG). Encourage different funders of LSG training (including other international organizations, MDF, etc.) to use the system. Carefully explore potential of the CEGSTAR to engage in the role of a training service provider to LSG by taking into consideration its future role in the TNS and a need to avoid the risk of conflict of interests.

### System for steering regional and local development

1. Establish dialogue and coordination between MRDI and MoF on the issue of linking regional and municipal planning and budgeting instruments (e.g. including transforming BDD from a spending and accounting tool to a development oriented and holistic budget policy and management instrument). Joint pressure with IFIs may need to be applied, including more effective deployment of conditionality instrument used by IFIs.
2. Pay adequate attention to internal capacity-building of municipal authorities to formulate development policies and strategies, as well as to greater involvement of elected councilors, who have the key role in the development policy formation process, along with citizen engagement.
3. Revise the regional and local development methodologies, in order to make the strategies more strategic, more focused on regional and local growth potentials, and with more effective guidance in economic development. Ensure that MDDs are not limited to the lists of priority infrastructure but also include institutional decentralization reform measures that need to be implemented locally (especially in relation to services decentralization and municipal management aspects) and include measures for creating a business enabling environment and private sector incentives.
4. Further streamlining of different planning instruments – RDSs, MDDs, spatial plans and national programs – will be required for future investment of resources to be coherent and strategic.
5. Coordinate future intervention in the regional development domain with the EU that has a traditional leading role, know-how and relevant instruments for supporting regional development. Consider piloting the RDA model in one of the future target regions, if the RDA approach becomes part of the Regional Development Policy in Georgia.

### Sharpening focus on economic development

1. Give special attention to the issues impacting regional and LED in the new Decentralization Strategy design and its implementation. These issues include: revenues; land, property and assets management; equalization; LSG competencies related to management of infrastructure and facilitating economic and private sector development; inter-municipal cooperation and interface between LSG and private sector.
2. Sharpening the focus on economic development will have obvious implications for the project’s counterparts’ arrangements. UNDP will need to step out of its traditional attachment to MRDI and extend its partnership to other Ministries that are instrumental for advancing the LSG role and capacities in managing economic development, including the Ministry of Economy and the MoF.
3. Focus future provision on technical assistance to partner municipalities on LED instruments and LSG capacity to manage such development without distorting the market and interfering in the private sector. This will involve support to such capabilities as spatial planning and assets management; cost-benefit analysis to identifying investment projects; project development and cycle management to access infrastructure funds; the use of PPP instrument; engagement of the private sector in the management of public services; various tools for creating a supportive business environment, such as business support services/ centers/ incubators, branding, etc.. In this context, see also the recommendation N8 related to integrating this know-how in MDDs.
4. Linked to the previous recommendation, in the future the SGPs can be used to fund demo-projects that will be a prototype/ showcase what LSG can do in support of LED. There is a potential to build on some previously funded SGP initiatives (e.g. small tourism service providers associations/ support centers, etc.).
5. Seek better synergies with MDF for targeting economically viable investments in project municipalities. In this context, experience emerging at the Armenian Territorial Development Fund can be of interest.[[11]](#footnote-11)
6. Systematically analyze the experience related to promoting the LSG role in LED (an analytical component). Translate LED instruments into laws, regulations and methods. In a very practical sense, it is suggested to establish a Task Force at NALAG (consisting of experts, practitioners, academicians, key Ministries specialist) to reflect systematically on economic governance issues and ensuring that emerging experiences feed well-structured policy dialogue and dissemination of good practices and lessons.
7. UNDP strategies to support of cross-border economic activities should build on strategies based on solid analysis of the situation and issues to be resolved to facilitate economic cross-border cooperation, as well as providing a link to policy dialogue where relevant.
8. The future project may consider drawing on the experience of donor countries (Switzerland and Austria) that have some expertise in the area of the LSG role in LED (instruments), as well as suggesting effective approaches to mountainous areas development, tourism, spatial planning, etc. Links to the rural development initiatives targeted by other SDC and ADA projects in Georgia should be also ensured through securing the same geographic focus (where feasible) and coordination of assistance strategies.

### Coordination and synergies

1. While formulating the new project proposal, clearly articulate and visualize the linkages and synergies with other UNDP and non-UNDP interventions. This will include but not be limited to: UNDP/DANIDA local good governance initiative; UNDP/DFID Public Administration Reform project; UNDP/EU Rural Development Project; UN Joint program for Gender Equality; EU regional development/ RDA related projects; the role of IFIs (specifically in advocating for local budget and fiscal decentralization reform); investments of MDF/ RDF in regional and local development; key international local governance support projects (e.g. those of GiZ, USAID, CoE, etc.).

**Annex 1 Terms of Reference**

**Terms of Reference**

International Consultant for Project Evaluation

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|  | **UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**  **JOB DESCRIPTION** |

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| **I. Position Information** |
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| Job Code Title: International Project Evaluation Consultant  Duty Station: Tbilisi and (home based)  Contract Type: IC  Project Reference: Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia  Duration: Up to 20 working days within the period of 15September - 20 October 2017 –  (one field mission to Georgia)  Supervisor: UNDP Democratic Governance Team Leader |

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| **II. Organizational Context** |
| Georgia has made significant progress in terms of political, economic and social development over the last decade. Bold institutional reforms, robust GDP growth [[12]](#footnote-12) and expansion of targeted social assistance (TSA) schemes resulted in significant reduction of poverty and especially extreme poverty in general population. The changes were reflected by rising human development index from 0.710 in 2005 to 0.754 in 2014[[13]](#footnote-13).  Moreover, peaceful transfer of power through parliamentary elections in 2012 signaled a new era of consolidated democracy and made Georgia a rare exception in the region. This was further reinforced by transparent and credible presidential, local self-governance and parliamentary elections in 2013-2016 along with improved scores in democracy, media and civil society development as demonstrated by various international indices[[14]](#footnote-14).  Georgia has taken steps to strengthen market access and establish closer ties with the European Union (EU). Signing of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA) agreement in 2014 represents an important opportunity for the country to strengthen its cooperation with Europe on political, economic, social and security issues, and to benefit from bilateral free trade. Under the agreement, the GoG is expected to implement core reforms in a number of key areas including the development of civil society, good governance, public administration and civil service reform.  Besides, the country has achieved significant progress in terms of enhancing legislative and institutional framework for local self-governance reform and decentralization. The key achievements in these areas include the adoption of the new code of Local Self-Governance, further amendments concerning citizen participation as well as the enhancement of decentralization demonstrated by the transfer of selected competences to municipalities and fiscal decentralization allowing municipalities to retain a portion of the local income tax.  However, despite impressive progress in specific sectors and areas, Georgia faces an unfinished development agenda common among the middle-income countries. Unemployment, poverty and inequality remain key policy challenges, reflecting an unfinished transition to sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It is obvious that despite the progress achieved in the field of regional development and decentralization, significant challenges remain.  There is a scope for improving the policy-making and strategic planning processes at national, regional and local levels. Georgia’s civil sector is quite young. Civil servants and politicians have no experience or a positive memory of structured interaction and the division of responsibilities for policymaking, policy development and decision-making. The level of decentralization of competencies and resources is still quite limited. Similarly, the capacities of the local authorities to design and deliver development oriented, evidence-based, inclusive, participatory and gender-sensitive services remain low. These all constrain further progress in local development.  According to recent welfare monitoring survey, 18.4 % of population and 21.4 % of children still live in poverty (2014).[[15]](#footnote-15)  Growth has failed to translate into job creation and the unemployment rate declined only marginally from 12.4% in 2014 to 12% in 2015[[16]](#footnote-16). Young people appear to be the most disproportionately affected with unemployment rates of nearly 31% in 2014. Failure to make transition to the labor market and other social factors make youth particularly vulnerable to the prospect of sliding into poverty [[17]](#footnote-17).**There are also significant gender differences in the labour market. Female labour force participation is 57 %, compared to 75 % for males and the** average monthly salary of women is 40 % lower than that of men due to a concentration in lower-paid jobs (health care, education and subsistence agriculture).  The economic gains have not been evenly distributed across the country and there is a strong asymmetry between rural and urban areas as well as large disparities across the regions. Unemployment remains four times higher in urban areas compared with rural areas. This is largely thought to be attributed to widespread self-employment in the agricultural sector. However, rural areas are much less developed compared to urban areas and in 2012, 30% of the rural population was living under the poverty line[[18]](#footnote-18).Child poverty rates are also about 50% higher in rural areas than they are in urban areas[[19]](#footnote-19).  There are also significant differences in the delivery of public services in rural and urban areas. While the results of the two consecutive surveys examining citizen satisfaction with service delivery, demonstrate improvements in the provision of a large spectrum services from 2013 to 2015, several issues remain unaddressed. The survey also reveals significant differences between rural and urban areas and mountainous regions in terms of access to certain services.  There is a number of unresolved issues particularly affecting rural population. A series of public services are practically not available to villages. E.g. centralized supply of drinking water is only available to 40-41% of villages and 26-32% of mountainous regions. Similarly, the sewage system wasn’t available in 95% and 92% of the rural areas in 2013 and 2015 respectively), only 6% of villages were provided with waste disposal and cleaning services in 2015 etc[[20]](#footnote-20). 6% of children in rural Georgia live in households where there is no improved source of drinking water. Almost 7% of urban children live in households with unimproved sanitation facilities vs 41.3% of rural children[[21]](#footnote-21).  Overall, GoG is enthusiastic to advance decentralization and introduce effective regional development tools. Thus, it is crucially important to strengthen its policy formulation, advocacy and implementation capacities to ensure proper achievement of the reform goals and objectives.  To address the prevailing regional and local development challenges, UNDP in collaboration with ADA and SDC and in partnership with Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI) implements the project “fostering regional and local development in Georgia” since 2012. The project activities are centered around the three interrelated priorities covering national, regional and local levels:   * Strengthening of policy formulation and implementation capacities of MRDI and other national stakeholders. MRDI is supported to implement the commitments under the approved RDSS and assisted to upscale its relevant policy coordination function. The legislature, especially the parliamentary Committee on Regional Policy and Self-Government is supported to make it an active participant of the reform process. The policy dialogue among different governmental and non-governmental stakeholders is facilitated promoting improvement of the local governance and regional development related policies. * Strengthening role and capacities of regional and local authorities for intensifying their efforts for development. For this purpose, selected regional administrations and LSGs are being supported in strategic development planning and in implementing selected actions from their respective regional/municipal development plans. Specific emphasis is to be placed on reflecting the municipal development plans in programme budgets. * Introducing an effective, nation-wide training system for regional administrations and local authorities to strengthen their planning, budgeting, management and service delivery capacities. The training system pursing a long-term impact effectively addresses the training needs at regional and local levels. An innovative mechanism coordinating demand and supply flows is to be set up. Thus, the regional governors’ administrations and LSGs will benefit from a wide range of quality trainings, as well as practical assistance to be used in the regional and local development processes.   The project implementation timeline is 2012- 2017with the budget of over USD 6 Million.  The key achievements to date from the RLD project include:   * Promotion and contribution to decentralization reform reflected in significant improvement of the legal basis, as a precondition for local development. This includes:   + Essentially revised Code on Local self-governance (the LSG Code) adopted on 14 February 2014. Among other changes new code imposed direct elections of Mayors and Gamgebelies (chief executive of the municipality); transferred water and melioration management powers to municipalities; mandated the LSGs to allocate at least 1 percent of their salary fund to training municipal staff using the CEGSTAR training system and created a pre-conditions for greater fiscal decentralization, including transfer of the income tax to local ownership (since 2016). Further amendments to the code significantly enhanced the framework for public participation by establishing two new forms of citizen engagement: village assembly and civil council, both to be formed with balanced participation of men and women.   + A new Law on Development of Mountainous Areas which introduces special policies and support measures to promote development of the mountainous regions in Georgia. A national strategy and action plan to further systematize support under this law is in the making. * Institutionalization of the systemic approach to regional and municipal development, through introduction of Regional and Municipal Strategic planning, as well as facilitation of establishment of the system of central funding allocation to the regional and municipal strategic priorities.   + 9 Regional Development Strategies and respective Action Plans approved by the Government of Georgia and around $ 175 million channeled from the centrally managed Regional Development Fund for implementation of these Action Plans in 2015 alone. 600 regional projects across all of Georgia, benefitting over 1 million inhabitants are underway. Most notably, the Regional Development Planning has become an essential pre-requisite for the allocation of the Regional Development Fund resources across regional priorities. * Establishment of the institutionalized and resourced National Training System (NTS) for local authorities first time ever in Georgia’s history. The NTS, along with the mandatory allocation of 1 percent of each municipalities’ salary fund for trainings creates a good basis for a systemic capacity development of local officials as an essential pre-requisite for improved municipal services, infrastructure and development;   As per the Prodoc in 2014 and 2017, external mid-term and final evaluations of the project shall take place in line with the UNDP rules and regulations, that are in line with the best international standards. The mid-term review was conducted in 2014 and final evaluations will be considered as part of the program monitoring and evaluation activities.  Therefore, UNDP seeks to engage an independent consultant, who will undertake the final evaluation of the project, review the project implementation to date, taking a full account of the project implementation context, identify the strengths and weaknesses, lessons learned, best practices of the project and provide forward looking recommendations for the upcoming initiatives. The details of the expected consultancy are provided below.  The evaluation of the project is also the part of UNDP Georgia Evaluation Plan 2016-2020. |
| **III. Duties and Responsibilities** | |
| The consultant will be responsible to review the project implementation since the beginning to date and provide a strategic assessment and recommendations. The duties of the consultant include:.   * + Develop detailed plan of evaluation of project performance as well as the context around the project   + Undertake project evaluation   + Review how the project addresses national priorities. Review national ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country   + Assess the relevance, timeliness, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project considering existing context   + Hold discussions with the main stakeholders: Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, Swiss Cooperation Office for the South Caucasus, Austrian Development Agency, UNDP other international partners (GIZ, EU, USAID, etc)   + Undertake the assessment of the Project vis-à-vis targets set by the Project Document   + Provide recommendations for possible phase 2 of the project,   IV. Outline of methodology and consultancy criteria:  The consultancy will be undertaken in close cooperation with the Project Team and entail a combination of desk review and document analysis, field visits, and interviews with key stakeholders, applying both qualitative and quantitative analyses. The project review and elaboration of recommendations will be participatory in nature and will make use of different tools. The list of key project documents to be reviewed is attached to this TOR.  The consultant will develop a detailed time-bound plan of the consultancy in close cooperation with the project. The project will provide the consultant with a list of key stakeholders, draft schedule of the meetings and will facilitate communication of the consultant with UNDP, SDC, ADA, MRDI and other stakeholders. The project will also support the consultant logistically (transport, hotel reservations, organization of workshops, arrangement of meetings, etc.)  The consultant shall look at the following criteria while reviewing the project:  (a) relevance – to what extent project has been responding and continues to respond to the national context,  (b) timeliness – how much the activities were carried out in a responsive and timely manner and  (c) effectiveness - to what extent the project is on track to achieving the project outputs and outcomes,  (d) efficiency- how economically resources or inputs (such as funds, expertise  and time) were converted to results.  (e) sustainability - national ownership and the prospects for further institutionalization of capacity development efforts to strengthen local and regional governance structures,  The Consultant should evaluate the following aspects:   1. Project concept and design   The evaluation will assess the project concept and design. He/she will review the problem addressed by the project and the project strategy, encompassing an assessment of the appropriateness of the objectives, planned outputs, activities and inputs as compared to cost-effective alternatives. The executing modality and managerial arrangements should also be judged. The evaluator(s) will assess the relevance of indicators and review the work plan, planned duration and budget of the project.   1. Implementation   The evaluation will assess the implementation of the project in terms of quality and timeliness of inputs and efficiency and effectiveness of activities carried out. Also, the effectiveness of management as well as the quality and timeliness of monitoring and backstopping by all parties to the project should be evaluated. The evaluation is to assess the Project team’s use of adaptive management in project implementation.   1. Project outputs, outcomes and impact   The evaluation will assess the achievement of outputs and contributions to outcomes as well as the sustainability of project results and potential impact. This should encompass an assessment of the achievement of the immediate objectives and the contribution to attaining the overall objective of the project. The evaluation should also assess the extent to which the implementation of the project has been inclusive of relevant stakeholders and to which it has created collaboration between different partners. The evaluation will also examine positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended   1. Cross cutting issues:   The evaluation will assess the project implementation process and its approaches in terms of due attention to gender aspects and environmental aspects. The evaluation should give an answer to the question to which degree the approaches, concepts and services provided gender balanced and promoted environmentally friendly approach, whether the gender and environmental aspects were addressed sufficiently in monitoring and reporting with the view of relevant to the Projects Document.   1. Visibility:   The evaluation will assess the project implementation process how the Project ensured compliancy with the visibility guidelines of Donors and how did it ensure awareness raising of RLD project in general within the stakeholders and beneficiaries  V. Deliverables and Timeframe:  The consultant should:   1. Produce evaluation Inception Report showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures, draft and final reports reflecting the findings of the evaluation along with the recommended actions for possible phase 2 of the project. The draft report should be prepared in two weeks’ time after completion of the country mission. The outline of the report should be agreed with UNDP, SDC, ADA and MRDI during the mission. The respective feedback to the draft report will be shared with the consultant in a week time after receipt of the draft report. The final report shall be prepared within a week following receipt of the feedback. 2. Produce mission reports by the end of the mission (in a week time after completion of the mission)   VI. Management  Consultant will work under the guidance and direct supervision of UNDP Georgia Democratic Governance Team Leader and overall guidance of the Assistant Resident Representative. As a minimum, the consultant will have inception and debriefing meetings with the UNDP DRR/ARR, Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and Swiss Cooperation Office in South Caucasus (SDC), MRDI leadership. UNDP will facilitate communication of the consultant with SDC, ADA and MRDI.  The UNDP Georgia and the Project Team will be responsible for liaising with partners, and supporting the consultant in acquiring relevant documentation, data and evidence.  Tentative timetable for the Consultancy:   1. working days within the period of 15 September – 20 October, 2017   VII. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS  Payment Terms will be as follows:   * 10% of payment upon approval of the final Inception Report * 30% upon submission of the draft report * 60% upon finalization of the final report   Or, as otherwise agreed between UNDP and Consultant. | |

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| VII. Competencies |
| **Corporate Competencies:**   * Demonstrates commitment to UNDP’s mission, vision and values; * Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability; * Highest standards of integrity, discretion and loyalty.   **Functional Competencies:**  Knowledge Management and Learning:   * Shares knowledge and experience; * Actively works towards continuing personal learning, acts on learning plan and applies newly acquired skills.   Development and Operational Effectiveness:   * Ability to perform a variety of specialized tasks related to Results Management, including support to design, planning and implementation of program, managing data, reporting; * Ability to provide input to business processes re-engineering, implementation of new system, including new IT based systems; * IT competencies in Word, Excel, Power Point and internet. * Excellent negotiations skills   Leadership and Self-Management:   * Focuses on result for the client and responses positively to feedback; * Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude; * Remains calms, in control and good humored even under pressure. |

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| **VIII. Required Qualifications** | |
| Education: | * Advanced University degree or equivalent in Public policy, Public Administration, or a related discipline (preferably with a concentration on local governance, decentralization issues) |
| Experience: | * Minimum 5 years of professional experience in managing and/or assessment of large scale, multidimensional projects preferably in an international organization setting * Minimum 8 years of experience of working on the issues of local governance, democracy, decentralization or related matter. * Experience of working with public sector at central and/or local level and/or donor organizations; * Familiarity with the development context of Georgia; previous working experience in the country and good understanding of current development dynamics in decentralization and regional development of Georgia will be an asset. |
| Other Requirements: | * Fluency in spoken and written English; knowledge of Georgian an asset. * Strong research and analytical skills; * Excellent verbal and written communication skills * Excellent organizational skills * Excellent computer literacy (MS Office; Windows). * Initiative and sound judgment, dedication to the UN principles and demonstrated ability to work harmoniously with persons of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds |

**Annex 2 Evaluation Mission Program**

# Mission of Ms. Olena Krilova, Independent Expert for Final Evaluation of Project “Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia”

## 1--11 October 2017

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday 1 October 2017 | | | | | |  | |  | |
| 23:55 | | | Arrival Tbilisi International Airport | | | |  | | |
| Monday 2 October 2017 | | |  | | | |  | | |
| 10:00-11:00 | | | Welcome by Ms Marika Shioshvili, RDL Project Manager | | | | | | |
| 11:00. – 11:20 am | | | Transfer to UN house, Eristavi street  Ms. Marika Shioshvili RLD Project Manager | | | | | | |
| 11:30 – 13.00 pm | | | Briefing by UNDP RepresentativesMr. Shombi Sharp Deputy Resident Representative (DRR), Ms. Natia Natsvlishvili ARR, Marika Shioshvili, RLD Project Manager | | | | | | |
| 14:30-15:30 16:00- 18:00 | | | Meeting with MRDI Deputy Minister Mr. Irakli Matkava Meeting RDL Project Team Ms. Marika Shioshvili P.M., Ms. Nino Kakubava, CD coordinator, Ms. Maia Bibileishvili, RD coordinator, Ms. Gvantsa Bitskinashvili Admin Assistant, Mr Alexandre Svanishvili – Legal expert | | | | | | |
| Tuesday, 3 October 2017 | | |  | | | |  | | |
| 11:00-12:30 | | | Meeting with GIZ Programme Director Karsten Posse and Senior Advisor Archil Zhorzholiani | | | | | | |
| 14.30 – 15.30 pm  MRDI 2nd floor | | | Meeting with MRDI Department of Self-Governance Development and Regional Policy  Mr. Nikoloz Rosebashvili Head of the Department  Interpreter | | | | | | |
| Wednesday, 4 October 2017 | | |  | | | | | | |
| 09:00-10:00  10.00 – 11.00 am | | | Meeting with ADAMeeting with RDL other relevant projectsUSAID GGI | | | |  | | |
| 12.00 – 13.00 am | | | Meeting with Giorgi Toklikishvili, Former Director of CEGSTAR | | | | | | |
| 15.00 – 16.00 | | | Meeting: RLD donor Organization - SDCMr. Olivier Bürki, Ms. Sophia Svanadze SDC, Ms. Tamuna Tsivtsivadze SDC | | | | | | |
| 16.00 – 17.00 | | | Meeting with the Civil Service Bureau of GeorgiaMs. Eka Kardava, Director | | | | | | |
| Thursday 5 October 2017 | | |  | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | Documents study | | | | |
| 14:00-15:0015:00-17.00 | | | | | Meeting with NALAG, Director David Melua  Focus group discussion with the Mayors of five municipalities | | | | |
| **Friday 6 October 2017** | | | | |  | | | | |
| 10:00 – 10.45 | | | | | Travel to Rustavi | | | | |
| 11.00-12.30  12:40-13:20 | | | | | Meeting with CiDA and RLD SGS grantee NGOs of Kvemo Kartli region (Mr. Zviad Devdariani; Mr. Giorgi Abuladze, NGOs: Eco-tourism development center; Kvemo Kartli Informational Portal; Green Caucasus) | | | | |
| 13:30 – 14:3016:00-17:00 17:00-18:00 | | | | Meeting with Rustavi Mayor, Mayor’ office departments and Council members  Mr. David Jikia, Mr. Revaz Barbakadze  Meeting with the Centre for Effective Governance System and Territorial Arrangement Reform (CEGSTAR) - Mr. Shota Katamadze Director and staff  Meeting with the MRDI Department of Innovation and Reform - Mr. Giorgi Dididze, Deputy Director, Mr. Giorgi Kezherashvili | | | | |
| **Monday 9 October 2017** |  | | | | | | | | | |
| 11:30-12:30 | Meeting with the Chair of the Parliament - Mr. Irakli Kobakhidze and the Head for the Parliamentary Committee on Regional Policy and Local Self Governance | | | | | | | | | |
| 16:00-17:00 | | | | Meeting with MDF Deputy Director, Mr. Gagi Buadze, | | | | |
| **Tuesday 10 October 2017** |  | | | | | | | | | |
| **11:00-12.30** | Meeting with UNDP for debriefing (conclusions of evaluation) review and way forward - Mr. Shombi Sharp DRR, Ms. Natia Natsvlishvili, ARR, Mr. Gigi Bregadze DG Team Leader, Ms. Marika Shioshvili P.M. | | | | | | | | | |
| 17:30:18:30 | Debriefing with ADA and SDC | | | | | | | | | |
| **Wednesday 11 October** | | **Departure** | | | | | | | | |

**Annex 3 List of documents reviewed**

**Laws, regulations, concepts**

* Law on LSG
* Law on Local Budget
* Main Principles of the Strategy on Decentralization and Self-Government Development 2013-17
* Law on Regional Development Policy and Planning
* Law on Development of High Mountain Regions
* Decentralization Strategy (?)
* Good Governance Strategy 2017-20
* LSG Code and road map
* Civil Service Code
* National Training Concept for LSG
* Regional Development Fund related key regulations, procedures

**Development Plans and their implementation**

* RAP methodology
* MDD methodology
* Copies of the RDSs elaborated with the support of the project
* Data on the RDS implementation/ funding (including from RDF)
* Copies of the MDDs elaborated with the support of the project (examples, including those that will be visited during the mission) + 2017 Budgets of those municipalities
* Data on the MDD implementation/ funding in targeted areas
* High Mountain Regions Development Strategy and Action Plan
* Database on the SGS project supported by the project (agree on the format for this data: breakdown by regions and municipalities – type of projects/ services – amounts - N of beneficiaries/ including women – co-funding amounts by sources)

**LSG Training System related**

* MoU between UNDP and CEGSTAR
* CEGSTAR functional analysis or any materials on assessing capacity of the organization + organizational development strategy/ plans
* Trainings needs assessment report of 2015 by GEGSTAR
* Pilot performance appraisals of municipalities by MRDI
* Examples of municipal training plans
* NTS e-library
* Data on funding of municipal trainings provided by CEGSTAR in last years by sources

**Project Steering and Management**

* Project Document
* Steering Committee meetings minutes
* Mid-term Review Report of 2014
* Management response to the Project Mid-term Review of 2014
* Annual project reports (2016 is available already)
* Study tour reports (if available)
* Documentation available from national level policy advocacy events (roundtables, etc.)
* Actual project budget (plan/fact by year)
* !! Information on all project performance indicators (baseline/ endline)
* Citizen Satisfaction with Public Services in Georgia Surveys
* Analytical materials and publications produced with the support of the project (research reports for the Decentralization Strategy, etc.)
* Project staff ToRs
* Project key PR and visibility materials
* Samples of project media coverage
* Strategic Partnership Donor Coordination meetings minutes

**Other**

* MRDI internal Human Resources Management Policy
* Micro-Capital Grant Agreement with NALAG

1. Linked to the decision to downsize the number of local self-government units from 1000 to 69 (64 municipalities and 5 cities) made by the government of Georgia in 2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. HDI rised from 0.710 in 2005 to 0.769 in 2015 (2016 Human Development Report, UNDP, available at: <http://hdr.undp.org>) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Regional Development Fund is a fund managed and allocated by MRDI [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Thus, in 2015 alone, around $175 million channeled from the centrally managed Regional Development Fund for implementation of the regional Action Plans (around 600 regional projects benefitting over 1 million inhabitants). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The RDF budgets (excluding the Village Fund) rose from 140 million GEL in 2014 to 175 million GEL in 2015 and 174,975,522 GEL in 2016. The funding budget for 2017 has also increased to 200 million GEL out of which 190, 000,000 is already allocated for funding of 711 projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This includes update of pilot 22 MDDs developed in 2015 and development of 21 new MDDs [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Initially 20 MDDs were planned to be developed till 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The municipalities do not own most infrastructure related to municipal utilities, and management of the major share of land is still under the competencies of the Ministry of Economy. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The latter provision was sealed in the 2014 LSG Code [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See relevant materials at <http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/en/donor_board> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In Armenia, the Fund (with SDC-support) is experimenting with the “new generation” of investments allowing strengthening municipal capacities to provide better services to the population, including in the agricultural domain, in the framework of multi-functional communal enterprises. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. GDP per-capita increased from $2,613 in 2010 to $3,605 in 2013; 3.754 in 2015 <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/517361475740368277/Georgia-Snapshot-Oct2016FINAL.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. 2015 Human Development Report, UNDP, available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/GEO.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Freedom House, Freedom House 2013 Report; National Democratic Institute (NDI), NDI Public Perceptions Surveys, 2013-2014; Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project; The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project 1996-2013; IREX media sustainability index and IREX media sustainability index 2014; Civil Society Organizations (CSO) sustainability index Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Sustainability index by USAID, 2012-2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Welfare Monitoring Survey (2015) UNICEF [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/517361475740368277/Georgia-Snapshot-Oct2016FINAL.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Welfare Monitoring Survey (2015) UNICEF [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Urban Development Strategy, World Bank, [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Welfare Monitoring Survey (2015) UNICEF [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Citizen Satisfaction Survey, 2015, UNDP [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Welfare Monitoring Survey (2015) UNICEF [↑](#footnote-ref-21)